



# MEMORANDUM

EUGENE WATER & ELECTRIC BOARD

*Rely on us.*

TO: Commissioners Schlossberg, Brown, Carlson, Barofsky and McRae  
FROM: Lisa Krentz, Generation Manager, and Rod Price, Assistant General Manager  
DATE: April 23, 2021  
SUBJECT: Walterville Canal Flow Restrictions for 2021  
OBJECTIVE: Information Only

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## **Issue**

Based on below median McKenzie River summer streamflow forecasts, following a planned outage (June 5-28), EWEB will voluntarily maintain at least 10% more flow in the McKenzie Bypass of the Walterville Canal than in the canal itself through October 31, 2021.

## **Background**

In a Record of Decision implemented on January 10, 2018, General Manager, Frank Lawson formalized an operational decision regarding summer flows in the Walterville Canal, which is part of the Leaburg/Walterville Hydroelectric Project (FERC #2496). The decision states that, “In years with below median expected summer stream flows/snowpack, from May 20<sup>th</sup> through October 31<sup>st</sup>, EWEB will voluntarily adjust the power canal intake in order to maintain at least 10% more flow in the McKenzie bypass reach of the Walterville hydroelectric project than flows exiting the tailrace of the project.”

EWEB owns and operates the Walterville hydroelectric project, with a nameplate capacity of 8 MW, on the lower McKenzie River under a license issued by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission on April 27, 2000. Up to 2,577 cubic feet per second (cfs) can be diverted into the Walterville canal at the Walterville diversion under normal operations. Under the terms of the operating license, EWEB is required to maintain minimum instream flows of 1,000 cfs in the bypassed reach of the McKenzie River.

In accordance with the Record of Decision, in low flow years EWEB will adjust the flow going into the Walterville canal during the summer to maintain 10% more flow in the river than in the canal. Maintaining more flow in the river than in the canal will improve fish migration, water quality, and recreational use conditions in the bypassed reach. The primary impact to EWEB is financial through lost generation.

## **Discussion**

Based upon snowpack data and summer stream forecasts available in early-April, the McKenzie Basin is projected to experience below median stream flows during the upcoming summer. Although SnoTel data from the Natural Resources Conservation Service indicates that current snowpack in the basin is roughly 108% of median, McKenzie River streamflow forecasts for the April to September

period at Vida (the closest forecast station) are 99% of average. Considering these projections were made before April's warm temperatures, staff expect that summer flow projections will be reduced further when the May streamflow forecast is released.

Accordingly, EWEB Generation will implement the Walterville Canal flow restrictions identified in the January 2018 Record of Decision following the annual Walterville Project maintenance outage that is currently scheduled for June 5 to June 28, 2021. Through October 31, 2021, EWEB will voluntarily maintain at least 10% more flow in the McKenzie Bypass of the Walterville Canal than in the canal itself.

**Requested Board Action**

No Board Action is required. This memo is for informational purposes only.