

Hello all,

Here is a summary of key points I took away from the February 27, 2024 USACE Fort Peck Test Flow stakeholder meeting. The slides from the meeting are also attached.

- The magnitude, shape, and timing of flow and flow peaks (measured at the Wolf Point location) are the variables being controlled when comparing to previous years' natural peaks (2018 and 2023) to the test flow peaks. (slide 5)
- The current Fort Peck Reservoir elevation is 2230. The elevation needs to be at 2227 or higher to begin a test flow. (slide 8)
- With current snow-pack levels above Fort Peck being at 72% of average, it is possible a full test will not be implemented due to the Reservoir level falling below the 2227 feet elevation in June. (slide 8)
- They will have a much better idea by the second week in April, based on updated snow-pack levels and runoff, if the test flow will not be implemented, be partially implemented, or fully implemented. (slide 8)
- The Annual Operating Plan meeting is scheduled for the afternoon of March 28 in Fort Peck. Official information will be coming out in the next week or so.
- There are 5 additional monitoring efforts, other than the pallid sturgeon monitoring, that are being done or coordinated by the USACE. (slide 13-18)
 - Aerial Photography/ Lidar
 - Physical Surveys
 - Need assistance in reaching out to private landowners for okaying monitoring efforts on some of the pump sites.
 - Cultural Resource Monitoring
 - Dam Safety Monitoring
 - Water Quality Monitoring
- Currently, there is not a monitoring effort set up for after the peak flow in July.
- The USACE is adding a larval drift study to coincide with the test flow using 1-day old pallid sturgeon fry's being released just below the dam. (slide 20)
 - Information gathered from this drift study probably won't be available till late fall.
 - Can genetically sample if pallid sturgeon are hatchery origin or wild origin to know if there is natural recruitment or not in addition to released larvae that may survive.
- As a follow-up to the meeting, I emailed Joe Bonneau with the USACE and he has MRCD's May 21 Quarterly Meeting in Sidney on his calendar.