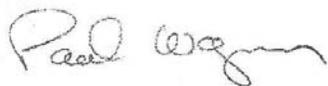


SYSTEM OPERATIONAL REQUEST: #2011-01

The following State, Federal, and Tribal Salmon Managers have participated in the preparation and support this SOR: National Marine Fisheries Service, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission..

TO:	Brigadier General McMahon	COE-NWD
	James D. Barton	COE-Water Management
	Steven Barton	COE-RCC
	David Poganis	COE-P
	Col. Steven Miles	COE-Portland District
	LTC David Caldwell	COE-Walla Walla District
	Karl Wirkus	USBR-Boise Regional Director
	Stephen J. Wright	BPA-Administrator
	Lori Bodi	BPA-PG-5



FROM: Paul Wagner, Chairperson, Salmon Managers

DATE: April 1, 2011

SUBJECT: Spill Priority List

SPECIFICATIONS:

Spill priority list for implementation (use this list until all projects are spilling to 120%) beginning April 1 through April 2 for management of excess generation spill.

Lower Granite	41 Kcfs, or 120%
Little Goose (night) / (daytime)	30% of instantaneous flow
Little Goose (nighttime)	32 Kcfs, or 120%
Lower Monumental	26 Kcfs, or 120%
Ice Harbor	95 Kcfs, or 120%
McNary	145 Kcfs, or 120%
Little Goose (daytime)	32 Kcfs, or 120%
John Day	120 Kcfs, or 120%
The Dalles	125 Kcfs, or 120%
Bonneville	100 Kcfs, or 120%
Chief Joseph	20---50---100---130--165---200
Grand Coulee	0----5-----10----20----35----50
Dworshak	37%--42%---50%---60%----70%

Beginning April 3, implement spill as described in the 2011 Fisheries Operation Plan. If there is excess generation spill, increase to the 120% at each project as described in the list above.

JUSTIFICATION:

We understand that due to present weather conditions and the need for drafting reservoirs to the flood control elevations, there is presently excess generation spill in the hydrosystem. We recognize that this spill is involuntary spill, is unique to 2011 and is not specifically designated as spill for fish passage under the Biological Opinion.

This excess generation spill presents an opportunity to enhance fish survival. Migrating juvenile salmonids have been detected at Lower Granite Dam, indicating entry into the hydrosystem. These fish numbers have been increasing since monitoring began at Lower Granite Dam on March 25, 2011. (<http://www.fpc.org/currentdaily/passindx.txt>)

The Fish Passage Advisory Committee (FPAC) has met and discussed the spill priority list developed by the US Army Corps of Engineers. The FPAC has suggested to the COE that the excess generation spill should be directed to those projects where it would enhance fish survival. The FPAC spill priority recommendations for the situation currently occurring would focus the provision of spill up to the 115/120% criteria of the WA DOE exemption beginning at Lower Granite Dam and subsequently implemented at the downstream projects; Little Goose, Lower Monumental and Ice Harbor in succession to the 120% spill level before spill is provided in the lower Columbia River.

The spill priority management presented here occurs at projects that are within the States of Oregon and Washington. The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality waiver goes into effect on April 1. The Washington Department of Ecology (WA DOE) exemption does not specify dates. We have requested guidance from WA DOE staff and they stated in conversation on March 30 and in an email dated March 31 :

"I have attached a copy of the June 30, 2010 Gas Abatement Plan approval that is required under WAC 173-201A-200(1)(f)(ii). This approval is required before operators may apply the adjusted water quality criteria for total dissolved gas.

As we discussed during our phone conversation yesterday, Ecology does not explicitly state dates in the approval letter to the Corps when the adjustment may be applied. However, David Wills is correct in his description below of the USACE 2008 approval letter which states "General fish spill seasons are April through August" and "General non-fish spill seasons are September through March". This language is not in the 2010 approval letter, but this statement remains true for the implementation of the fish passage TDG criteria adjustment. Spill to aid fish passage over hydroelectric dams is generally expected to occur in the noted time period, but Washington recognizes that flexibility to these general seasons may be necessary. It is more important to note that the adjustment criteria apply only when there is evidence that juvenile salmon migration is occurring."

Current monitoring of fish at Lower Granite Dam shows that fish are present and that spill to 120% TDG levels would aid fish passage. Monitoring in accordance with the terms of the WA DOE exemption is ongoing.

The above mentioned salmon managers believe that we are presented with a unique opportunity to enhance survival of juvenile migrating salmonids while staying within the accepted TDG requirements. Therefore, we request that the COE consider implementing the spill of excess generation as described above, beginning immediately at Lower Granite Dam.

As the fish passage season progresses, the salmon managers may make further suggested changes to the spill priority list as needed in relation to the fish migration needs or concerns. We expect to make these suggested changes through the TMT process.