

SYSTEM OPERATIONAL REQUEST: #2001-4

- *The following State and Federal Salmon Managers have participated in the preparation and support this SOR: Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, and Columbia River Inter-tribal Fish Commission.*

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FROM: **Christine Mallette, Chairperson, Salmon Managers**

DATE: **May 3, 2001**

SUBJECT: **Albeni Falls**

SPECIFICATIONS: Beginning immediately, pass inflow up to powerhouse capacity at Albeni Falls. Albeni Falls Reservoir should maintain its current elevation of 2054 feet.

JUSTIFICATION:

The present operations plan for the federal hydrosystem calls for Albeni Falls to begin filling on May 5th and continue to its summer elevation of 2062.5 feet by the middle of June. The volume of water needed to accomplish this fill would be approximately 0.78 MAF. This is the only FCRPS project that will fill and stay full through the summer and fall.

The present drought and economic situation has resulted in the interruption of endangered species act protection measures. Flows are far below those called for by the Biological Opinion and spill is presently not being provided for fish passage. It is estimated that Grand Coulee Reservoir will not reach its full elevation of 1290 feet by June 30 (estimated to only reach 1280 feet) and consequently summer flow augmentation will be further diminished. The Vernita Bar flow minimums for emergence are presently being provided, but proposals have been made by the Action Agencies to decrease these flows prior to the end of fall chinook emergence.

Given the present hardship being endured by other users of the hydrosystem, it seems appropriate to call for the participation of the Albeni Falls Reservoir to ease some of the burden being placed on fish this migration season. The SOR calls for Albeni Falls to pass inflow and this water can be used to fill Lake Roosevelt for summer flow augmentation purposes and to provide Vernita Bar minimum flows through the end of emergence.