


SYSTEM OPERATIONAL REQUEST: #99-5

- *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, National Marine Fisheries Service and Columbia River Inter-tribal Fish Commission.*

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:  Marv Yoshinaka, Chairperson, Salmon Managers

DATE: March 30, 1999

SUBJECT: Implementation of Snake River Spill Measures

SPECIFICATIONS:

- Spill to the 120% total dissolved gas cap at each of the Snake River Projects. The following volumes at each project are the volumes specified in the steelhead Supplemental Biological Opinion. Volumes may be adjusted to achieve the 115/120% TDG cap.
- At Lower Granite Dam beginning the evening of March 31, 1999 spill 45 kcfs from 1800 hours to 0600 hours daily.
- At Little Goose Dam, spill 60 kcfs from 1800 hours to 0600 hours daily beginning April 1, 1999.
- At Lower Monumental Dam, spill 40 kcfs from 1800 hours to 0600 hours daily beginning April 2, 1999.
- At Ice Harbor Dam, spill 75 kcfs during nighttime hours and 45 kcfs during daytime hours beginning daily on April 3, 1999.

JUSTIFICATION:

The collection of hatchery juvenile chinook yearlings increased sharply, reaching 2,600 fish per day on March 23, 1999, at the Whitebird Trap. Collection of wild yearling chinook at the Whitebird Trap has increased from less than 100 fish to over 400 daily over the March 18 - 24 period. The collection of wild yearling chinook ranged from 19 to 103 per day during the week of March 19 through 25, at the Imnaha Trap. Wild yearling chinook daily catch at the Grande Ronde Trap ranged from 16 to 40 daily for the same period. Wild yearling chinook at the Lewiston trap ranged from 54 to 100 from March 22 to March 26. In the first four days of monitoring efforts at Lower Granite Dam, the wild yearling chinook numbers have increased from 208 to 2,320, while hatchery yearling chinook have increased from 400 to over 1,000 fish per day.

All four trap sites have captured small numbers of wild steelhead since they went into operation this season. The wild steelhead index at Lower Granite Dam has increased from 200 to over 1200 in the first four days of monitoring activities at this site. All of the passage index data indicates that the spring migration is underway in the Snake River for yearling wild and hatchery chinook and steelhead.

Spill is requested in accordance with the NMFS Supplemental Steelhead Biological Opinion. The spill is requested to be staggered in at one-day intervals at successive downstream projects in association with the expected travel time of fish between sites at present flows. The salmon managers are aware that the planning date for spill for fish passage, and dissolved gas waivers was anticipated for April 3. The intent of the April 3 date was to begin spill, when the downstream migration began. Smolt monitoring data indicates that the juvenile fish migration is beginning earlier than historic dates. This objective of this request is to implement the intent of the fish passage measures, implementing protection when fish passage occurs.