

System Configuration Team Meeting
April 18, 2019
DRAFT

****Comments due by June 30, 2019**

Representatives of Corps, ID, WA, BPA, NOAA, and others participated in today's SCT meeting facilitated by Blane Bellerud, NOAA, and chaired by Ian Chane, Corps. See the last page of these minutes for a list of attendees at today's meeting.

Copies of previous documents discussed, and meeting sign-up sheets are available from Kathy Ceballos at 503-230-5420. Final SCT notes are available on the COE's TMT website under the FPOM link.

1. FY 19 Update:

Ian Chane, Corps, provided an update for FY19 projects. There have been some changes due to a need changes for projects as well as changes in studies.

Line 3 Estuary Habitat Studies – No change.

Line 4 Avian Predation Cormorant Management and Monitoring – Slight change from \$2.4 million to \$2.75 million.

Line 7 The Dalles East Fish Ladder Emergency Auxiliary Water Supply – Increase from \$2 million to \$2.64 million. It may be less. It is an operable system right now. Some equipment needs to be tweaked and some wiring in the 7-foot valve, which flooded recently. Ian had been hearing \$50k for that repair. That said, after this year, the only costs associated with this project should be closeout costs.

Line 15 – McNary Top Spill Weir (TSW) Permanence – Because of CRSO, Line 15 is being deferred and its funds were reallocated to CRSO. Some of the funds have already been spent and cannot be recovered, which is why there is still a small budget for this item in the FY19 budget. While the project has been deferred and the funding dropped from \$2.5 million to \$100,000, the project is in a place that if funding were to reappear or be reallocated, the project could move forward this year.

Line 19 Little Goose Adult Ladder Temperature Mitigation – Margie reminded SCT that the Corps went out with a contract but had to end it due to the contractor's inability to perform. They recouped most of the money and went out with the contract again. The second time they went out with a contract the bid came in higher. The current need for this project is

\$465,000 up from January's estimated need of \$165,000. The new project will be to provide a permanent source of power.

Line 21 Lower Granite Spillway PIT Detection – The Corps has received a design from the contractor. The Corps will take this out for review and it should take about a month for review. The project is on track, reported Margie.

Line 33 Columbia River System Operations (CRSO) – The initial \$4.3 million is now up to \$7.9 million. Most of the funding is intended for the last 6 months of this fiscal year. Some of that funding may not be fully used. Trevor Conder, NOAA, asked how much funding can be pushed to 2020. Ian answered, “We don’t carry over CRFM funding.”

Line 43 – Bonneville Powerhouse 2 Fish Guidance Efficiency – This item has also been deferred to create money for CRSO and the McNary Overshoot study. It will be postponed until at least 2020. The budget dropped from \$3.3 million to \$700k. The current is for ongoing design work. This should help so that the Corps can issue a contract next year. Trevor asked if a design had been made in 2015. That design work was stopped. Trevor also asked if the \$700k would be enough for a hydraulic evaluation. Because there is design work, it is not. Trevor noted that there are survival benefits to the fish and stressed the importance of pushing forward this year with a study. Ian said he would investigate the cost and if it is possible to add back in. He will report back at the next SCT.

Line 44 Bonneville Powerhouse 2 Floating Orifice Gates/Bulkheads – This project has increased slightly due to installation and SADC. This project will be closed out this year.

Line 51 McNary Steelhead Overshoot – This was a large topic of discussion at the last SCT meeting and continued to be one at today's SCT. The Corps was able to find \$375k funding for this project, up from the \$0 that was obligated for it in January. This was based on the original estimate and is only meant to cover the fall part of the study, not the spring. The Corps will then see at the end of the fiscal year if it has any funds left over to fund the spring portion of the study. If not, the Corps would try to fund the spring portion in the beginning of FY20.

Several items/issues have come up related to the overshoot study.

1. There is some concern about the PIT evaluation. There was originally supposed to be a pit evaluation that would be supported through NMFS.
2. The current project is only to assess operation of one gate (Spillbay 20).

Ian wonders what the goal is for this project and what the criteria for the study would be. He asked if the study is set up in a way that it will get the information necessary to make a decision. He does not want to be put in a position where the money is spent and later the decision/policymakers come back and say, “We don’t have enough information to make a decision.”

Blane responded that in order to develop a decision point, more than one year of data would be needed. He said, “You don’t do a study for one year and make a decision.” This is

especially true because of variability and fieldwork variability. The most basic question would be “when you open the TSW, do fish go out?” That study has been done and showed that the TSW is effective. Now, the study that is currently under discussion is “how and when do you open the TSW and for what duration?”

Ian wondered what the trigger would be. Trevor noted that there is a sampling test that would look at different times. The data from the study should help show which scheme was most effective. Trevor thinks the data will show when the TSW should be opened and for how long.

Brad Eppard, Corps, noted that the study would be looking at the most efficient way to move fish as well as the most efficient way to move water.

The data collection itself is more of an SRWG discussion, noted Trevor. A lot of the specifics that impact data, such as how many fish were available to pass that day, is most appropriate for SRWG to sort out. Trevor commented it might take a few years to narrow down how they are looking at the data. What they see in the first year or two could inform what they do in the second or third year.

Ian commented that it is an expensive pilot study.

Tom Lorz, Umatilla/CRITFC, commented that it will be easier once they have a proposal from SRWG to evaluate.

Blane noted that to ensure the study is designed properly, people can think of specific questions they would like answered.

Leah Sullivan, BPA, said that originally BPA was looking for hydro-acoustic data from adjacent turbines in addition to monitoring the TSW that would help answer if the proportion of fish that pass at the TSW is attracting fish from turbine passage. If there is not a population response (e.g., increased detection in PIT tagged steelhead within the John Day River that overshot McNary during the fall) then does it mean the TSW was not opened for long enough or at the right time? Leah noted that these are the types of discussions happening at SRWG but funding has been a constraint. The policy people at BPA have agreed to move forward with just hydro-acoustic at the top spill, if not enough funding is not available.

Leah noted that most of the overshoot fallback movement of overwintering steelhead is in early spring (shown by Ritchins et al. 2018). Early March is important to consider, she said.

Ian asked if SCT should revisit this after SRWG. Trevor agreed this would be a good idea. The Corps and BPA will think of questions they want SRWG to answer with the study. This will be tabled for now and discussed at the next SCT meeting.

Line 16 Ice Harbor Turbine Passage Survival Program – Margie McGill reported that the testing will be done this fall on unit 2. They are still working to balance it.

2. FY 20 Initial Budget Review

The President’s budget for all CRFM projects is \$21.602 million. This is one of the lowest budgets since the program was started. This is a significant decrease. The capability identified for all projects in FY20 is over \$80 million. Willamette projects have \$60 million. Ian stressed that this is the President’s Budget and not the final appropriation. The House and Senate

still have to review the budget. Ian said that while he is hopeful that the House and Senate will provide additional funding, what SCT needs to do is set itself up for what would be funding if \$21.6 million is the final number. He also wants to prioritize based on capability. It is also a possibility that come October the budget will not be approved and the Corps will be operating under a continuing resolution.

Looking at FY19 for Lamprey the carry in is \$923k; previously it was \$1.123 million. Ian noted that funds are not typically carried over. Knowing that the fish accords were wrapping up, the Corps carried over \$1.123 for lamprey. Not all of that was specifically carried in projects. This has translated into the lamprey only being allotted what was carried in from those projects last year.

The Corps helps OMB with a J-sheet each year. It is an overview of the projects and where the funding is. It is typically done on a surface level. This year, the Corps was directed to give line item amounts.

In the past, there has been some movement in funding between the Willamette and the Columbia. This year, the Corps is being told that the split between the two is the split. There will not be as much movement to shift things around. The split right now is \$12.6 million for the Willamette.

Ian also shared that he will be stationed in Washington DC from June-September on a special assignment.

The Corps sent out a ranking sheet last month. It is not prepared to rank today.

Trevor asked if CRSO will continue in FY20. Ian responded that it will continue through 2021.

Margie provided an update on **Line 23 Lower Granite Juvenile Bypass Facility - Phase 1a (Gatewell to Separator), Phase 1b (Outfall) Close Out**. Tom said he thinks \$300k is vastly off. Margie clarified that it is to complete the scope for the completion contract and the as-built for the construction that will be completed this year. Tom asked if that was a CRFM need. Ian replied that it is. Tom commented that the Corps is just pushing this down the road.

Trevor asked a question about **Line 15 – McNary Top Spill Weir (TSW) Permanence**. He noted that the region ranked this high and believes this to be an important project. This was part of doing the overshoot study. Now it seems like it is not necessary to be complete in order to do the study. Trevor wondered what Line 15 provides the region for \$2.2 million. Margie replied that the project has not been completed. There is a crane in place and an emergency bulkhead being used. She said the project needs to be completed. What is out there now was supposed to

be a temporary fix and was retrofitted to work but there are concerns about long-term reliability. She noted, "What we're using is the backup. If the backup goes out, there is nothing else."

What could affect the TSW opening schedule for the overshoot proposal with the crane, asked Trevor. The Corps has had an initial coordination meeting and they have agreed to the fall and potential spring testing schedule for the McNary overshoot hydro-acoustic study.

Ian also pointed out **Line 43 – Bonneville Powerhouse 2 Fish Guidance Efficiency**. Right now, the project is in FY20 for \$2.6 million, the original budget before it was cut in FY19.

Ian would like to do preliminary rankings at the next SCT.

3. Other Items:

Pit tag building: this is mostly O&M and is cost-sharing. 40% of the cost is covered by BPA and the remaining 60% is covered by the Corps. Trevor has some concerns and FPOM is probably the best forum for those.

2019 BiOp and budget: At the end of March, the 2019 CRSO BiOp was signed. It is a non-jeopardy opinion. It basically says their action as presented to is sufficient to avoid jeopardy for all of our listed stocks for the duration of the BiOp. There are some conservation recommendations. This year's BiOp includes a flex spill agreement. There are some changes to MOP (an addition of half a foot of MOP in the Snake and at John Day) to add flexibility to the operation.

John Day turbine replacements: They were wrapping up comments and getting ready to send it out for review and someone thought the BiOp expired. They found nothing about John Day turbines in the BiOp.

Discussion on modeling spill levels of 120-125% have been brought up in other forums. Concerns have been raised about TDG and Stilling Basin impacts. If modeling is required, it will be funded through O&M or other sources.

4. Approval of Official Minutes

Minutes for February were approved.

5. Future Agenda Items:

At the next SCT, members will rank FY20 projects. The next SCT is on May 16, 2019.

6. Today's Attendees:

Blane Bellerud, NOAA
Brad Eppard, COE
Charles Morrill, WA
Christine Petersen, BPA
Ian Chane, COE
Josie Thompson, NOAA
Leah Sullivan, BPA
Leslie Bach, NPCC
Melissa Haskin, BPA (CONTR)
Scott Bettin, BPA
Sean Tackley, Corps
Tom Lorz, Umatilla/CRTIFC
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