



MEMORANDUM

EUGENE WATER & ELECTRIC BOARD

Rely on us.

TO: Commissioners Brown, Carlson, Mital, Simpson and Helgeson
FROM: Michael McCann, Generation Manager, and Susan Ackerman, Chief Energy Officer
DATE: April 18, 2018
SUBJECT: Walterville Canal Flow Restrictions for 2018
OBJECTIVE: Information Only

Issue:

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 20th through October 31st, 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.”

Background

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 in the bypassed reach of the McKenzie River of 1,000 cfs at all times.

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

Discussion

Based upon snowpack data and summer stream forecasts available in mid-April, the McKenzie Basin is projected to experience below median stream flows during the upcoming summer. NRCS SnoTel data indicates that current snowpack in the basin is roughly 74% of median. McKenzie River streamflow forecasts for the April to September period at Vida (the closest forecast station) are 86% of average.

Accordingly, EWEB Generation will implement the Walterville Canal flow restrictions identified in the January 2018 Record of Decision beginning on May 20, 2018. Through October 31, 2018, 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

This memo is for informational purposes only, no Board action is requested.