

FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION  
Washington, D. C. 20426

OFFICE OF ENERGY PROJECTS

Project No. 637-095--Washington  
Lake Chelan Hydroelectric Project  
Public Utility District No.1 of Chelan County

**September 19, 2013**

Ms. Michelle Smith  
Licensing & Compliance Manager  
Public Utility District No. 1 of Chelan County  
P.O. Box 1231  
Wenatchee, WA 98807-1231

Subject: Ramping Rate and Minimum Flow Deviations, Article 405

Dear Ms. Smith:

We received your letter filed June 3, 2013, reporting ramping rate and minimum instream flow deviations which occurred on May 2, 2013, at the Lake Chelan Hydroelectric Project No. 637. The report was filed under Article 405 of the license<sup>1</sup> and the approved Operations Compliance and Monitoring Plan (Plan).<sup>2</sup>

**Requirements**

Article 405 of the license requires you to implement a Plan that describes how you will comply with the instream flows, ramping rates, and tailrace flows, as set forth in Article 7 of the Lake Chelan Settlement Agreement (Agreement), and Chapter 7 of the Comprehensive Plan attached to the Agreement. Under the Agreement, you are required to maintain a minimum flow requirement of 320 cubic feet per second (cfs) into the Chelan River Reach 4 from March 15 through May 15, for steelhead spawning.

In addition, the Plan requires you to notify the Washington Department of Ecology and the Commission within 48 hours after you become aware of any deviation from the minimum flow requirements. You are also required to file a report with the Commission within 30 days of any deviation from minimum flow requirements, lake levels or ramping rates.

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<sup>1</sup> *Public Utility District No. 1 of Chelan County*, 117 FERC ¶ 62,129 (2006).

<sup>2</sup> *Public Utility District No. 1 of Chelan County*, 121 FERC ¶ 62,152 (2007).

**Deviation**

You reported that at around 12:53 p.m., on May 2, 2013, one of the five pumps that delivered water from the project tailrace to the habitat channel (Channel) tripped off-line, reducing flows from the required 320 cfs to approximately 270 cfs. Water was immediately released from the low level outlet (Outlet) at the project dam to make up the difference. After the pump failed, the surface water elevation in the Channel dropped 4.25 inches, based on water level monitoring in the pool at the pump station. Subsequently, ramping rates were set at approximately 2 inches per hour during the period when fry might be present. The released water from the Outlet reached the Channel approximately 3 hours later, and water levels in the Channel returned to the previous levels by 4:30 p.m.

**Review**

You also reported that at the time of the incident, the licensee, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, and Washington Department Ecology biologists were in the habitat channel conducting depth and velocity transect studies. They observed what appeared to be a 4-inch to 5-inch drop in surface water elevation in the channel after the pump failed. While numerous Chinook fry were rearing in the channel, none were observed stranded due to the drop in water elevation. In addition, the pump would be repaired during its regular maintenance period, and would not resume operation until October 15, 2013.

To meet the 48-hour-notification requirement, you reported the May 2 incident to the Commission and Washington Department of Ecology on May 3, 2013. The pump's trip was caused by an operating emergency due to water leaking past the seal into the pump, which was beyond your control. You took immediate corrective action and restored the flow in a timely manner. No adverse biological impacts were observed as a result of the incident. Your filing fulfills the reporting requirements of Article 405 of the license and the approved Plan.

Thank you for your cooperation. If you have any questions concerning this letter, please contact Jake Tung at (202) 502-8757, or hong.tung@ferc.gov.

Sincerely,

Kelly Houff  
Chief, Engineering Resources Branch  
Division of Hydropower Administration  
and Compliance