

# **R** *Chelan County PUD* RELICENSING UPDATE

*Quarterly information about the relicensing of the Lake Chelan and Rocky Reach Hydroelectric Projects*

## **LAKE CHELAN HYDRO PROJECT**

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### *Working Groups Finalize Study Plans - Field Work Begins*

Stage two of the relicensing process began this spring as working group members finalized study plans and began implementation of field work. For many studies, the field season began in April as temperatures warmed and the lake level was drawn down by the PUD in anticipation of melting snowpack and tributary inflows. The relicensing team will take advantage of the lower lake level to perform studies along the shoreline and in the Chelan River Gorge.

Resource agencies and the public will have an opportunity to comment and make recommendations concerning the completed studies. Most studies will be completed during 1999. Study plans are located on the relicensing web site ([www.chelanpud.org](http://www.chelanpud.org)) or by contacting Rosana Sokolowski at (509) 663-8121. A draft Environmental Assessment and draft license application will be issued in April 2001, along with any settlements with interested parties that define proposed terms and conditions of the new license. The final application will be submitted to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission on March 20, 2002.

The following describes the objectives of eight primary study plans and associated field work.

**Water Quality:** (*Relicensing Team facilitators: Jim Huffman and Jim Wall*) The water quality monitoring study will determine the effects of Project operations on: 1) lake water quality; 2) Chelan River water quality; and 3) tailrace (powerhouse discharge) water quality. The objective is to maintain the water quality of the lake at, or near, its present state while providing for population growth and increases in tourism and recreational uses of the lake. The plan dovetails the Lake Chelan Water Quality Committee's study. Field work begins in April 1999. Information will also be compiled from existing Department of Ecology studies, water quality monitoring and sampling work.

**Fisheries:** (*Relicensing Team facilitator: Jeff Osborn*)

The fishery investigation will: 1) evaluate the effect of Project operations and lake level fluctuations on fish spawning in tributaries and on the lake's sport fishery; 2) assess hatchery stocked fish contributions to the lake sport fishing; and 3) determine the potential use of hatcheries to supplement existing fish populations in the lake.

Tributary inspections and a creel survey began in mid-April.

**Wildlife and Botanical:** (*Relicensing Team facilitators: Paul Fielder and Jeff Osborn*)

The goal of the wildlife investigation is to: 1) summarize existing wildlife information; 2) review current wildlife investigations and management activities; and 3) determine which activities should continue in the future license term. Big game surveys will be conducted through 1999. In addition, a botanical study will identify occurrences of rare plant species and provide management and enhancement recommendations. A third study will investigate the presence of threatened or endangered riparian habitat, plants and wildlife species (bats, reptiles and birds for example.) Studies related to the riparian habitat investigation will begin in May 1999.

**Recreation and Aesthetics:** (*Relicensing Team facilitator: Greg Jones*)

The recreation and aesthetics study will help define public recreational uses of Lake Chelan and develop a concept for coordinated development and utilization of the lake's recreational resources. The study will focus on Project-related impacts to recreation and address those impacts. The results will be summarized in a Comprehensive Recreation Plan for Lake Chelan. A recreational use survey that began during 1998 will continue through the spring of 1999.

**Land Management and Socioeconomics:** (*Relicensing Team facilitator: Gregg Carrington*) A socioeconomic study will identify factors that influence tourism and recreation, agriculture, and private and commercial development in the Lake Chelan area and will estimate the impact of project operations on these resources. Consultant BST Associates of Bothell, developed the study plan that will also determine Project-related (*cont. page 2*)

economic impacts on the region such as power rates. In addition, the land management study will provide an overview of existing land management plans for the Lake Chelan basin to assure that collaborative decisions are being made. Work associated with both studies will begin during April 1999.

**Cultural and Historical:** (*Relicensing Team facilitator: Scott Kreiter*) The goal of this study is to identify cultural resource areas recognized by multiple groups as important to their history. The cultural resources plan, which consists of a literature review, consultation process, and field study to inventory cultural/historical sites, began late March 1999.

**Erosion Control:** (*Relicensing Team facilitator: Gene Yow*) The erosion control study addresses past erosion control efforts and evaluates areas impacted by erosion along the lake and in the Chelan River Gorge. The study involves mapping sites using Global Positioning System equipment and evaluating control measures where erosion control appears critical. Field work began in mid-April 1999.

**Lake Level Investigation:** (*Relicensing Team facilitators: Gregg Carrington and Gene Yow*) This study is basically a desktop application. An operations model will analyze the effects of lake levels based on the decisions of the other studies. There is no field work associated with this investigation.

*Relicensing team members will be working on field studies during April and May. The next Lake Chelan public/agency meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 23 beginning at 10 a.m. at Campbell's Resort in Chelan.*

## ROCKY REACH HYDRO PROJECT

### *Issue Identification Begins For Rocky Reach*

A March 25 public meeting marked the official kick-off for relicensing the Rocky Reach Project. During the meeting, held in the Chelan County PUD auditorium, relicensing team members reviewed the proposed relicensing method, schedule and communication guidelines. In addition, individuals attending the meeting were able to take part in developing a list of potential environmental issues associated with the Project. Issues identified pertained to land management, water quality, fisheries, recreation, wildlife, historical and cultural resources, shoreline vegetation and socioeconomic resource areas.

Development of a preliminary list of issues will continue through May 1999.

**A second meeting to review the Rocky Reach relicensing process and identify environmental issues is scheduled for the evening of Tuesday, April 27, from 6–9 p.m. in the Chelan County PUD auditorium in Wenatchee. The public is invited to attend the meeting.**

The PUD encourages community participation throughout the relicensing process. Issues or concerns should be brought to the attention of Gregg Carrington, Chelan County PUD, 327 N. Wenatchee Avenue, Wenatchee, WA 98801. Anyone interested in obtaining more information regarding relicensing or upcoming meetings can do so by contacting Michelle Smith at Chelan County PUD, (509) 663-8121, toll free in Washington at 888-663-8121. All documents and meeting schedules are available by visiting our web site at [www.chelanpud.org](http://www.chelanpud.org).

## Rocky Reach Hydro Project Relicensing Timeline

### 1999 Monthly Meetings

Generally, Rocky Reach meetings will be held on the fourth Thursday of each month in the Chelan County PUD auditorium in Wenatchee, 9a.m.–4 p.m. Tentative dates include: May 27, June 24, July 29, Aug 26, Sept 23, Oct 28, Nov 18, and Dec 16.

*Please refer to the relicensing web site or call Rosana Sokolowski at (509) 663-8121 to confirm meeting dates.*

### Long-term Schedule

#### Jan–April 1999

Discuss process and schedule with interested parties

#### March–Dec 1999

Identify issues (environmental and social effects) associated with the Hydro Project (issue identification meetings held on March 25 and April 27)

#### April–Dec 1999

Work with interested parties to determine resource goals and objectives

#### April 1999–Jan 2002

Prepare study plans to address identified issues

#### 2000–2002

Conduct studies

#### 2003

Develop license application, environmental assessment and settlement agreements

#### June 2004

Submit final license application, environmental assessment and settlement agreements to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC)

#### 2006

New license issued

## *The Forest Service*

The Forest Service mission statement carries a strong message, “Caring for the Land and Serving People.” A federal agency, the Forest Service was established in 1905 by Congress to improve and protect the forest, provide quality water and produce a continuous supply of timber. Today, the Forest Service mission can best be described as sustaining the health, productivity and diversity of the land to meet the needs of present and future generations.

The National Forest System covers over 191 million acres. The Forest Service offices are organized into four levels—ranger district, national forest, region, and the national office in Washington, D.C. Each level has a line officer in charge of administration for that unit.

A national forest is composed of several ranger districts. For example, the 2.2 million acre Wenatchee National Forest includes the Chelan, Entiat, Leavenworth, Lake Wenatchee, Cle Elum and Naches Ranger Districts. A district ranger is often the public point of contact. District employees carry out many activities including trail construction and maintenance, operation of campgrounds, and management of vegetation and wildlife and fish habitat. A forest supervisor assures that activities are coordinated between the districts and provides oversight for the entire forest. Forest supervisors report to a regional forester.

At the national level, Chief Mike Dombeck oversees the entire Forest Service. Dombeck reports to the UnderSecretary for Natural Resources and Environment in the US Department of Agriculture.

Dombeck has developed a national resource agenda for the Forest Service that includes: watershed health and restoration, sustainable forest ecosystem management, managing forest roads and recreation.

To assure that relicensing planning for a hydro project is consistent with Forest Service land management resource objectives, the Forest Service formed a network of individuals and teams that are involved with relicensing activities.

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*“Participation in the hydroelectric relicensing process is a priority at all levels of the Forest Service.”—Forest FERC Coordinator Glenn Hoffman*

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In the Pacific Northwest, the regional office in Portland is responsible for all National Forest lands located in

Washington and Oregon. The regional forester is the responsible official for deciding terms and conditions attached by the Forest Service to a new hydro license.

In addition, a relicensing interdisciplinary team allocates time and resources for relicensing processes associated with projects located on or near Wenatchee National Forest lands, including Lake Chelan and Rocky Reach. A Board of

Directors reports to Wenatchee Forest Supervisor Sonny O’Neal. Board members include: Al Murphy, Karin Whitehall, Bob Sheehan, and Glenn Hoffman.

With local, regional and national offices, how does the Forest Service manage communications and coordinate activities? “We use e-mail a lot,” says FERC Coordinator Glenn Hoffman. “And, depending on the need we may set up conference calls, schedule group/interdisciplinary meetings, or meet one-on-one.” Hoffman says, “Participation in the hydroelectric relicensing process is a priority at all levels of the Forest Service. Those of us on the Wenatchee Forest working on the relicensing effort live in the local area and understand the importance of hydropower. We will continue to work very closely with the Chelan PUD

and all stakeholders to assure that National Forest lands are adequately protected and utilized through this relicensing process.”

### **Forest Service staff working on relicensing of hydro projects involving Wenatchee National Forest lands**

#### *Regional Forester:*

Robert Williams (Portland)

#### *Wenatchee Forest:*

Sonny O’Neal, Forest Supervisor

Al Murphy, District Ranger, Chelan

Karin Whitehall, District Ranger, Entiat

Glenn Hoffman, Forest FERC Coordinator

Alex Martinez, Relicensing Team Leader

Phil Archibald, Fish Biologist, Entiat

Rick Edwards, Hydrologist, Entiat

Joe Kastenholtz, Wildlife Biologist, Chelan

Barbara Jackson, Landscape Architect

Ann Fink, Archaeologist

Rick Acosta, District Representative, Chelan



*An eight-year veteran of the Forest Service, Fish Biologist Phil Archibald discusses fish productivity in Lake Chelan at a fisheries working group meeting in Chelan.*

(photo by Richard Uhlhorn)

## GET TO KNOW THE RELICENSING TEAM

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### *Michelle McGoraty-Smith, Corporate Communications Specialist*

Smith's role in the relicensing process involves overseeing external and internal communications. For the Lake Chelan and Rocky Reach hydro

projects her work includes managing communications between the PUD and over 500 agency and public stakeholders participating in the relicensing process. "The District realizes that effective communication is essential to the success of the relicensing process," says Smith. "We are a public utility and public participation is vital. My goal is to make the relicensing process as understandable as possible and provide a variety of opportunities for people to be involved." Her responsibilities include the relicensing web site, news releases, newsletters, presentations, advertising, communications plans and protocol, and public correspondence. In addition to relicensing work, she also handles the District's logo identity program, assists with annual report production, and provides graphic, writing and editing assistance for the Corporate Communications Department.

Smith began working for the District in 1992. She has worked as Communications Specialist in the Public Relations Department for nearly five years. Her degree, which came from both the University of Wisconsin in Madison and Seattle University, is in journalism. Her career has included working for the Wisconsin State Journal/Capital Times in Madison, the Associated Press in Seattle, and the Seattle Times. Her love of and talent in computer graphics later landed her a job as the advertising and public relations manager for WestCoast Hotels, Inc. in Seattle. Smith is a past board member for the Washington State Apple Blossom Festival in Wenatchee, where she was in charge of coordinating the Arts and Crafts Fair. She and her husband Terry have two daughters, McKenna and Madison.



## QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS?

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Your comments are welcome. Your written comment, question, concern or position on a topic or issue can be mailed to Michelle Smith, Chelan County PUD, 327 North Wenatchee Avenue, Wenatchee, WA, 98801, e-mail [michelle@chelanpud.org](mailto:michelle@chelanpud.org), or call toll-free in WA (888) 663-8121.



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Wenatchee, WA 98807-1231  
To be added to the mailing list contact  
Rosana Sokolowski, Relicensing Coordinator  
at the address above.