

SYSTEM OPERATIONAL REQUEST: #2004-15

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

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FROM: David A. Wills, Chairperson, Salmon Managers

DATE: June 22, 2004

SUBJECT: Lower Columbia River Summer Spill Program

SPECIFICATIONS: Continue implementing the Biological Opinion spring spill program through June 30. Beginning on July 1, 2004 spill daily at Lower Columbia River projects according to the summer spill provisions contained in the 2000 Biological Opinion.

- Spill 24 hours daily at John Day Dam at 30% of instantaneous flow.
- Spill at The Dalles Dam shall occur for 24 hours daily at a level equal to 40% of instantaneous flow.
- Spill to the 120% gas cap at Bonneville Dam during nighttime hours and 75 Kcfs during daytime hours.

JUSTIFICATION:

The 2000 Biological Opinion calls for a summer spill program to protect and enhance the survival of juvenile migrants moving past the Lower Columbia River hydroelectric project during the summer migration period. This program is to be implemented as described in the Biological Opinion. A spill study has been funded for implementation at Bonneville Dam for the summer of 2004. The technical staffs of the state, tribal and federal salmon management agencies reviewed and commented this project entitled "Summer Spill Evaluation", study code SPE-04-New, proposed by the US Geological Survey for funding through the US Army Corps of

Engineers Columbia River Fishery Management Program (see Joint Technical Staff comments provided to Mr. Rock Peters on May 18, 2004). Given the extent of the technical concerns related to this study the technical staffs of the state, tribal and federal salmon management agencies do not support the implementation of this study. In addition, the reduction of spill at Bonneville Dam for the conduct of the study will impose additional mortality on the juvenile fish migration. Consequently, we recommend that the Biological Opinion spill measures be fully implemented at the Bonneville project, as well as at the other Lower Columbia River projects.