SYSTEM OPERATIONAL REQUEST: #99-3

- ***The following State and Federal Salmon Managers have participated in the preparation of this SOR: Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Idaho Department of Fish & Game, and National Marine Fisheries.***

TO:	**Brigadier General Griffin**	**COE-NPD**
	William Branch	**COE-Water Management**
	Cindy Henriksen	**COE-RCC**
	Bolyvong Tanovan	**COE-RCC**
	Doug Arndt	**COE-P**
	Col. R. Slusar	**COE-Portland District**
	Lieut. Col. W.E. Bulen, Jr.	**COE-Walla Walla District**
	Steve Clark	**USBR-Boise Acting Regional Director**
	Judith Johansen	**BPA-Administrator**
	Greg Delwiche	**BPA-PG-5**

FROM: **Ron Boyce, Salmon Managers**

DATE: **March 19, 1999**

SUBJECT: **Priest Rapids and Bonneville Operations to protect emergent fall chinook.**

SPECIFICATIONS:

- Decrease flows at Priest Rapids on March 20, 1999 to achieve average flows projected through March 31.
- Maintain these average daily flows projected for this time period at a stable or increasing level. If flows increase, maintain the increased flow at a stable or increasing level.
- Limit hourly and daily fluctuations.

JUSTIFICATION:

Projected flows at Priest Rapids are indicating a significant decrease in flows after March 22, decreasing to the 90 kcfs level in the last week of March. This decrease is indicated during a time period in which naturally spawned fall chinook will be emerging from the gravel in increasing numbers below Bonneville and Priest Rapids dams. The salmon managers are requesting that this decrease in flows if it must occur should occur immediately prior to the increase in emergence. The lower flows are requested to be maintained at a stable or increasing and stable level to avoid stranding emergent fall chinook fry. The data provided to the salmon managers by the operators and regulators indicate that average flows can be maintained at a stable 113 kcfs level between now and March 31. The critical objective of this request is to maintain a steady and stable flow at this lower level to avoid stranding until flow projections and power operators can maintain a stable flow at increasing levels through the April period. Some impact of decreasing the flows now is expected, but the impact is anticipated to be greater later on when more fish have emerged from the gravel.