

## **SYSTEM OPERATIONAL REQUEST: #2005-5**

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

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**FROM:** David A. Wills, Chairperson, Salmon Managers

**DATE:** April 14, 2005

**SUBJECT:** Bonneville Project Spill

**SPECIFICATIONS:** Beginning April 15, 2005 at 1800 hours, spill 50 Kcfs hourly at Bonneville Dam. Begin operating the Bonneville Corner Collector on April 15, no later than 1600 hours. Flatten daily load following at the project to the extent possible to moderate tailwater elevation fluctuations. Avoiding daily tailwater fluctuations should effectively increase tailwater elevations from the minimums observed during low load time periods, providing better conditions for emerging juvenile chum salmon.

Increase Bonneville spill to full Biological Opinion levels (75 Kcfs during daytime hours and spill to the 120% TDG gas cap during nighttime hours) on April 19 at 1800 hours.<sup>1</sup>

**JUSTIFICATION:** Initiation of Biological Opinion spill at Bonneville Dam has been delayed from the normal April 10 planning date because of below normal flows and inadequate water depth to protect emergent chum fry below Bonneville Dam. The initial reduced Bonneville spill request is based upon dissolved gas levels occurring at the sensitive, Multnomah Falls chum redd

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<sup>1</sup> CRITFC and the Nez Perce Tribe do not oppose this SOR, but want to see a higher spill volume, 120 kcfs daytime at Bonneville Dam, as outlined in their 2005 River Operations Plan.

site, which has minimum coverage at present tailwater elevations. ODFW, USFWS and FPC staff measured dissolved gas levels at the Multnomah chum redd sites at 9:00 to 9:30 a.m. on April 14. Dissolved gas levels ranged from 101.3 to 103.9 with 1.5 ft depth compensation. Based upon these measurements the agencies and tribes recommend the beginning of spill at Bonneville to benefit downstream migrating salmon and steelhead. It is anticipated that by next Tuesday a very high percentage of chum will have emerged and Bonneville spill levels will no longer need to be restricted, but moderating load following to increase minimum tailwater may need to continue to protect the remaining emergent fry.