

Contact: Tom Gauntt
PacifiCorp, 503-813-7291

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PacifiCorp to remove Condit Dam

With regulatory approvals received after 12 years of effort, decommissioning now working toward October 2011 event

PORTLAND, Ore. – After nearly a century of serving PacifiCorp customers, Condit Dam on the White Salmon River in south central Washington will start to be removed this fall, fulfilling a multi-party settlement agreement signed in 1999.

Decommissioning the hydroelectric project is now moving forward after receipt of an essential sediment management permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the final major regulatory step. On Dec. 16, 2010, PacifiCorp received a Surrender Order from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission providing for dam decommissioning. The commission modified the Surrender Order on April 21, which, with the Corps permit, provides the regulatory certainty PacifiCorp needed to proceed to remove the 125-foot high dam. On June 8, 2011, the commission completed review and approval of requisite project removal design and resource management plans.

“We have notified our contractors to move forward,” said Todd Olson, program manager for PacifiCorp. “The project has been in the planning stages for more than a decade. These recent regulatory approvals enable us to now move forward with the commitment we made to the settlement parties to remove the dam as soon as feasible.”

Dam removal was determined to be less costly to PacifiCorp customers than the fish passage that would be required for operation as part of the federal dam relicensing process. The cost of decommissioning Condit is currently estimated at about \$32 million, including funds already spent during the planning process.

“While we move forward on this complex task with determination, it will be sad to see Condit go,” Olson said. “It has been supplying low-cost, renewable and emission-free power for our customers since 1913, long before those phrases were even in use.”

“The decommissioning of Condit Dam represents a momentous and long-awaited day,” said Virgil Lewis, of the Yakama Nation Tribal Council, one of the parties to the 1999 settlement. “This is an essential step in restoring the ecosystem’s resources and rebuilding the natural balance that supported the Yakama people and a significant tribal fishery for millennia. We are excited to welcome home the salmon, steelhead and lamprey that have been absent from the White Salmon River over the last century.”

American Rivers, a leading national conservation organization advocating for clean water and healthy rivers, pointed to the cooperation behind the decommissioning.

"After years of hard work, we will soon celebrate one of the nation's biggest and most exciting river restoration projects," said Brett Swift, Northwest regional director of American Rivers. "Condit Dam served a useful purpose, but now the time has come to remove it and restore a healthy, free-flowing White Salmon River. We applaud PacifiCorp for its leadership. It isn't every day that we get to witness a river coming back to life."

Plans call for a summer full of meticulous preparation before a carefully planned breach in October releases Northwestern Lake through a 13-foot hole blasted out near the base of the dam. Steps to be completed before the breach include the initial excavation of the 90-foot long drain tunnel, dredging the upstream side of the dam at the drain tunnel, work to strengthen a bridge that crosses Northwestern Lake, and also relocating a water pipeline that crosses the reservoir.

"Safety for everyone involved is a key priority," said Tom Hickey, PacifiCorp's project manager. "People working on the project will be taking special care, and PacifiCorp will also implement a public safety plan. It will be important for people in the area to abide by closure signs and stay out of the project area."

After the initial breach and draining of the reservoir in October, demolition of the remaining portion of the dam is scheduled to begin in spring 2012 and be completed by August 31, 2012. Restoration work throughout the former reservoir area is planned to be completed by the end of 2012.

Throughout this time, PacifiCorp will continue to work with county officials and local residents on access restrictions and other safety measures as the project progresses. Timely public notices will be posted concerning any closures.

For general information on the Condit project, visit: <http://www.pacificorp.com/es/hydro/hl/condit.html>

The construction contractor for the decommissioning project is JR Merit Industrial Contractors, Inc. of Vancouver, Wash. with engineering and construction monitoring services being provided by Kleinfelder, an international engineering consulting firm based in San Diego, Calif. with a local office in Portland, Oregon.

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About PacifiCorp

PacifiCorp is one of the lowest-cost electricity producers in the United States, serving more than 1.7 million customers in the West. PacifiCorp operates as Pacific Power in Oregon, Washington and California, and as Rocky Mountain Power in Utah, Wyoming and Idaho. With a generating capability of more than 10,620 megawatts from coal, hydro, gas-fired combustion turbines and renewable wind and geothermal power, the company works to meet growing energy demand while protecting and enhancing the environment.

Facts about Condit

- The project is located approximately 3.3 miles upstream from the confluence of the White Salmon and Columbia Rivers. Project facilities consist of a **125-foot high, 471-**

foot long concrete gravity diversion dam, and an intake structure that directs water into a 13.5-foot diameter by 5,100-foot long wood stave flow line.

- The powerhouse contains two double horizontal Francis turbines with an installed capacity of **14.7 megawatts** (enough to power about **7,000 average homes** for a year). The project creates a reservoir, Northwestern Lake, which extends 1.8 miles upstream of the dam and covers approximately 92 acres.
- In 1999, the Condit Settlement Agreement was signed by PacifiCorp and project stakeholders. The settlement agreement was amended in 2005 to extend the dates for project removal.
- Settlement parties include: American Rivers, American Whitewater Association, Columbia Gorge Audubon Society, Columbia Gorge Coalition, Columbia River United, Federation of Fly Fishers, Friends of the Columbia Gorge, Friends of the Earth, Friends of the White Salmon, The Mountaineers, Rivers Council of Washington, The Sierra Club, Trout Unlimited, Washington Trout, Washington Wilderness Coalition, the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission , the Yakama Nation, the U.S. Forest Service, the U.S. Department of the Interior, the National Marine Fisheries Service, the Washington Department of Ecology, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and PacifiCorp.

Maps and photos available upon request.