

140 FERC ¶ 62,092
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION

Public Utility District No. 1 of Chelan County,
Washington

Project No. 2145-107

ORDER APPROVING REVISED WILDLIFE HABITAT MANAGEMENT PLAN
UNDER ARTICLE 403

(Issued July 31, 2012)

1. On March 19, 2012, Public Utility District No. 1 of Chelan County, Washington (licensee) filed revisions to its approved wildlife habitat management plan (plan)¹, for the Rocky Reach Hydroelectric Project. The licensee states that the revisions are needed because of a wildfire and subsequent mudslide that occurred on lands that were slated for certain habitat restoration measures under the original plan. The project is located on the mid-Columbia River, in portions of Grant, Yakima, Kittitas, Douglas, Benton and Chelan Counties, Washington, and it occupies about 3,052 acres of federal land managed by the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation), the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the U.S. Department of the Army (Army), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), and the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE).
2. The wildlife habitat management plan approved under article 403 includes a provision for contingency projects in case factors such as wildfire and weather prevent completion of the originally-proposed measures, in accordance with the Rocky Reach Wildlife Forum (RRWF), and with Commission approval.
3. Contingency projects on BLM-administered lands are proposed in the following areas: Azwell (approximately 686 acres); Chelan Butte (approximately 3,334 acres); and Swakane (approximately 2,436 acres). In the Azwell area, approximately 473 acres will be planted with containerized native shrubs and a spring will be developed to provide water for mule deer and bighorn sheep. In the Chelan area, approximately 21 acres of agricultural land will be restored to native shrub-steppe plant communities and in the long term (not during the first five years), bitterbrush and other native browse species may be planted on 244 acres. Lastly, fire rehabilitation treatment, including planting containerized native shrubs and grasses on approximately 500 acres, and the development of a spring near Tenas George Canyon and Swakane Creek will occur in the Swakane area. Noxious weed control will occur in all three areas. The licensee

¹ The Order Approving Wildlife Habitat Management Plan Pursuant to Article 403 was issued on September 22, 2010 (132 FERC ¶ 62,179).

provided the proposed revisions to the RRWF on March 6, 2012, and the contingency measures were approved at the RRWF meeting on March 15, 2012.

4. The licensee's proposed revisions to the wildlife habitat management plan will address habitat issues caused by recent wildfires, such as burned areas that no longer support native trees and shrubs and being invaded by exotic species. The revisions are consistent with the allowance for contingency projects included in the original plan in case factors such as wildfire and weather prevented implementation of other measures. Therefore, the revisions to the plan should be approved.

The Director orders:

(A) The revisions to the wildlife habitat management plan, filed March 19, 2012, pursuant to article 403 of the license for the Rocky Reach Hydroelectric Project No. 2145, are approved.

(B) This order constitutes final agency action. Requests for rehearing by the Commission may be filed within 30 days of the date of issuance, as provided in section 313(a) of the FPA, 16 U.S.C. § 8251 (2006), and the Commission's regulations at 18 C.F.R. § 385.713 (2012). The filing of a request for rehearing does not operate as a stay of the effective date of this order, or of any other date specified in this order. The licensee's failure to file a request for rehearing shall constitute acceptance of this order.

Robert J. Fletcher
Chief, Land Resources Branch
Division of Hydropower
Administration and Compliance