



## **COLUMBIA RIVER INTER-TRIBAL FISH COMMISSION**

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February 3, 2004

Jim Ruff, Chair  
Implementation Team  
NOAA Fisheries  
Portland, OR 97232

Dear Mr. Ruff,

I understand that the Implementation Team at its meeting this Thursday will discuss the Bonneville Power Administration's and others' proposal to curtail summer spill. It does not appear that representatives from the Commission's member tribes will be able to attend this meeting due in part to an overlapping commitment to meet with General Grisoli, ACOE-NWD, to discuss this topic and related issues.

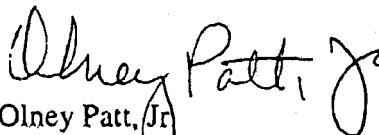
I would like to offer the following points for your consideration

- 1 The operations described in summer spill option 4 and the study methodology developed by CBFWA to support summer spill options 3 and 4 would provide sound biological data to assess and quantify the benefits of summer spill. Summer spill options 3 and 4 refer to proposals developed to assess existing Biological Opinion spill operations (option 3) and expanded spill operations intended to increase salmon protection (option 4).
2. The Skalski-Beeman study method for summer spill option 2 would not allow for the development of data addressing the range of stocks affected by spill curtailment nor would it provide information on project effects at any dams other than Bonneville. Summer spill option 2 refers to the proposal(s) to reduce summer spill.
3. The projections of benefits estimated to accrue from those actions described in the federal postings on the TMT web page are unreasonably high and do not meet the test that the survival benefits should be equal to or greater than the benefits of summer spill
- 4 The offset exercise actions contain elements of "double-counting." For example, Bonneville's support for the "Vernita Bar plus" operation, which has been ongoing for the last several years, was recently made contingent on reduction of summer spill. Likewise, continuation of Bonneville funding for tribal law enforcement appears to be contingent on reductions in summer spill. These "offsets" are inconsistent with the notion that offset actions should result in survival improvement above current conditions.

5. The impacts to salmon resulting from the loss of summer spill appear to be low. A more conservative estimate of loss would be approximately double the losses presented in the federal materials posted on the TMT web page. Actual assessment of summer spill effects should be undertaken by studying option 4, with the associated methods for options 3/4.
6. The notion that federally imposed unilateral reduction in tribal salmon harvest may be considered an offset to additional hydropower impacts is contrary to our understanding of the law and antithetical to tribal proposals for salmon conservation.

Additional comments addressing this subject matter will be forthcoming in response to NOAA's white papers and in response to Judge Redden's remand of the FCRPS BiOp. We will address this matter in additional forums as appropriate.

Sincerely

  
Olney Patt, Jr.  
Executive Director

February 5, 2004

## **System Configuration Team Update to IT**

\* Corps recently informed that saving & slippage hold-back to the FY04 CRFM appropriation would be 22.5% rather than 16% as expected. And, contrary to previous annual budgets, do not count on receiving any funds later in the year. Hence, Corps no longer leaning forward.

\* This meant that CRFM '04 budget would be \$4 million less than what had previously been planned for.

\* To accommodate the reduced budget the Corps proposed to SCT a reduced '04 work and study plan.

\* SCT recommended several changes to the Corps proposal

1) John Day turbine survival evaluation be deferred to FY05, saving \$800 k.

2) Hydroacoustic monitoring of juvenile fish passage at Lower Granite be reinstated, this adds \$750 k back into the budget.

3) Improvements to the barge loading flume at Lower Monumental continue on schedule, this entails replacement of the dewatering system, be reinstated which adds \$100 k back in the budget.

\* With the SCT recommended changes the budget is approximately balanced at the \$70 million level, however, there is interest in seeing the modified behavioral guidance curtain (BGS) evaluated at Lower Granite, with an in/out two treatment test, which would require another \$200 k for improvements to permit movement of the curtain.

\* Corps is now considering SCT's recommendations.

\* Chair's Summary - FY04 CRFM Budget is now down to the bare bones, but all the time sensitive and biologically important work and studies are still moving forward. However, major work achievements, such as the start of construction of the Ice Harbor RSW, may not survive any further cuts.