



MEMORANDUM

EUGENE WATER & ELECTRIC BOARD

Rely on us.

TO: Commissioners Carlson, Barofsky, McRae, Schlossberg and Brown
FROM: Lisa Krentz, Generation Manager
DATE: April 14, 2023 (May 2, 2023 Board Meeting)
SUBJECT: Walterville Canal Flow Restrictions for 2023
OBJECTIVE: Information

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 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 on snowpack data and summer flow forecasts available in early-April, the McKenzie Basin is projected to experience above median streamflow during the upcoming summer. Although SnoTel data from the Natural Resources Conservation Service indicates that current snowpack in the basin is roughly 96% of median, the McKenzie River streamflow forecasts for the April to September period at Vida (the closest forecast station) are 107% of median. Accordingly, EWEB Generation will not implement the Walterville Canal flow restrictions identified in the January 2018 Record of Decision on May 20th.

Requested Board Action

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