

Packwood Lake Hydroelectric Project
Water Quality and Aquatic Resources Committee
August 22, 2006
Meeting Summary¹

Presentations

There were no formal presentations at this meeting.

Handout

There were no handouts, however the Draft, Packwood Lake Drawdown Study, Draft Report (90% Completion) that was discussed is available through the website at: <http://www.energy-northwest.com/downloads/gen/packwood/relicensing/Packwood%20drawdown%20report%20-%20Interim%20Report%20-%20Aug%202006.pdf>

Summary of Discussions

Kent Doughty, EES Consulting, presented an overview on the study results for bathymetric mapping and shoreline erosion, and reviewed wetlands hydrology results that were discussed at the May meeting. The new piezometer had been installed in the perched layer at the Upper Lake Creek wetlands area. Vegetative mapping will provide additional information on wetland condition and function. The need to determine the extent of the perched layer was discussed. In addition to providing results from the second drawdown season, work remaining for this study includes functional assessment of the wetlands and data analysis of that component, and generating exceedence curves that show the proportion of time that the lake surface is at or above various elevations.

Dan Ross, Energy Northwest provided a status update on the design for the permanent barrier. HDR FishPro was selected to prepare the design documents. They will be providing Energy Northwest with conceptual designs the week of August 21, and will be ready to discuss preliminary design options with the agencies and tribes in mid-September, after which design drawings will be prepared. Submittal of a package to FERC is expected early next year, and if all approvals are received, the barrier will be installed in October 2007. A question arose on whether Energy Northwest could conduct Section 7 consultations. Energy Northwest was designated for the Integrated Licensing Process, and will check with FERC to determine if that designation could be used for the barrier.

John Blum, EES Consulting reviewed the August 19 seining of the stilling basin. The night before, EES Consulting reviewed release sites, and determined that Lake Creek would not be available or feasible. John Blum and John Serl reviewed release sites on Saturday morning, and decided to release at the Skate Creek bridge area; near where fish from the lower dams are released. It appears that snorkeling has been effective; snorkeling results were consistent with what was captured. Two large adults were captured, a 20-25 pound buck Chinook and a 15

¹ These meeting summary notes are not verbatim. They do not reflect formal decisions by Energy Northwest, any agency, tribe, non-governmental organization, or interested stakeholder.

pound female. Over 600 fish were captured in two passes. Juvenile Chinook were captured, as well as juvenile coho, trout, and suckers. The reason only two passes were conducted was the difficulty in capturing the large Chinook, and the need to get the fish to the release point. For the fish rescue plan, statements will be added for snorkeling before seining and that a minimum of two passes be conducted, preferably three. Because of the difficulties getting the adult Chinooks, a discussion was held on techniques that could be used including a gill net. Committee members indicated that there may be more effective methods, and were not in favor in using gill nets.

Dan Ross discussed the supplemental water that was provided after the seining was completed. The tailrace was allowed to drain, and then supplemental water was started. There was about 6 inches of water at the stilling basin bridge, but only about 2 inches of water at the Riffe Bridge. Because of an error in communication, no formal fish rescue was conducted in the tailrace; however, Energy Northwest did not observe any adults.

A question was asked about erosion at the lake and cultural resource protection. This will be addressed in the Historic Properties Management Plan that will be out in draft sometime in October.

Laura Schinnell provided a status update on the studies, and a schedule of when study plan reports should be available. Preferences on the date to hold the first study plan report meeting were discussed, and October 3 was selected. Studies that will be discussed include water quality, cultural resources, lake drawdown, engineering study related to barrier replacement, and stream connectivity. The rest of the studies will be discussed at the December study plan report meeting. Energy Northwest expects that discussions leading to Energy Northwest's preliminary license proposal will begin in February or March. Energy Northwest has asked EES Consulting to try and get all draft study reports completed by next June. The preliminary license proposal is due on October 1, 2007 and the license application is due by February 28, 2008.

Actions from the Meeting

- Laura will check with FERC on designation for Section 7 consultation for the fish barrier. (Note: FERC advises that the designation is general enough that it does apply to the fish barrier.)
- Laura will send the latest spreadsheets on when study reports are expected, and the ILP schedule to agencies and the tribes.
- John Blum will prepare a final version of the Fish Rescue Plan adding the statements on snorkeling and seining passes, and data obtained from supplemental water testing.

Tentative Dates for Meetings

The tentative date for the meeting to discuss preliminary fish barrier designs is September 19 at Ecology. (Note: this has been confirmed. The meeting will be at Ecology starting at 1:00 p.m. A meeting notice will be sent once the room number is provided.)

The tentative date for the October study plan report meeting is October 3, pending FERC staff availability. (Note: this has been confirmed. The meeting will be held at the Lacey Public Library starting at Noon.)

Attendance

Laura Schinnell, Energy Northwest
Gary Sprague, WDFW
Ruth Tracy, GPNF
Karen Thompson, GPNF/Cowlitz Valley Ranger District
John Blum, EES Consulting
Kent Dought, EES Consulting
Deb Cornett, Ecology
Brian Peck, USFWS
Dan Ross, Energy Northwest
Cliff Casseseka, Yakama Nation

Via phone:

Ken Wieman, GPNF
Blane Bellerud, NOAA Fisheries