2006 Water Flow Management Plan at Francis Walter Dam

The Army Corps of Engineers and its agency partners are to be congratulated for addressing in a very meaningful way those issues identified over the course of the last year that will have a real impact on the success of the 2006 water augmentation plan. As the boating and fishing seasons approach, we offer below several suggestions aimed not at amending the purpose, focus, or objectives of the plan, but only at enhancing the plan's reliability during the coming year.

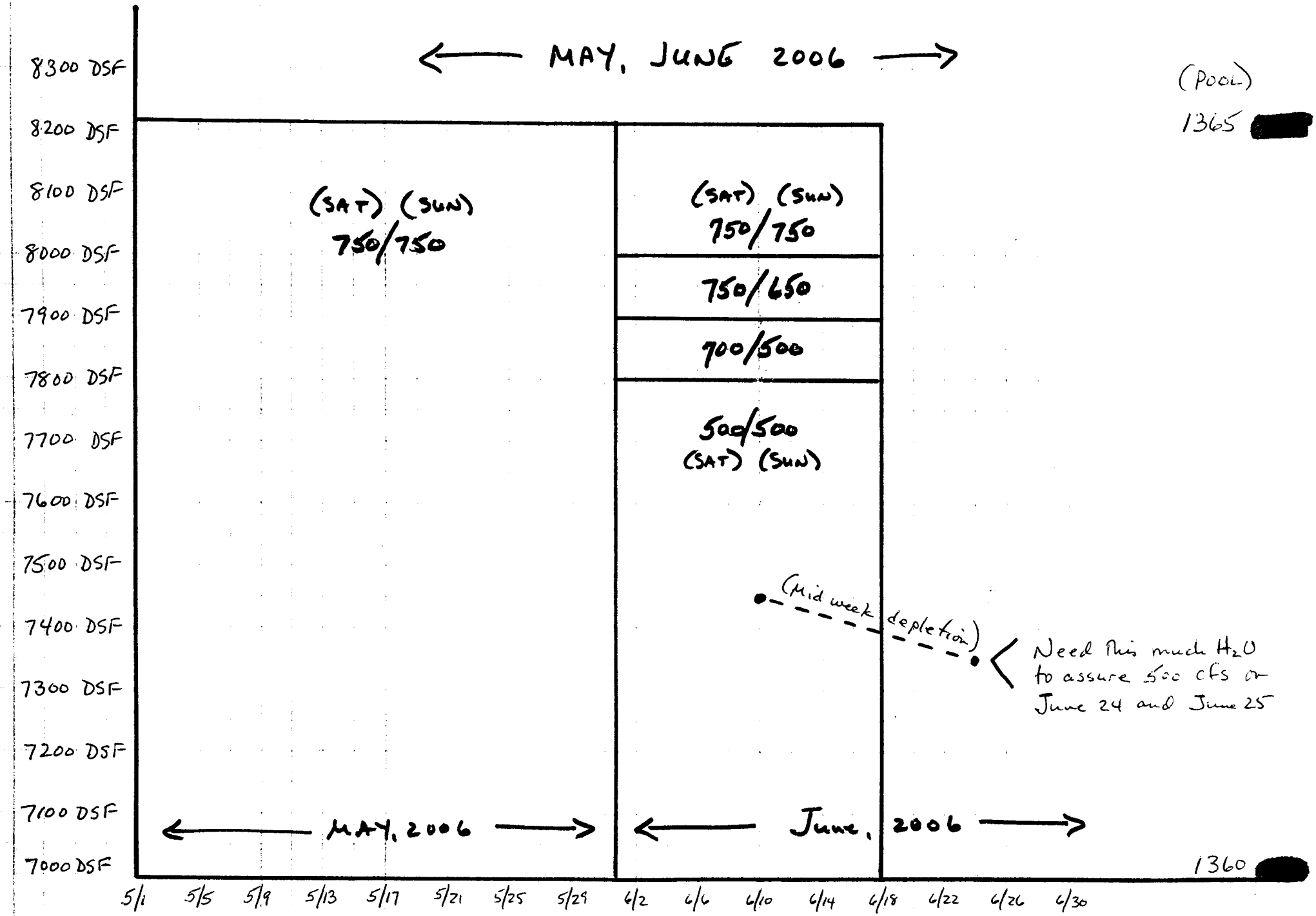
Suggestion #1: During the June 10-11 whitewater release, be willing to release less than the target 750 cfs each day, if by doing so, the prospect for maintaining mid-week fishing and June 24-25 boating releases can more likely be achieved. (See attached May/June chart for suggested guidelines and thresholds that might be appropriate.)

Suggestion #2: Begin collecting water earlier than April 1 ... especially in a year like this one, when there is little or no snow pack, and when much or all of the collected water will necessarily come from rain events during the collection period. To offset concerns about gathering too much water too soon, set maximum thresholds during March, such as: pool elevation up to not more than 1310 on March 7; not more than 1320 on March 15; etc. One of the lessons of 2005 was the reminder that very wet conditions can, in a matter of a few days, turn to very dry conditions, with river flows dropping dramatically over a very short period of time. Given the rather dramatic implications to the proposed program that would result from failing to meet the target pool elevation of 1365 by May 12, every effort should be made to assure that early water is retained in amounts and at times certain to achieve the May 12 requirement.

Suggestion #3: Confirm that the release of water from Francis Walter Dam on non-whitewater weekends during May and June will equal inflow at the dam (up to 1,000 cfs).

Suggestion #4: Define what happens to the plan in the event that 1365 is not achieved by the target date of May 12. For example, specify that collection will or will not continue, and how it will be structured so as to minimize the impact on weekend boating during the balance of May and June. (These are, and will remain, hugely important weekends for boating). On those weekends, would outflow equal inflow? Up to 750 cfs? Would amounts in excess of that be collected? On weekdays in May and June, would outflow equal inflow? Up to 250 cfs? And would amounts in excess of that be collected? Or, would maximum collection efforts span across May and June weekends rendering those weekends unboatable? And if so, until what elevation is reached? 1361? 1362? 1365? (Again, we reiterate the importance of earlier collection of water to avoid any possibility of having to deal with the questions raised by Suggestion #4.

Suggestion #5: Before any whitewater day is canceled, consider a shortened (6- to 7-hour?) release beginning in the early morning, to salvage the whitewater section of the river for those who profoundly prefer it.


← MAY, JUNE 2006 →
(POOL)
1365
8300 DSF
8200 DSF
8100 DSF
8000 DSF
7900 DSF
7800 DSF
7700 DSF
7600 DSF
7500 DSF
7400 DSF
7300 DSF
7200 DSF
7100 DSF
7000 DSF
(SAT) (SUN)
750/750
(SAT) (SUN)
750/750
750/650
700/500
500/500
(SAT) (SUN)
(Mid week depletion)
Need this much H2O to assure 500 cfs on June 24 and June 25
← MAY, 2006 →
← June, 2006 →
1360
5/1
5/5
5/9
5/13
5/17
5/21
5/25
5/29
6/2
6/6
6/10
6/14
6/18
6/22
6/26
6/30