Wanapum Dam Impact on Irrigators

March 10, 2014
Briefing Purpose

• Background and Update on Wanapum Dam situation
• Possible impacts to Agriculture and Irrigators
• Invitation to March 13 Meeting
• Washington State support for Irrigation Contingency Planning
Overview & Update

• Wanapum drawdown began Feb. 27
• Rock Island generation stopped March 3
  – Rock Island reservoir dropped to 605 feet (above sea level)
• Rock Island reservoir level increased to 609 March 8, generation restarted
• Addressing various issues based on the current conditions (fish passage, irrigation, recreation)
Wanapum Drawdown Response

FCRPS, Canadian, and Non-Federal Hydro Plant Elevations
(Does not include Willamette, Rogue, & Yakima Basins)
Collaboration

- Chelan County PUD
- Grant County PUD
- Douglas County PUD
- Bonneville Power Administration
- Mid-C Hourly Coordination
- U.S. Corps of Engineers (Chief Joseph Dam)
- U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Grand Coulee Dam)
- WA State Department of Ecology
- WA State Department of Fish and Wildlife
- WA State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation
Rock Island Reservoir Level

- Normal operating range is 612 – 613
- FERC license normal operating range is 609-613
- Majority of irrigation intakes are in the water at these levels
  - We are learning about elevations of the withdrawals
River Level Uncertainties

• Coordination with Grant County PUD for Rock Island tailrace elevation
• Coordination upriver with Federal agencies and Douglas County PUD
• Goal to maintain 609 feet until a solution at Wanapum
• Runoff is an unknown
Water Withdrawals

• About 100 Columbia River irrigation withdrawal points have been identified in Chelan, Douglas and Grant counties
• Most of the withdrawal points are on the Rock Island reservoir
• Thousands of acres are impacted in the three counties
Current Water Withdrawal
Pump House

Typical Water Elevation
Irrigation Contingency Planning

• Three major issues
  – Adequate water for tree preservation and fruit production
  – Water for frost prevention in spring
  – Water for pesticide application

• Modifications to irrigation may be necessary at any level below 612, but how much is part of what we hope to learn over the coming week
Possible State Agency Assistance

• Participate in March 13 Irrigator/Agriculture representative meeting
• Expedited permits for system modifications
• Temporary permit relief for operational conditions such as instantaneous withdrawal rates
• Others areas as identified by stakeholders
March 13 Meeting

• 5:30 – 7:00 p.m.
• Confluence Technology Center
  285 Technology Center Way
  Wenatchee
Conclusion

• A dynamic situation that changes hourly
• Good fortune and continuing collaboration will help avoid and/or resolve emerging problems
• Plans in process if good fortune doesn’t continue
• Invite and encourage the State’s participation as a partner
More information

- chelanpud.org under “Wanapum Dam Response”
- Facebook.com/ChelanPUD
- Twitter @ChelanPUD
- Shaun Seaman
  shaun.seaman@chelanpud.org
  phone 509-661-4459