MEMORANDUM

To: Fish Passage Advisory Committee (FPAC)

From: FPC Staff

Date: January 9, 2020

Subject: Action Notes from January 7, 2020 FPAC conference call.

On January 7, 2020, FPAC met for its weekly conference call. The following people participated in the meeting/call:

- Dave Swank (Chair, USFWS)
- Tom Lorz (Vice Chair, CRITFC)
- Brandon Chockley (FPC)
- Erin Cooper (FPC)
- Claire McGrath (NOAA)
- Jay Hesse (Nez Perce Tribe)
- Erick Van Dyke (ODFW)
- Charlie Morrill (WDFW)
- Jonathan Ebel (IDFG)
- Kyle Dittmer (CRITFC)
- Jennifer Graham (Warm Springs Tribe)
- Trevor Conder (NOAA)
- Tom Iverson (Yakama Nation)

AGENDA ITEMS

Approval of Notes from December 17th Meeting (00:00:00 – 00:02:15)
- Notes for December 17 meeting were approved with no edits.

Water Supply and Reservoir Status (00:02:15 – 00:06:15)
- Brandon Chockley (FPC) noted that the current forebay elevation at GCL is 1,285’.
- Tom Lorz (CRITFC) noted that the latest STP has GCL staying at ~1,285’ for at least a month with a slight refill at end of the month. 1,285’ is a relatively normal flood control...
elevation this time of year and staying at this elevation for one month is a good sign and indicates that COE and BPA feeling comfortable.

- Current elevation at DWOR is 1,516’. Tom Lorz noted that this is well below their current flood control. Tom is guessing that we are below average at DWOR.

**Weather Update and Climate Forecast (00:06:15 – 00:12:40)**

- Kyle Dittmer (CRITFC) provided an overview of seasonal and monthly precipitation and snotel information (see attached).
- Snow line will be coming down to 2,500-3,000’ (Oregon Cascades) over the next few days. Expecting series after series of storms, all expected to be snow at elevations.
- Snotel sites not looking good for Oregon cascades; slightly better in Washington Cascades; Idaho panhandle is more normal. Approaching storms should help.
- ONI index beginning to look more positive, trending towards El Niño.
- NOAA long term forecast calling for below normal temperatures in the Northwest and near normal precipitation. CRITFC forecast calling for near normal temperatures and near normal to slightly below normal precipitation.

**Chum Ops (00:12:40 – 00:21:35)**

- FPAC asked for an update on chum. Charlie Morrill (WDFW) noted that chum are done. Last survey at Hamilton was December 31; 7 dead, 35 redds. Peak live counts on Hamilton Creek on Nov. 27th (639 live, 49 dead, 78 redds).
- Dave Swank (USFWS) asked whether WDFW has population estimates for numbers of spawners entering Hamilton Creek spawning channel. Claire McGrath (NOAA) noted that there are no population estimates yet and she is not sure when they are released. Charlie did not know when they would be done or whether they would be available by the time of the TMT process meeting. Charlie will check with Todd Hillson (WDFW).
- Claire noted that there seems to be a discrepancy in the Dec. 23 count in the spreadsheet versus what had been communicated verbally. Charlie will look into this. Brandon Chockley (FPC) asked that, if the spreadsheet needs to change, please send the corrected spreadsheet to FPC so it can be posted.
- Chum operation is to stay with minimum 11.3’ elevation for remainder of protection period.
- Kyle Dittmer (CRITFC) noted that we are expecting a lot of rain at BON in the next several days so maintaining a minimum of 11.3’ in the tailrace should not be a problem.

**Washington TDG Waiver – Update and Discussion (00:21:35 – 00:42:35).**

- Dave Swank (USFWS) sent a link that describes the newly adopted TDG waiver for the state of Washington ([https://ecology.wa.gov/DOE/files/da/da1060f4-6934-4341-bee4-0d3997a9f2d5.pdf](https://ecology.wa.gov/DOE/files/da/da1060f4-6934-4341-bee4-0d3997a9f2d5.pdf)). Understanding is that it is not completely final until it is approved by EPA.
- Dave Swank noted that FPAC should have a discussion with the COE about what happens if exceed 15% GBT and/or 5% GBT incidence threshold. Seems like the waiver lines it out well but wouldn’t be surprised if COE has different interpretation than FPAC.
For example, how much would you decrease spill, what would be the target TDG level, would we immediately go back up to the previous TDG level prior to exceeding GBT criterion? Would be good to get ahead of the curve. FPAC should write out the steps that we think we should follow if there is an exceedance in the GBT criteria and share that with the COE. Charlie noted that, in most cases, when the GBT criteria are exceeded we are in uncontrolled spill and spill cannot be reduced. Dave noted that uncontrolled spill is covered in the waiver language.

- Brandon Chockley (FPC) noted that the 2020 Flex Spill agreement had language indicating that, if a change in operations is necessary, the Flex Spill team will be responsible for discussing changes in operations. A reduction in spill due to the GBT criteria may be considered a change in operations so it is unclear who is responsible for deciding what to do if GBT incidence criteria are met, FPAC or the Flex Spill team. Dave Swank (USFWS) noted that not all agencies are signatories on the Flex Spill agreement (USFWS included).

- Brandon also noted that it is still incredibly unclear what the non-salmonid GBT monitoring program is going to look like, particularly in 2020. If we follow Washington plan, as Brandon understands it, we have the potential to group multiple sites to meet sample size requirements. Equating GBT incidence rates from a grouping of monitoring projects to TDG from one project will be difficult. Where would you reduce TDG if GBT incidence rate from a grouped sample exceeds criteria? Dave Swank (USFWS) noted that he did not see any language about grouping GBT data across samples. Brandon noted that this was communicated at a public meeting back in September or October. Trevor Conder (NOAA) noted that it's in their draft implementation plan. Trevor also noted that, in looking at the data, it is unlikely that size requirements will be met under current sample rates, even if combining projects.

- Brandon noted that there is language in the Washington waiver that indicates that a plan must be in place for 2021 so non-salmonid monitoring may not be an issue in 2020. However, this will also depend on what Oregon puts in their waiver. If Oregon makes non-salmonid monitoring mandatory in 2020, we will need to comply. Will also need to comply with the more stringent of the two in terms of sample size requirements. Whatever the sample size requirement are for non-salmonids, it’s unlikely that we will be able to meet it (combining or not combining) with the current process that’s in place for GBT monitoring. Oregon is the only one that specifically noted that the non-salmonid monitoring would take place under the current infrastructure. Washington was more liberal. There’s also an argument over who pays for it but the Washington language seems to indicate that, if someone wanted to develop and fund a separate program for non-salmonids that would be ok.

- Dave Swank (USFWS) asked, since there is a need to communicate with the COE on this, what is the appropriate forum to do that: TMT, FPOM.

- Charlie Morrill (WDFW) noted that he does not think 2020 will be an issue, in terms of non-salmonid monitoring. 2021 is the target for a non-salmonid monitoring.

- Claire McGrath (NOAA) noted that she thinks TMT is the best forum and questioned whether the Flex Spill team is prepared to deal with making in-season changes to
operations. Tom Lorz (CRITFC) noted that the Flex Spill team is largely the same people as FPAC. Tom also noted that the Flex Spill agreement technically ends when the new BiOp comes out but there are discussions about this. Tom thinks, if a new BiOp is issued, this may be a non-issue.

- Tom recommended that FPAC talks to the COE to figure out what their plan is. If that works for FPAC then great. If FPAC does not agree, then we will need to work through it with whatever channels we have. Claire McGrath (NOAA) noted that it would be good for FPAC to flesh out how the response to an exceedance in GBT incidence criterion would look. Claire noted that the COE came to FPAC at the TMT Year-end-review for a recommendation. Trevor Conder (NOAA) noted that he agrees we should wait until the Oregon waiver is completed. Brandon Chockley (FPC) noted that there is an Oregon EQC meeting at the end of January. Brandon believes this is when Oregon would decide on their waiver. Trevor recommended that a technical group should have discussions on this soon thereafter.

- Jay Hesse (Nez Perce Tribe) noted that he agrees that we need to wait until Oregon has issued their waiver but we can begin to walk through interpretations based on the language in the Washington waiver now. Discussions should be informally until get Oregon ruling. Then engage outside of the TMT process. Jay does not want to do this in the public meeting. Dave Swank (USFWS) noted that it sounds like these conversations should be had in a TMT Process meeting or in a separate meeting.

- Charlie Morrill (WDFW) will talk with WDFW personnel and DOE to provide insight into concerns expressed.

- Jay will follow up with Flex Spill signatories to determine whether the language regarding changes to operations needing to go through the Flex Spill team includes changes due to GBT monitoring.

**Other: Dworshak Unit 1 Testing (00:42:35 – 00:51:00)**

- Jay Hesse (Nez Perce Tribe) noted that the COE is proceeding with testing Unit 1 at Dworshak at speed no load sometime between Jan 22 and Jan 28. Similar to testing that was done in late November/early December. Understanding is that this testing is necessary for Unit 1 to be operation and the COE is moving forward with testing even though it is inconsistent with FPP standards to do testing when adult salmonids are in lowest abundance.

- Nov/December testing included some spill to try to attract steelhead adults away from flow from turbine units. COE plans to provide spill during January testing as well. Jay has shared his concerns that the testing is not the best time but will not object. Nez Perce will have staff to observe. Trevor Conder (NOAA) noted that the plan to spill was not in latest MOC for January testing. Jay confirmed that COE does plan to provide spill, based communication with Ann Setter (COE).

- Dave Swank (USFWS) asked what the response would be if steelhead mortalities are observed. Jay noted that there is an adult mortality threshold established (not sure what it is at thig point, thinks it is 10). Jay assumes the threshold would be in place during January testing.
• Trevor Conder (NOAA) noted that he has concerns that the MOC did not have mitigation in it. Rather, it expected managers to define and/or request mitigation or identify for them. Mitigation in this case if something to reduce impacts (e.g., spill to attract away from powerhouse).
• Jay Hesse (Nez Perce Tribe) reiterated that the January testing is outside the FPP criteria to do these types of things when the least adults are present. This type of scheduling cannot happen again. Tom Lorz (CRITFC) noted that the excuse is flood control concerns but that is questionable given that they currently have two units and are at least 50’ below FC obligations. They could push this off for a month or two. The scheduling issue was purely contractual.

Coordination for Other Scheduled Meetings (00:51:00 – 01:01:21)
• TMT tomorrow (Jan. 8th)
• FPOM Thursday, Jan. 9th
• Next FPAC meeting will be a face-to-face at FPC (Tuesday, January 21st at 10:00)
• TMT Process Meeting on Jan. 22nd will include discussion of Chum operations
  o Claire McGrath (NOAA) asked FPAC member to send her their objectives for this discussion so she can put information together ahead of time.
FPAC Agenda for Tuesday January 7th, 2020
Meeting time: 9:00 AM
Conference Call

1. Approval of notes from December 17th meeting
2. Water supply and Reservoir status
3. Weather update and climate forecast
4. Chum Ops
5. Washington TDG Waiver – Update and Discussion
   https://ecology.wa.gov/DOE/files/da/da1060f4-6934-4341-bee4-0d3997a9f2d5.pdf
6. Other
7. Coordination for other scheduled meetings
   a. TMT
   b. FPOM
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**Forecasted Daily Rain (in inches), BON dam area:**

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Mt. Hood Test Site, Oregon (north Oregon Cascades). Elevation 5370 feet.

Irish Taylor, Oregon (central Oregon Cascades). Elevation 5540 feet.

Mountain Meadows, Idaho (Panhandle, Salmon River drainage). Elevation 6360 feet.