DRAFT MEETING NOTES*

LEE VINING, FERC PROJECT NO. 1388

PROTECTION, MITIGATION, AND ENHANCEMENT MEASURES STAKEHOLDER MEETING

AUGUST 22, 2024, 8:00 AM–10:00 AM

**These meeting notes are documentation of general discussions from the meeting held on the above-noted date and focus on stakeholder questions and comments. These notes are not a verbatim account of proceedings and do not represent any final decisions or official documentation for the project or participating agencies.*

1.0 OBJECTIVES

- Run through Operations Model and scenario suggestions from stakeholders
- Set next Ops Model / PME meeting date

2.0 ATTENDEES

Relicensing Team Members
Matthew Woodhall, SCE
Martin Ostendorf, SCE
Kelly Larimer, Kleinschmidt
Finlay Anderson, Kleinschmidt
Shannon Luoma, Kleinschmidt
Bret Hoffman, Kleinschmidt
Carissa Shoemaker, Kleinschmidt
Heather Neff, Stillwater Sciences

Technical Working Group Members & Interested Parties
Adam Cohen, State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB)
Beth Lawson, California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)
Bryan Muro, SWRCB
Chris Shutes, California Sportfishing Protection Alliance
Graham Meese, CDFW
Greg Reis, Mono Lake Committee (MLC)
Tristan Leong, USFS

3.0 COMPILED ACTION ITEMS

- Bret and Beth to connect offline and discuss model logic.

4.0 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Shannon Luoma, Kleinschmidt, welcomed attendees, introduced the meeting.

Looking to see the proposed flows you have, what management objectives you're thinking of, see what that does to the model and the system. Regroup for a few weeks to run numbers on relicensing side. Come back together Sept 9 week, schedule that at the end of this meeting.

5.0 PME TOPIC: OPERATIONS MODEL RUN-THROUGH, DISCUSSION OF MINIMUM INSTREAM FLOWS, REDUCING FLOW ALTERATION REQUESTS, STREAMLINING ANNUAL CONSULTATION NEEDS

General: Is there a way to adjust operations that would provide downstream benefits without impacting fundamental SCE operational needs. The biggest enhancements downstream of Poole into Lower LVC; timing of filling the reservoirs may not need to be fully tied to rec season as they are in today's license. [could agencies clarify what management objectives (from established management plans) are driving these requested enhancements?]

Peak Flow Delivery: Agencies appear to be looking for a PME that provides 250 cfs of instantaneous flow (duration still unclear) at the LADWP diversion with some degree of predictability or advance communication so that LADWP can be prepared. The timing of the peak flows should coincide with natural hydrograph as much as possible, and flows could be a combination of Poole Powerhouse flows, spill over Rhinedollar Dam, and Warren Fork. [could agencies clarify what management objectives (from established management plans) are driving these requested enhancements?]

Transition from winter to summer flows: would like to look at potential operations at Tioga and Saddlebag that would level the flows as project transitions between being accessible and not accessible. The issue is that valves left open tend to provide high flows in spring until operators can get up to close them, then they can drop precipitously. Is there a way to change the manner in which the valves are left to reduce this "yo-yo" effect? [could agencies clarify what management objectives (from established management plans) are driving these requested enhancements?]

Minimum Instream Flows/Natural Hydrograph: Would like to evaluate if there is a way to provide higher flows in the late spring/summer within existing water budget [could agencies clarify what management objectives (from established management plans) are driving these requested enhancements?]

Summary from Copilot:

The meeting focused on discussing potential flow adjustments and their implications on project operations, with a particular emphasis on the management of Saddlebag and Tioga Lakes.

Flow Adjustments and Objectives: The meeting opened with discussions on potential flow adjustments, emphasizing the need to tie these adjustments to specific goals and management objectives for enhancement. Shannon Luoma highlighted the importance of understanding the constraints on the system, including sales agreements, recreation flows, and reservoir levels.

Model Updates and Challenges: Bret Hoffman discussed updates to the model, including edits to incorporate head change impacts on releases and the challenge of surcharging to meet targets without exceeding them. Beth Lawson expressed concerns about understanding the model's decision-making process, particularly regarding releases and adjustments.

Proposed Flow Scenarios: The group discussed various scenarios for adjusting flows, focusing on the need for a more nuanced approach that considers the operational constraints and the impact on metrics. Beth Lawson and Bret Hoffman agreed to further discuss and refine these scenarios offline.

Next Steps and Scheduling: The meeting concluded with plans to refine the proposed flow scenarios and model adjustments. Beth and Bret will discuss offline to address model concerns, aiming to have proposals ready for review by the next meeting scheduled for September 12th, 10-11:30am.

The meeting underscored the complexity of managing water flows and reservoir levels within operational and environmental constraints, highlighting the need for collaborative efforts to refine models and develop feasible flow adjustment scenarios.

Bret is working on updates to the models, particularly focusing on the impact of head change on releases. He mentioned making about a dozen edits and is still refining the model to accurately reflect the impact of reservoir head on flow rates.

Beth Lawson expressed a need for a better understanding of release decision-making in the model, particularly how it calculates releases during the drawdown period.

The discussion highlighted the operational constraints of managing reservoir levels and the desire to adjust flows to achieve environmental benefits without significantly impacting power generation.

There was a focus on trying to replicate more natural flow patterns in the river, particularly during the snowmelt period, to benefit native species and the overall ecosystem.

The team discussed the challenges of accurately modeling the impact of operational changes on reservoir levels and downstream flows, considering the variability in weather conditions and access to reservoirs for manual adjustments.

There was an acknowledgment of the need to balance environmental objectives with operational and power generation requirements.

6.0 SCHEDULE AND NEXT STEPS

Shannon summarized that Beth and Bret will talk together next week and spend time running the model. To have a productive meeting on September 12, we would like your proposals in advance of that meeting; Beth committed to giving us some flow suggestions about Sept 5th or 6th.

Beth will get agencies together beforehand to agree on some flow scenarios.

The next meeting is 10-11:30am on Thursday September 12.

The relicensing team adjourned the meeting.