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December 8, 2020

MEMORANDUM

TO: Council Members

FROM: Leslie Bach

SUBJECT: Report on Implementation, Fish Passage, and Power Outcomes under the 2019 and 2020 Flexible Spill Agreement.

BACKGROUND:

Presenters: Jason Sweet and Ben Zelinsky, Bonneville Power Administration; Michael Garrity, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife; Ed Bowles, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife; Jay Hesse, Nez Perce Tribe; Tim Dykstra, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Summary: The panel will provide a summary of the operations conducted under the 2019/2020 Flexible Spill Agreement, and a retrospective on the outcomes from those operations. They will describe the components of the agreement, the specifics of the operations in 2019 and 2020, and the general results from the operations, with a focus on the 2020 outcomes.

Relevance: The Flexible Spill Agreement implements actions that support measures in the Mainstem Hydrosystem Flow and Passage Operations sub-strategy of the 2014 Columbia River Fish and Wildlife Program to improve fish passage and survival through the hydrosystem. In particular, the Mainstem Flow and Passage Operations sub-strategy calls for collaborative efforts to develop and implement spill operations and to evaluate the effects of those operations on fish passage and on continued delivery of an adequate, economic and reliable power supply.

Background: Federal, State and Tribal partners developed a collaborative agreement on mainstem spill operations that was implemented during 2019 and 2020. The agreement calls for flexible spill operations that meet three objectives: provide additional fish benefits by increasing spill; manage power system costs and preserve hydrosystem flexibility; and retain operational feasibility. These operations involve increased spill during certain times of the day for fish migration and lesser amounts for the hours when hydropower production is needed most. For the 2020 operation, the states of Oregon and Washington modified their water quality standards to allow for an increase in total dissolved gas limits at the dams to 125% during spring fish passage spill. Monitoring conducted during 2019 and 2020 provides information on the effects of the spill operation on the three main objectives.

More Info: [Bonneville Power Administration Flexible Spill Web Page](#)
[Northwest Power and Conservation Council Story](#)