

SYSTEM OPERATIONAL REQUEST: #2002-6

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

TO:

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Raymond R. Boyce

FROM: **Ron Boyce, Chairperson, Salmon Managers**

DATE: **July 18, 2002**

SUBJECT: **Hungry Horse and Grand Coulee Summer Operations**

SPECIFICATIONS: The Salmon Managers are requesting the following operations be implemented at the Grand Coulee and Hungry Horse projects during August and September of 2002 to aid in the migration of summer anadromous fish and, to benefit bull trout and other resident species in the Flathead River.

1. Release water from Hungry Horse at a rate of 5 Kcfs. Transitional flows from August into September should be relatively smooth and reflect a receding hydrograph.
2. Pre-draft a volume of water from the Grand Coulee Reservoir in August that is equivalent, but not to exceed 150 Kaf, to the volume of water from Hungry Horse Reservoir that will not be discharged by the end of August (of the 20 feet designated from Hungry Horse that is reserved for summer flow augmentation under the NMFS 2000 Biological Opinion).
3. During the beginning of August draft this water as necessary to meet the Biological Opinion flow objectives at McNary. Drafting should begin when flows begin to drop below 200 Kcfs at McNary.
4. Refill the Grand Coulee reservoir in September with the volume of water from Hungry Horse that is equivalent to the volume pre-drafted from Grand Coulee in August.
5. If this SOR is not implementable, draft full Biological Opinion volume from Hungry Horse by August 31.
6. In addition, as per the 2000 NMFS Biological Opinion, reduce the volume of water pumped into Bank's Lake from Grand Coulee (Lake Roosevelt) by 130 KAF (volume

of water in normal operating range). Draft this volume of water directly from Grand Coulee to augment flows during the summer migration period, extending the time during which the flow objectives at McNary Dam are met.

JUSTIFICATION:

The 2000 NMFS Biological Opinion (page 9-63) states that:

“The Action Agencies shall limit the reservoir draft to elevation 3,540 feet by August 31 for salmon flow augmentation. BOR shall coordinate drafts for salmon with NMFS, USFWS, the Action Agencies, and other entities through the in-season management process. As a guideline for salmon flow augmentation releases during July and August, Hungry Horse may be operated in a manner that reduces impacts to other listed species while also releasing water to meet salmon flow objectives. Reduction in a second flow peak operation may be achieved by discharging water earlier, or at a more constant rate, to provide the full volume available for salmon.”

This operation is consistent with the Biological Opinion. Pre-drafting Grand Coulee will allow releases from Hungry Horse to be constant, while at the same time utilizing the water from Hungry Horse reserved for salmon flow augmentation during fall chinook summer migration.