

Mystic Lake Hydroelectric Project  
Whitewater Resource Group  
Conference Call – Annual Consultation  
June 16, 2015

Participating via conference line:

NorthWestern Energy – Andy Welch  
NorthWestern Energy – Brent Mabbott  
American Whitewater – Kevin Colburn  
American Lands – Nancy Johnson  
REC Resources – Jeff Frost

USFS – Jeff Gildehaus  
USFS – James (Andy) Efta  
MFWP – Don Skaar  
DNRC – Mary Broache

The call began at 9:00 AM. Jeff Frost confirmed those participating and reviewed items to be discussed.

Jeff reviewed the Mystic Lake protocol for whitewater flow enhancement and highlighted the changes from 2014:

- Removal of a Friday reading of USGS streamflow gauge #06204050 that could trigger weekend releases when the previous Wednesday reading was greater than 400 cfs. Jeff noted the short notice and difficulty for paddlers planning a float based on a Friday gauge reading.
- Communication to paddlers of pending whitewater flow enhancements by the Beartooth Paddlers and American Whitewater, as indicated by USGS gauge readings.

Jeff noted the paddler registration cards at the Emerald Lake put-in and requested paddler participation registering for floats on release weekends. Jeff next provided background information on development of the protocol. Kevin Colburn indicated that flow enhancements are provided by NorthWestern because of the project's effect on the amount and timing of boatable flows, with minimal disruption to Mystic operations. Nancy Johnson noted the successful implementation of the protocol by Mystic plant operators over several years, with targets for whitewater flow enhancement achieved and minimum flows maintained in West Rosebud Creek following whitewater releases.

Kevin Colburn informed the group that legislation has been re-introduced in Congress that proposes East Rosebud Creek for listing as a wild and scenic river.

Jeff noted the absence of Deb Mallowney (NWE) and lack of information on the rate of refill for Mystic Lake. Andy Welch indicated that lake levels over the past 13 days have continued to increase. Jeff Gildehaus informed the group that monitoring at NRCS Snotel sites by the USFS shows snowpack levels at 65 to 70 percent of 30-year averages. Most streams are currently running bank-full with snowmelt.

With no additional information or questions from the group, the conference call ended at 9:20 AM.

Following the conference call, Deb Mallowney provided the group with the following information on snowpack levels and rate of refill for Mystic Lake:

The current (June 17) lake elevation is 7664.38 feet, which is 9.12 feet from full pool. The lake is expected to fill by the last week in June to first week in July. The snow has melted off so additional flow is dependent on precipitation. The volume runoff forecast from the NRCS for June and July is 85 percent of average. The lake inflow to date in June has been 136 percent of average (532 cfs). The inflow has declined daily since June 10. Inflow on June 16 was 415 cfs. Projections indicate that there will be a small amount to no spill this year. Of course, this could all change based on the weather.