

CONDIT DAM REMOVAL DRAFT SECOND SUPPLEMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

This report is available on the Department of Ecology Web site at:
<http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wr/cwp/condit.html>

For a CD or printed copy of this report contact:

Derek Sandison
Department of Ecology
303 South Mission Street, Suite 200
Wenatchee WA 98801
Phone (509) 457-7120

Refer to Publication number 09-12-008

If you need this publication in an alternate format, please contact Tim Schlender in Ecology's Shorelands and Environmental Assistance Program at (360) 407-6096. Persons with hearing loss can call 711 for Washington Relay Service. Persons with a speech disability can call (877) 833-6341.

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STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY

303 S Mission St, Ste 200 • Wenatchee, WA 98801-6142 • (509) 662-0500

June 4, 2009

Dear interested parties:

The Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) has prepared and issued this Draft Second Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) in accordance with the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) for the Condit Dam Removal Project. The project involves a proposal by PacifiCorp to remove the Condit Hydroelectric Project on the White Salmon River, a tributary of the Columbia River.

Ecology previously conducted environmental review of the project comparing the effects of continued operation of the dam (the no-action alternative) with the removal of the dam (proposed action). This process culminated with a Final SEIS published in March 2007. The Final SEIS supplemented earlier National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) environmental impact statements (EISs) produced by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) in 1996 and 2002.

After the SEPA Final SEIS was published, additional sediment sampling found mercury levels in Northwestern Lake sediment that exceed screening criteria. Ecology determined that these findings warranted additional environmental review under SEPA. Thus, a second SEIS is being prepared. In addition to addressing the sediment issue, this Draft Second SEIS addresses a change in the proposed location for disposal of concrete from the dam.

The public comment period on the Draft Second SEIS closes July 20, 2009. Written comments can be provided to the SEPA Responsible Official at the following address:

Derek Sandison
Department of Ecology
303 S. Mission St. Suite 200
Wenatchee, WA 98801

or emailed to dsan461@ecy.wa.gov (Please use the following in the subject line: ("Condit Dam Draft SEIS Comments")). Comments received will be considered by Ecology as the department prepares the Final Second SEIS for the project. Thank you for your interest in this project.

Sincerely yours,

Derek I. Sandison
Director, Office of Columbia River
SEPA Responsible Official



Fact Sheet

Project Title

Condit Dam Removal

Proponent

PacifiCorp
825 NE Multnomah Street, Suite 1500
Portland, Oregon 97232-2135

Proposed Action

PacifiCorp proposes to remove the Condit Hydroelectric Project on the White Salmon River in accordance with the Condit Hydroelectric Project Settlement Agreement, as amended in 2005. Removal of the project would enable the river and watershed to return to the conditions of a free-flowing river. Originally completed in 1913, Condit Dam has since accumulated sediment and blocked fish passage. Removing the dam is expected to provide access to as much as 32.4 miles of river and tributary habitat for anadromous steelhead and salmon, and restore connectivity to foraging, spawning, rearing, and overwintering habitat for bull trout in the lower White Salmon River. The removal also would restore natural bed load movement processes in the river. Combined with a stable and natural flow regime, dam removal would result in increased salmonid (steelhead, salmon, and bull trout) production potential.

The proposed action includes draining the reservoir through a tunnel that would be constructed through the dam, removing the dam, removing the wood stave pipeline, the surge tower and the two penstocks, and filling in the tail race at the power house. Concrete from the dam would be disposed of on property near the dam.

Previous National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) environmental impact statements were prepared by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), but were found by the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) to not adequately cover all State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) issues. Ecology issued a Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) to address the environmental impacts of removal of the Condit Dam, which was prepared pursuant to SEPA. The Final SEPA SEIS evaluated one alternative: the proposed action to remove the Condit Dam and associated facilities.

Ecology elected to issue this Draft Second Supplemental EIS because of the discovery that mercury concentrations in the sediments in Northwestern Lake were higher than originally thought and because of changes in the location of concrete disposal.

Lead Agency Information

Responsible Official and Contact: Derek Sandison
Washington State Department of Ecology
303 S.Mission St., Suite 200
Wenatchee, WA 98801
(509) 457-7120

Permits, Certifications, and Licenses, and Other Required Actions or Approvals

Clean Water Act Section 404 permit from the US Army Corps of Engineers

Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification from Ecology

Construction Stormwater General National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit

The Federal Power Act would preempt state and local permits, (see FERC's May 18, 2006 declaratory order) except laws adjudicating proprietary water rights. It does not prevent FERC from ordering PacifiCorp to implement decommissioning requirements proposed by state and local agencies, including those for state permits or permits from Klickitat or Skamania County.

Date of Issue of Draft SEPA SEIS

September 30, 2005

Date of Issue of Final SEPA SEIS

March 23, 2007

Date of Issue of Draft Supplement to Final SEPA SEIS

June 4, 2009

Comments on the Draft EIS

In accordance with WAC 197-11-455, persons or agencies shall have 45 days (including a 15-day automatic extension) from the date of issue to review and comment on the Draft Second Supplemental EIS. Comments must be postmarked or received by the Responsible Official no later than July 20, 2009.

Written comments may be sent to:

Derek Sandison
SEPA Responsible Official
Department of Ecology
303 S.Mission St., Suite 200
Wenatchee, WA 98801

or e-mailed to dsan461@ecy.wa.gov (please include “Condit Dam Draft 2nd SEIS Comments” in the subject line).

Document Availability

Information regarding the availability of this Draft Supplement to the Final SEPA SEIS will appear in the Goldendale Sentinel and the White Salmon Enterprise newspapers. The Draft Supplement to the Final SEPA SEIS can be viewed online at <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wr/cwp/condit.html>. Hard copies of the Draft Supplement to the Final SEPA SEIS can be obtained at a cost of \$20 per copy. The Draft Supplement to the Final SEPA SEIS is also available on CD at no charge. Hard copies or CDs can be obtained by contacting Derek Sandison. Please specify the desired format. **Persons with disabilities may request this information be prepared and supplied in alternative formats.**

Copies of the Draft Supplement to the Final SEPA SEIS can be reviewed at Ecology’s Central Regional Office, 15 W Yakima Avenue, Suite 200, Yakima, Washington or at the following libraries:

White Salmon Valley Community Library
#5 Town & Country Square
White Salmon, WA
98672

Goldendale Community Library
131 West Burgen
Goldendale, WA
98620

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Supplemental Documents

Supplemental documents can be found on the CD inside the back cover of this document.

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AR	access road
BMP	best management practice
Ecology	Washington State Department of Ecology
EIS	environmental impact statement
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
FERC	Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
LCR	Lower Columbia River
LOS	level of service
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NTU	nephelometric turbidity unit
ppm	parts per million
RM	river mile
SA	staging area
SEIS	Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement
SEPA	State Environmental Policy Act
SR	State Route
TSS	total suspended solids
WAC	Washington Administrative Code