

OFFICIAL COORDINATION REQUEST FOR NON-ROUTINE OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE

COORDINATION TITLE – 21FRN01 Fern Ridge Outflow

COORDINATION DATE – 01 February 2021

PROJECTS – Fern Ridge

RESPONSE DATE – 15 February 2021

Description of the problem

Hydrologic conditions in water year 2020 were poor, with most of the state of Oregon was in a drought. Fern Ridge filled to 369.8 ft on 20 June 2020 which was a foot lower than conditions in 2015. The relatively mild conditions over the winter of water year 2021 have caused concern to the wildlife within the Fern Ridge reservoir and the inability to provide an adequate water supply in the Long Tom River this year.

The minimum outflow from Fern Ridge as listed in the Biological Opinion to accommodate native fish in the Long Tom River is 50 cfs from February through June. On July 1, the minimum outflow from Fern Ridge reduces to 30 cfs with a minimum flow target of 30 cfs at the downstream gage at Monroe. In the summer, Fern Ridge outflows are adjusted to supplement irrigation withdrawals to maintain the 30 cfs flow at Monroe. It is not uncommon for ODFW, NMFS, and the Corps to reduce the minimum outflow objective during the spring. This reduction agreement last occurred in early May 2020.

Type of outage/operation

Reduce Fern Ridge minimum outflow objective to 30 cfs as soon as feasible through 30 June 2021. Minimum outflows will be increased back to 50 cfs if warranted to accommodate native fish.

Impact on facility

Decreasing the minimum outflow to 30 cfs instead of 50 cfs will increase storage refill potential in the reservoir by 40 acre-feet per day. Increasing the probability of refill will provide an increased benefit to the wildlife, recreation, and water supply.

Dates of operation

As soon as feasible through June 30, 2021

Expected impacts to fish

Expected impacts to resident fish will be minimal. Salmon and steelhead do not spawn in the Long Tom River in the spring but they may rear or hold up in the Long Tom during the summer to seek refuge from the mainstem Willamette River.

Comments from agencies

-----Original Message-----

From: Elise X Kelley <Elise.X.Kelley@state.or.us>

Sent: Wednesday, February 03, 2021 10:45 AM

To: Walker, Christopher E CIV USARMY USACE (USA)
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Cc: Anne Mullan <anne.mullan@noaa.gov>; Bernadette N Graham-Hudson
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CIV USARMY CENWP (USA) <Salina.N.Hart@usace.army.mil>

Subject: [Non-DoD Source] RE: WFPOM: 21FRN01 Fern Ridge outflow

Hi Chris,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this. ODFW appreciates USACE's flexibility this spring in managing water levels at Fern Ridge Dam. It has relieved some of the worry of Fern Ridge Wildlife Area staff as they manage the refuge to provide wintering waterfowl habitat. We don't have additional comments.

Thanks and best,

Elise

Elise Kelley, Ph.D.

District Fish Biologist, Mid-Willamette District

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Final results

Flow changes were implemented.

Chris Walker

NWP Operations Division Fishery Section

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