

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

Washington, DC 20426

January 29, 2007

OFFICE OF ENERGY PROJECTS

Project No. 2149-131 – Washington  
Wells Hydroelectric Project  
Public Utility District No. 1 of  
Douglas County, Washington

**Subject: Scoping Document 1 for Wells Hydroelectric Project (P-2149-131)**

To the Party Addressed:

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (Commission) is currently reviewing the Pre-Application Document submitted by Public Utility District No. 1 of Douglas County, Washington (Douglas PUD) for the relicensing of its Wells Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2149). The project is located on the Columbia River near the towns of Pateros and Brewster in Okanogan County, Washington. Douglas PUD, licensee for the Wells Project, is using the Commission's Integrated Licensing Process and plans to file a license application for the continued operation of the project on or before May 31, 2010.

Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Commission staff intend to prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA), which will be used by the Commission to determine whether, and under what conditions, to issue a new license for the project. To support and assist our environmental review, we are beginning the public scoping process to ensure that all pertinent issues are identified and analyzed, and that the EA is thorough and balanced.

We invite your participation in the scoping process, and are circulating the attached Scoping Document 1 (SD1) to provide you with information on the Wells Project. We are also soliciting your comments and suggestions on our preliminary list of issues and alternatives to be addressed in the EA.

We will hold two scoping meetings for the Wells Project to receive input on the scope of the EA. A daytime meeting will be held Wednesday, February 28, 2007, starting at 9:00 a.m. at the Douglas County PUD Auditorium, 1151 Valley Mall Parkway, East Wenatchee, Washington. An evening meeting will also be held Wednesday, February 28, 2007, starting at 7:00 p.m. at the Columbia Cove Community Center, 601 West Cliff Avenue, Brewster, Washington. We will also visit the project facilities on Tuesday,

February 27, 2007, from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., meeting at the Wells Dam Visitor Center off of U.S. Highway 97. We invite all interested agencies, Indian tribes, non-governmental organizations, and individuals to attend one or all of these meetings. Further information on our site visits and scoping meetings is available in the enclosed SD1.

SD1 is being distributed to both Douglas PUD's distribution list and the Commission's official mailing list (see section 9.0 of the attached SD1). If you wish to be added to or removed from the Commission's official mailing list, please send your request by email to [efiling@ferc.gov](mailto:efiling@ferc.gov) or by mail to: Magalie R. Salas, Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street, N.E., Room 1A, Washington, DC 20426. All written or emailed requests must specify your wish to be removed or added to the mailing list and must clearly identify the following on the first page: Wells Hydroelectric Project No. 2149-131.

Please review SD1 and, if you wish to provide comments, follow the instructions in section 5.0. If you have any questions about SD1, the scoping process, or how Commission staff will develop the EA for this project, please contact Bob Easton at (202) 502-6045 or [robert.easton@ferc.gov](mailto:robert.easton@ferc.gov). Additional information about the Commission's licensing process and the Wells Project may be obtained from our website, <http://www.ferc.gov> or Douglas PUD's website, <http://www.douglaspud.org>.

Enclosure: Scoping Document 1

cc: Mailing List  
Public Files

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SCOPING DOCUMENT 1  
WELLS HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT

WASHINGTON

PROJECT NO. 2149-131

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission  
Office of Energy Projects  
Division of Hydropower Licensing  
Washington, DC

January 2007

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION .....	4
2.0 SCOPING .....	6
2.1 PURPOSES OF SCOPING .....	6
2.2 COMMENTS AND SCOPING MEETINGS .....	7
3.0 PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES .....	9
3.1 DOUGLAS PUD’S PROPOSED ACTION .....	9
3.1.1 Description of Existing Project Facilities .....	9
3.1.2 Description of Existing Project Operation .....	9
3.1.3 Proposed Project Facilities and Operations .....	10
3.2 ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED ACTION .....	10
3.3 NO ACTION .....	10
3.4 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT ELIMINATED FROM DETAILED STUDY .....	10
3.4.1 Federal Government Takeover .....	11
3.4.2 Nonpower License .....	11
3.4.3 Project Decommissioning .....	11
4.0 SCOPE OF CUMULATIVE EFFECTS AND RESOURCE ISSUES .....	12
4.1 CUMULATIVE EFFECTS .....	12
4.1.1 Resources That Could Be Cumulatively Affected .....	12
4.1.2 Geographic Scope .....	12
4.1.3 Temporal Scope .....	13
4.2 RESOURCE ISSUES .....	13
4.2.1 Aquatic Resources .....	13
4.2.2 Terrestrial Resources .....	14
4.2.3 Threatened and Endangered Species .....	15
4.2.4 Recreation, Land Use, and Aesthetics .....	15
4.2.5 Archaeological and Historic Resources .....	15
4.2.6 Developmental Resources .....	15
4.3 PROPOSED PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT MEASURES AND POTENTIAL STUDIES .....	15
5.0 INFORMATION REQUESTED .....	17
6.0 EA PREPARATION SCHEDULE .....	19
7.0 PROPOSED EA OUTLINE .....	20
8.0 CONSISTENCY WITH COMPREHENSIVE PLANS .....	21

9.0 FERC OFFICIAL MAILING LIST..... 24  
APPENDIX A - PROCESS PLAN AND SCHEDULES..... 29

**LIST OF FIGURES**

Figure 1. Location of the Wells Project (Source: staff).....5

## SCOPING DOCUMENT 1

### Wells Hydroelectric Project, No. 2149

#### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (Commission or FERC), under the authority of the Federal Power Act (FPA),<sup>1</sup> may issue licenses for terms ranging from 30 to 50 years for the construction, operation, and maintenance of non-federal hydroelectric projects. On December 1, 2006, Public Utility District No. 1 of Douglas County, Washington (Douglas PUD) filed a Notice of Intent to seek a new license for the Wells Project (Project No. 2149-131) and a Pre-Application Document (PAD).<sup>2</sup> The project is located on the Columbia River near the towns of Pateros and Brewster in Okanogan County, Washington (figure 1). There are 232.7 acres of federal lands located within the project boundary that are administered by the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, or the Bureau of Reclamation.

The Wells Project is a run-of-river project operated in coordination with five other regional hydroelectric projects on the mid-Columbia River. With limited active storage at the Wells Reservoir, daily inflow equals daily outflow and fluctuations and power generation are largely driven by the discharge from two upstream federal projects: Chief Joseph and Grand Coulee.

The project has a water right for 220,000 cubic feet per second (cfs) for power production and an impoundment right for 331,200 acre-feet per year. The Wells Reservoir must be maintained between elevations of 771 and 781 feet above mean sea level for power and non-power purposes.

The powerhouse has 10 generating units each housed individually in a 95-foot-wide and 172-foot-long concrete structure. The total installed capacity of the project is 774.3 megawatts (MW) with a maximum generating capacity of 840 MW. The average annual energy production for the period 2001 through 2005 was 3,870,169 megawatt-hours (MWh), with an average monthly generation ranging from 250,742 MWh in September to 398,796 MWh in June.

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<sup>1</sup>16 U.S.C. § 791(a)-825(r).

<sup>2</sup>The current license for the Wells Project was issued on July 12, 1962, for a term of 50 years; the current license expires on May 31, 2012.

Figure 1. Location map of the Wells Hydroelectric Project (Source: Pre-Application Document and Staff).

Public access for this information is available only through the Public Reference Room,  
or by email at [public.referenceroom@ferc.gov](mailto:public.referenceroom@ferc.gov)

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969,<sup>3</sup> the Commission's regulations, and other applicable laws require that we independently evaluate the environmental effects of relicensing the Wells Project as proposed, and also consider reasonable alternatives to Douglas PUD's proposal. At this time, we intend to prepare a draft and final environmental assessment (EA). The EAs will describe and evaluate the probable effects, including any site-specific and cumulative effects, of the proposed action and alternatives.

## **2.0 SCOPING**

This Scoping Document 1 (SD1) is intended to advise all participants as to the proposed scope of the EA and to seek information pertinent to this analysis. This document contains: (1) a description of the scoping process and schedule for the development of the EA; (2) a description of the proposed action and alternatives; (3) a preliminary identification of environmental issues and proposed studies; (4) a request for comments and information; (5) a proposed EA outline; and (6) a preliminary list of comprehensive plans applicable to the project area.

### **2.1 Purposes of Scoping**

Scoping is the process used to identify issues, concerns, and opportunities for enhancement or mitigation associated with a proposed action. According to NEPA, the process should be conducted early in the planning stage of the project. The purposes of the scoping process are as follows:

- invite participation of federal, state and local resource agencies, Indian tribes, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and the public to identify significant environmental and socioeconomic issues related to the proposed project;
- determine the depth of analysis and significance of issues to be addressed in the EA;
- identify how the project would or would not contribute to cumulative effects in the project area;
- identify reasonable alternatives to the proposed action that should be evaluated in the EA;

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<sup>3</sup>National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (Pub. L. 91-190. 42 U.S.C. § 4321-4347, January 1, 1970, as amended by Pub. L. 94-52, July 3, 1975, Pub. L. 94-83, August 9, 1975, and Pub. L. 97-258, § 4(b), Sept. 13, 1982).

- solicit, from participants, available information on the resources at issue, including existing information and study needs; and
- determine the resource areas and potential issues that do not require detailed analysis during review of the project.

## **2.2 Comments and Scoping Meetings**

During the preparation of the EA, there are several opportunities for resource agencies, Indian tribes, NGOs, and the public to provide input. These opportunities occur:

- during the public scoping process and study plan meetings when we solicit oral and written comments regarding scope of the issues and analysis for the EA;
- after issuance of the Commission’s ready for environmental analysis notice when we solicit comments, recommendations, terms, conditions, and prescriptions for continued operation of the project; and
- after issuance of the EA when we solicit written comments on the EA.

In addition to written comments solicited by this SD1, we will provide an opportunity for oral testimony at two public scoping meetings that we will conduct in the project vicinity. A daytime meeting will focus on concerns of the resource agencies, NGO’s, and Indian tribes, and an evening meeting will focus on receiving input from the public. We invite all interested agencies, Indian tribes, NGOs, and individuals to attend one or both of the meetings to assist us in identifying the scope of environmental issues that should be analyzed in the EA. The times and locations of the meetings are as follows:

### ***Wells Project Scoping Meetings***

#### **Daytime Scoping Meeting**

Date and Time:      Wednesday, February 28, 2007, starting at 9:00 a.m. and continuing to no later than 2:00 p.m.

Location:            Douglas County PUD Auditorium, 1151 Valley Mall Parkway, East Wenatchee, Washington.

## **Evening Scoping Meeting**

Date and Time: Wednesday, February 28, 2007, starting at 7:00 p.m. and continuing to no later than 12:00 a.m.

Location: Columbia Cove Community Center, 601 West Cliff Avenue, Brewster, Washington.

The scoping meetings will be recorded by a court reporter, and all statements (verbal and written) will become part of the Commission's public record for the project. Before each meeting, all individuals who attend, especially those who intend to make statements, will be asked to sign in and clearly identify themselves for the record. Interested parties who choose not to speak or who are unable to attend the scoping meetings may provide written comments and information to the Commission as described in section 5.0. These meetings are posted on the Commission's calendar located on the internet at <http://www.ferc.gov/EventCalendar/EventsList.aspx>, along with other related information.

Meeting participants should come prepared to discuss their issues and/or concerns as they pertain to the relicensing of the Wells Project. It is advised that participants review the PAD in preparation for the scoping meetings. Copies of the PAD are available for review at the Commission in the Public Reference Room or may be viewed on the Commission's website (<http://www.ferc.gov>), using the "eLibrary" link. Enter the docket number, P-2149 for the Wells Project, to access the documents. For assistance, contact FERC Online Support at [FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov](mailto:FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov) or toll free at 1-866-208-3676, or for TTY, (202) 502-8659. Copies of the PAD are also available from Douglas PUD by contacting Shane Bickford at (509) 881-2208.

Douglas PUD and Commission staff will visit the Wells Project on February 27, 2007, starting at 9:00 a.m. All participants interested in seeing the project should meet at Wells Dam Visitor Center off of U.S. Highway 97. All participants attending the site visit should be prepared to provide their own transportation. Anyone with questions about the site visit (or needing directions) should contact Mary Mayo at (509) 881-2488. Those individuals planning to participate in the site visit should notify Ms. Mayo of their intent, no later than February 21, 2007.

Following the scoping meetings and comment period, all issues raised will be reviewed and decisions made on the level of analysis needed. If our preliminary analysis indicates that any issues presented in this scoping document have little potential for causing significant effects, the issue(s) will be identified and the reasons for not providing a more detailed analysis will be given in the EA.

We will revise this SD1, if necessary, to reflect comments received during the comment period. If we receive no substantive comments and no revisions to the SD1 are necessary, we will so notify participants by letter.

### **3.0 PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES**

In accordance with NEPA, the EA will consider the following alternatives, at a minimum: (1) the applicant's proposed action, (2) alternatives to the proposed action, and (3) no action.

#### **3.1 Douglas PUD's Proposed Action**

##### **3.1.1 Description of Existing Project Facilities**

The Wells Project consists of: (1) a 1,130-foot-long and 168-foot-wide concrete hydrocombine dam with integrated generating units, spillways, switchyard and fish passage facilities; (2) a 2,300-foot-long and 40-foot-high earth and rock-filled west embankment; (3) a 1,030-foot-long and 160-foot-high earth and rock-filled east embankment; (4) eleven 46-foot-wide and 65-foot-high ogee-designed spillway bays with 2 vertical lift gates (upper leaf is 46 feet by 30 feet and lower leaf is 46 feet by 35 feet); (5) five spillways modified to accommodate the juvenile fish bypass system; (6) 10 generating units each housed in a 95-foot-wide and 172-foot-long concrete structure with an installed capacity of 774.3 MW and maximum capacity of 840 MW; (7) five 14.4-kilovolts (kV) power transformers each connected to 2 generating units converting the power to 230 kV; (8) two 41-miles-long 230-kV single-circuit transmission lines running parallel to each other; and (9) appurtenant facilities.

##### **3.1.2 Description of Existing Project Operation**

The Wells Project is operated run-of-river with daily outflows to the Wells Reservoir equaling daily inflows. The limited active storage of the reservoir is only sufficient to regulate flow on a daily basis. Reservoir fluctuations and power generation are largely driven by the discharge of water from the two hydroelectric projects upstream on the mid-Columbia River.

Currently, the project has a water right for 220,000 cfs for power production and an impoundment right for 331,200 acre-feet per year. The Wells Reservoir must be maintained between elevations of 771 and 781 feet above mean sea level for power and non-power purposes.

Daily operation of the project is influenced by many factors including: existing FERC license requirements, natural stream flows, regulation of upstream storage reservoirs in the US and Canada, regulation of water releases from upstream hydro projects on an hourly basis to meet changing power demands, actions in response to fish, wildlife and other environmental regulations, and variable power demands from power sales contracts. Douglas PUD has also entered into many settlements and agreements that affect the management of environmental resources as well as operation/generation of the Wells Project.

The project normally generates its maximum output during periods of high river flows, usually May through August. Regional electric loads typically peak during the summer months for home air conditioning and irrigation pump usage. Regional peak loads also occur during winter months for heating and lighting purposes.

### **3.1.3 Proposed Project Facilities and Operations**

Douglas PUD is not proposing any new facilities or operations at the Wells Project.

## **3.2 Alternatives to the Proposed Action**

We will consider and assess all alternative recommendations for operational or facility modifications, as well as protection, mitigation, and enhancement measures identified by us (Commission staff), the agencies, Indian tribes, NGOs, and the public. To the extent that modifications would reduce the power production of the proposed project, we will evaluate costs and contributions to airborne pollution related to generation of replacement power by fossil fuel stations.

### **3.3 No Action**

Under the no-action alternative, the Wells Project would continue to operate as required by the current project license (*i.e.*, there would be no change to the existing environment). No new environmental protection, mitigation, or enhancement measures would be implemented. We use this alternative to establish baseline environmental conditions for comparison with other alternatives.

### **3.4 Alternatives Considered But Eliminated from Detailed Study**

At present, we propose to eliminate the following alternatives from detailed study in the EA.

### **3.4.1 Federal Government Takeover**

In accordance with § 16.14 of the Commission's regulations, a federal department or agency may file a recommendation that the United States exercise its right to take over a hydroelectric power project with a license that is subject to sections 14 and 15 of the FPA.<sup>4</sup> We do not consider federal takeover to be a reasonable alternative. Federal takeover of the project would require congressional approval. While that fact alone would not preclude further consideration of this alternative, there is currently no evidence showing that federal takeover should be recommended to Congress. No party has suggested that federal takeover would be appropriate and no federal agency has expressed interest in operating the project.

### **3.4.2 Nonpower License**

A non-power license is a temporary license the Commission would terminate whenever it determines that another governmental agency is authorized and willing to assume regulatory authority and supervision over the lands and facilities covered by the non-power license. At this time, no governmental agency has suggested a willingness or ability to take over the project. No party has sought a non-power license, and we have no basis for concluding that the Wells Project should no longer be used to produce power. Thus, we do not consider a non-power license a reasonable alternative to relicensing the project.

### **3.4.3 Project Decommissioning**

Decommissioning of the project could be accomplished with or without dam removal. Either alternative would require denying the relicense application and surrender or termination of the existing license with appropriate conditions. There would be significant costs involved with decommissioning the project and/or removing any project facilities. The project provides a viable, safe, and clean renewable source of power to the region. With decommissioning, the project would no longer be authorized to generate power.

No party has suggested project decommissioning would be appropriate in this case, and we have no basis for recommending it. Thus, we do not consider project decommissioning a reasonable alternative to relicensing the project with appropriate environmental enhancement measures.

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<sup>4</sup> 16 U.S.C. §§ 791(a)-825(r).

## **4.0 SCOPE OF CUMULATIVE EFFECTS AND RESOURCE ISSUES**

### **4.1 Cumulative Effects**

According to the Council on Environmental Quality's regulations for implementing NEPA (50 C.F.R. 1508.7), an action may cause cumulative effects if its effects overlap in space and/or time with the effects of other past, present and reasonably foreseeable future actions, regardless of what agency or person undertakes such other actions. Cumulative effects can result from individually minor but collectively significant actions taking place over a period of time, including hydropower and other land and water development activities.

#### **4.1.1 Resources That Could Be Cumulatively Affected**

Based on our review of the PAD and preliminary staff analysis, we have identified water quality and migratory fish as aquatic resources that could be cumulatively affected by the proposed continued operation and maintenance of the Wells Project.

#### **Aquatic Resources**

The operation of the Wells Project and other mainstem Columbia River dams can influence water quality conditions and fisheries resources in the mid-Columbia River. During periods of high flows, spillway releases at these dams can increase total dissolved gas levels throughout the river. Additionally, impoundment of water behind the dams and fluctuating reservoir levels and project releases may influence water temperatures, dissolved oxygen levels, pH, and turbidity within the basin. In regard to migrating fish species, the dams inhibit upstream and downstream fish movements and alter spawning and rearing habitat within the mainstem Columbia River. Other factors that may cumulatively affect aquatic resources in the basin include non-native fish introduction, human development, agricultural practices, timber harvest, and mining operations.

#### **4.1.2 Geographic Scope**

Our geographic scope of analysis for cumulatively affected resources is defined by the physical limits or boundaries of: (1) the proposed action's effect on the resources, and (2) contributing effects from other hydropower and non-hydropower activities within the Columbia River Basin. Because the proposed action can affect resources differently, the geographic scope for each resource may vary.

At this time, we have tentatively identified the geographic scope for aquatic resources to encompass the Columbia River from the tailrace of the Chief Joseph Project to the downstream end of the Wells Project tailrace (i.e., the beginning of the Rocky Reach Project reservoir). We are seeking comments on our choice of geographic scope.

### **4.1.3 Temporal Scope**

The temporal scope of our cumulative effects analysis in the EA will include a discussion of past, present, and future actions and their effects on each resource. Based on the potential term of a new license, the temporal scope will look 30-50 years into the future, concentrating on the effect to the resources from reasonably foreseeable future actions. The historical discussion will, by necessity, be limited to the amount of available information for each resource.

## **4.2 Resource Issues**

In this section, we present a preliminary list of environmental issues to be addressed in the EA. We have identified these issues, which are listed by resource area, by reviewing the PAD and the Commission's record for the Wells Project. This list is not intended to be exhaustive or final, but contains those issues raised to date that could have substantial effects. After scoping is completed, we will review this list and determine the appropriate level of analysis needed to address each issue in the EA. Those issues identified by an asterisk (\*) will be analyzed for both cumulative and site-specific effects.

### **4.2.1 Aquatic Resources**

- Effects of the project on the input, movement, accumulation, and retention of toxins (i.e., DDT and PCBs) originating in the Okanogan River and the potential indirect effects of these toxins on aquatic organisms and humans.
- Effects of the project on total dissolved gas levels in the Wells tailrace and Rocky Reach forebay.\*
- Effects of the project on water temperature, dissolved oxygen, pH, and turbidity.\*
- Effects of the project on aquatic and wetland plant communities.
- Effects of the project on the spread of aquatic invasive species.

- Effects of the project and ongoing actions, including the Habitat Conservation Plan, on salmon and steelhead.\*
- Effectiveness of the nuisance wildlife control program on controlling predation of listed salmon and steelhead juveniles and identification and evaluation of the cost and benefits of potential alternatives to the existing program.
- Effects of the project on juvenile lamprey dam passage and reservoir survival.\*
- Effects of the project on adult lamprey habitat use and upstream passage.\*
- Effects of the project on white sturgeon spawning, rearing, recruitment, movements, and abundance.
- Effects of the project on bull trout survival and habitat.\*
- Effects of the project on resident fish.

#### **4.2.2 Terrestrial Resources**

- Whether the project transmission line represents an avian electrocution or collision hazard.
- Effects of transmission line right-of-way management practices (e.g. weed control and road maintenance) on wildlife and botanical resources.
- Effects of Douglas PUD's land management practices (weed control, soil erosion control) and permitting policies (installation of docks, water systems, fences, landscaping, and agricultural uses) on wildlife and wildlife habitats.
- Effects of project-related recreation on wildlife and wildlife habitats (e.g. disturbance to wildlife and alteration and modification of habitats).
- Effects of the frequency, timing, amplitude and duration of reservoir fluctuations on waterfowl and on riparian and wetland habitats.
- Effects of the project reservoir as a migration and movement barrier to mule deer.
- Adequacy of the existing wildlife management program in reducing project effects on wildlife.

#### **4.2.3 Threatened and Endangered Species**

- Effects of project operations (reservoir fluctuations) and project-related recreation on federally listed bald eagle and Ute ladies'-tresses.
- Effects of project operations (reservoir fluctuations), land management practices, and project-related recreation on the following state-listed rare species: little bluestem, chaffweed, northern sweet grass, brittle prickly-pear, American white pelican, and sharp-tailed grouse.
- Effects of the project on Upper Columbia River spring-run Chinook salmon, Upper Columbia River steelhead, and bull trout.

#### **4.2.4 Recreation, Land Use, and Aesthetics**

- Effects of project operations (reservoir fluctuations) on access to and use of public boat launches and docks.
- Effects of aquatic vegetation and sediment conditions (transport and deposition) on public access to and use of the project waters.
- Adequacy of existing recreation facilities and public access within the project boundary in meeting current and future (over the term of a new license) recreational demand, including barrier-free access needs.

#### **4.2.5 Archaeological and Historic Resources**

- Effects of continued project operations or changes in project operation or facilities on historic, archeological, and traditional resources that may be eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

#### **4.2.6 Developmental Resources**

- Effects of protection, mitigation, and enhancement measures on project economics.

### **4.3 Proposed Protection and Enhancement Measures and Potential Studies**

Douglas PUD, working with the consulted entities, has identified measures to protect and enhance environmental resources of the project area. Douglas PUD proposes

to continue operating the Wells Project with the following environmental protection and enhancement measures:

- Continue to implement the Habitat Conservation Plan for salmon and steelhead species inhabiting the project area.
- Periodically (every 5 years) provide an update to its Public Use Plan (next update is scheduled for 2007).
- Continue to implement its Land Use Policy to provide guidance for land use management decisions regarding project lands and waters.

Depending upon the findings of studies completed by Douglas PUD and the recommendations of the consulted entities, Douglas PUD will consider, and may propose certain other measures to enhance environmental resources affected by the project as part of the proposed action. The following is Douglas PUD's initial study proposals to fill information gaps to address the above issues and determine appropriate environmental measures. Further studies may need to be added to this list based on comments provided to FERC from interested participants, including Indian tribes. Douglas PUD proposes to:

#### *Aquatic Resources*

- Conduct a review of existing information describing the survival and rates of predation for juvenile Pacific lamprey migrating through Columbia River hydroelectric projects. Also, implement a field study to assess the occurrence of juvenile lamprey in the diets of predatory fish and birds present in the Wells Project forebay and tailrace.
- Conduct a study to locate suitable adult lamprey spawning habitat within the Wells Project area and conduct surveys to identify active spawning by adult lamprey.
- Conduct a radio-telemetry study to examine the effects of the Wells Project on adult lamprey migration and dam passage.
- To address human health concerns, sample sediments and fish tissues for DDT and PCBs in the lower Okanogan River within the Wells Project boundary.
- Continue to study and examine total dissolved gas production dynamics at the Wells Project.

- Develop a water temperature model that assesses the effects of the Wells Project on water temperature.
- Conduct additional sampling to monitor dissolved oxygen, pH, and turbidity within the Wells Project.

#### *Terrestrial Resources*

- Conduct an evaluation of the effectiveness of and identify alternatives to the predator control program on listed and recreationally important fish stocks.
- Conduct plant and wildlife surveys and develop a cover type map for the Wells Project 41-mile-long 230 kV transmission line in order to assess rare and noxious plant communities in the transmission line right-of-way, evaluate potential avian collision problems, and evaluate the extent of use and dependency of habitats in the transmission line corridor by sage and sharp-tailed grouse.

#### *Recreation Resources and Land Use*

- Conduct a study to evaluate whether Wells Project recreation facilities, such as boat launches and docks, can be reasonably accessed under various reservoir operating scenarios. Assess how aquatic vegetation and sediment conditions affect public access to project waters. (In 2005 Douglas PUD conducted aquatic macrophyte identification and distribution study, and a detailed bathymetric survey of the Wells Project reservoir and tailrace).
- Conduct a recreation needs analysis to identify current and future recreation needs within the project boundary, including the possibility of trails and trail linkages. Public access to project lands and waters would be identified and assessed. The study would also determine whether adequate demand exists to justify the construction of new recreation facilities.

#### *Cultural Resources*

- Conduct a cultural resources investigation to resolve existing gaps in knowledge of cultural resources in the area of potential effect.

## **5.0 INFORMATION REQUESTED**

We are asking federal, state, and local resource agencies, Indian tribes, NGOs, and individuals to forward to the Commission any information that will assist us in conducting an accurate and thorough analysis of the project-specific and cumulative effects associated with the Wells Project. The types of information requested include, but are not limited to:

- information, quantitative data, or professional opinions that may help define the geographic and temporal scope of the analysis (both site-specific and cumulative effects), and that helps identify significant environmental issues;
- identification of, and information from, any other EA, Environmental Impact Statement, or similar environmental study (previous, on-going, or planned) relevant to the proposed relicensing of the Wells Project;
- existing information and any data that would help to describe the past and present actions and effects of the project and other developmental activities on environmental and socioeconomic resources;
- information that would help characterize the existing environmental conditions and habitats;
- the identification of any federal, state, or local resource plans, and any future project proposals in the affected resource area (e.g., proposals to construct or operate water treatment facilities, recreation areas, water diversions, timber harvest activities, or fish management programs) along with any implementation schedules;
- documentation that the proposed project would or would not contribute to cumulative adverse or beneficial effects on any resources. Documentation can include, but need not be limited to, how the project would interact with other projects in the area and other developmental activities; study results; resource management policies; and reports from federal, state, and local agencies; and
- documentation showing why any resources should be excluded from further study or consideration.

The requested information, comments on the PAD and SD1, and study requests should be submitted in writing to the Commission no later than April 2, 2007. All written filings pertaining to the Wells Project must clearly identify “*Wells Project No. 2149-131*” on the first page. All information, comments, and study requests should be sent to:

Magalie R. Salas, Secretary  
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission  
888 First Street, N.E., Room 1A  
Washington, DC 20426

All filings sent to the Secretary of the Commission should contain an original and eight copies. Failure to file an original and eight copies may result in appropriate staff not receiving the benefit of your comments in a timely manner. Scoping comments and study requests may be filed electronically via the Internet in lieu of paper. See 18 CFR 385.2001(a)(1)(iii) and the instructions on the Commission’s web site (<http://www.ferc.gov>) under the “e-Filing” link. For assistance, please contact FERC Online Support at [FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov](mailto:FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov) or toll free at 1-866-208-3676, or for TTY, (202) 502-8659. The Commission strongly encourages electronic filings.

Register online at <http://www.ferc.gov/esubscribenow.htm> to be notified via email of new filings and issuances related to this or other pending projects. For assistance, please contact FERC Online Support.

Intervenors – those on the Commission’s service list for this proceeding – are reminded that if they file comments with the Commission, they must also serve a copy of their filing on each person whose name appears on the official service list. Note that the list is periodically updated. The official service list can be obtained on the Commission’s web site (<http://www.ferc.gov>) - scroll down to Documents and Filing and right click on service list - or call the Office of the Secretary, Dockets Branch at (202) 502-8715. In addition, if any party files comments or documents with the Commission relating to the merits of an issue that may affect the responsibilities of a particular resource agency, they must also serve a copy of the document on the resource agency.

Any questions concerning the scoping meetings, site visits, or how to file written comments with the Commission should be directed to Bob Easton at (202) 502-6045 or [robert.easton@ferc.gov](mailto:robert.easton@ferc.gov). Additional information about the Commission’s licensing process and the Wells Project may be obtained from the Commission’s website, [www.ferc.gov](http://www.ferc.gov), or Douglas PUD’s website, <http://www.douglaspud.org>.

## **6.0 EA PREPARATION SCHEDULE**

At this time, we anticipate the need to prepare a draft and final EA. The draft EA will be sent to all persons and entities on the Commission's service and mailing lists for the Wells Project. The EA will include our recommendations for operating procedures, as well as environmental protection and enhancement measures that should be part of any new license issued by the Commission. All recipients will then have 30 days to review the EA and file written comments with the Commission. All comments on the draft EA filed with the Commission will be considered in preparation of the Final EA.

The major milestones, including those for preparing the EA, are as follows:

<u>Major Milestone</u>	<u>Target Date</u>
Scoping Meetings	February 2007
License Application Filed	May 2010
Issue Ready for Environmental Analysis Notice	July 2010
Deadline for Filing Comments, Recommendations and Agency Terms and Conditions/Prescriptions	September 2010
Draft EA Issued	May 2011
Deadline for Filing Modified Agency Recommendations	August 2011
Final EA Issued	November 2011

A copy of Douglas PUD's process plan, which has a complete list of relicensing milestones for the Wells Project, including those for developing the license application, is attached as Appendix A to this SD1.

## **7.0 PROPOSED EA OUTLINE**

The preliminary outline for the Wells Project EA is as follows:

### **SUMMARY**

- 1.0 APPLICATION
- 2.0 PURPOSE OF ACTION AND NEED FOR POWER
  - 2.1 Purpose of Action
  - 2.2 Need for Power
- 3.0 PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES
  - 3.1 Applicant's Proposed Action
    - 3.1.1 Project Facilities and Operation
    - 3.1.2 Proposed Protection, Mitigation, and Enhancement Measures
  - 3.2 Staff-recommended Alternative
  - 3.3 No-Action Alternative
  - 3.4 Alternatives Considered but Eliminated from Detailed Study
- 4.0 CONSULTATION AND COMPLIANCE

- 4.1 Consultation
  - 4.1.1 Scoping
  - 4.1.2 Interventions
  - 4.1.3 Comments on the Application
- 4.2 Compliance
  - 4.2.1 Water Quality Certification
  - 4.2.2 Section 18 Fishway Prescriptions
  - 4.2.3 Endangered Species Act
  - 4.2.4 Section 106 Consultation
- 5.0 ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS
  - 5.1 General Description of the River Basin
  - 5.2 Cumulative Effects Analysis
    - 5.2.1 Geographic Scope
    - 5.2.2 Temporal Scope
  - 5.3 Proposed Action and Action Alternatives
    - 5.3.1 Aquatic Resources
    - 5.3.2 Terrestrial Resources
    - 5.3.3 Threatened and Endangered Species
    - 5.3.4 Recreation, Land Use, and Aesthetics
    - 5.3.5 Archaeological and Historic Resources
  - 5.4 No-Action Alternative
- 6.0 DEVELOPMENTAL ANALYSIS
  - 6.1 Power and Economic Benefits of the Project
  - 6.2 Cost of Environmental Measures
  - 6.3 Economic Comparison of Alternatives
- 7.0 COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT AND RECOMMENDED ALTERNATIVE
- 8.0 FISH AND WILDLIFE AGENCY RECOMMENDATIONS
- 9.0 CONSISTENCY WITH COMPREHENSIVE PLANS
- 10.0 FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
- 11.0 LITERATURE CITED
- 12.0 LIST OF PREPARERS

## **8.0 CONSISTENCY WITH COMPREHENSIVE PLANS**

Section 10(a)(2) of the FPA, 16 U.S.C. section 803(a)(2)(A), requires the Commission to consider the extent to which a project is consistent with federal or state comprehensive plans for improving, developing, or conserving a waterway or waterways affected by a project. The staff has preliminary identified and reviewed the plans listed below that may be relevant to the Wells Project. Agencies are requested to review this list and inform the Commission staff of any changes. If there are other comprehensive

plans that should be considered for this list that are not on file with the Commission or if there are more recent versions of the plans already listed, they can be filed for consideration with the Commission according to 18 CFR section 2.19 of the Commission's regulations. Please follow the instructions for filing a plan at <http://www.ferc.gov/industries/hydropower/gen-info/complan.pdf>.

The following is a list of comprehensive plans currently on file with the Commission that may be relevant to the Wells Project.

Comprehensive Plan	Agency
Fisheries USA: The Recreational Fisheries Policy of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. No date.	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Washington, DC
An Assessment of Outdoor Recreation in Washington State: A State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Planning (SCORP) Document 2002-2007. October 2002.	Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation, Olympia, WA
Voices of Washington: Public Opinion on Outdoor Recreation and Habitat Issues. November 1995.	Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation, Olympia, WA
State of Washington Outdoor Recreation and Habitat: Assessment and Policy Plan, 1995-2001. November 1995.	Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation, Tumwater, WA
Washington State Trails Plan: Policy and Action Document. June 1991.	Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation, Tumwater, WA
The Fifth Northwest Electric Power and Conservation Plan. Council Document 2005-07.	Northwest Power and Conservation Planning Council, Portland, OR
Columbia River Basin Fish & Wildlife Program. Council Document 2000-19.	Northwest Power and Conservation Planning Council, Portland, OR
Mainstem Amendments to the Columbia River Basin Fish & Wildlife Program. Council Document 2003-11.	Northwest Power and Conservation Planning Council, Portland, OR

Protected Areas Amendments and Response to Comments. Council Document 88-22.	Northwest Power and Conservation Planning Council, Portland, OR
Resource Protection Planning Process- Paleoinian Study Unit. 1987	Washington State Dept. of Community Development, Office of Archaeology & Historic Preservation, Olympia, WA
Water Resources Management Program - Methow River Basin. November 1977.	Washington Department of Ecology, Olympia, WA
Water Resources Management Program - Okanogan River Basin. February 1978.	Washington Department of Ecology, Olympia, WA
State Wetlands Integration Strategy. December 1994.	Washington Department of Ecology, Olympia, WA
Application of Shoreline Management to Hydroelectric Developments. September 1986.	Washington Department of Ecology, Olympia, WA
Hydroelectric Project Assessment Guidelines. 1987.	Washington Department of Fisheries, Olympia, WA
Strategies for Washington's Wildlife. May 1987.	Washington Department of Game, Olympia, WA
State of Washington Natural Heritage Plan. 1987.	Washington Department of Natural Resources, Olympia, WA
Final Habitat Conservation Plan. September 1997.	Washington Department of Natural Resources, Olympia, WA
Settlement Agreement pursuant to the September 1, 1983, Order of the U.S. District Court for the District of Oregon in Case No. 68-513. Columbia River Fish Management Plan. November 1987.	State of Washington, State of Oregon, State of Idaho, Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, Nez Perce Tribe, Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Indian Nation.

A Resource Protection Planning Process Identification Component for the Eastern Washington Protohistoric Study Unit. 1987.

Washington Dept. of Community Development, Office of Archaeology & Historic Preservation, Olympia, WA

Washington State Hydropower Development/Resource Protection Plan. December 1992.

Washington State Energy Office, Olympia, WA

North American Waterfowl Management Plan. May 1986.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Canadian Wildlife Service. U.S. Department of the Interior. Environment Canada.

Eighth Amendment to the Fishery Management Plan for Commercial and Recreational Salmon Fisheries off the Coasts of Washington, Oregon, and California. January 1988.

Pacific Fishery Management Council, Portland, OR

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## 9.0 FERC OFFICIAL MAILING LIST.

The list below is the Commission's official mailing list for the Wells Project (FERC No. 2149). If you want to receive future mailings for the Wells Project from the Commission and are not included in the list below, please send your request by email to [efiling@ferc.gov](mailto:efiling@ferc.gov) or by mail to: Magalie R. Salas, Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street, N.E., Room 1A, Washington, DC 20426. All written and emailed requests to be added to the Commission's mailing list must clearly identify the following on the first page: Wells Project No. 2149-131. You may use the same method if requesting removal from the mailing list below.

Register online at <http://www.ferc.gov/esubscribenow.htm> to be notified via email of new filings and issuances related to this or other pending projects. For assistance, please contact FERC Online Support at [FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov](mailto:FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov) or toll free at 1-866-208-3676, or for TTY, (202) 502-8659

### Mailing List

Brett Swift American Rivers	Jennifer L. O'Connor Puget Sound Energy, Inc.	Chairman, Columbia River Gorge Commission
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## APPENDIX A - PROCESS PLAN AND SCHEDULES

### WELLS ILP PROCESS PLAN AND SCHEDULE

Date	Pre-Filing Milestone	Responsible party
12/1/2006	File Notice of Intent and Pre-Application Document	Douglas PUD
12/1/2006	Issue public notice of NOI and PAD	Douglas PUD
1/30/2007	Notice NOI/PAD and issue Scoping Document I (SD1)	FERC
3/1/2007	Hold scoping meeting and site visit	FERC
4/2/2007	Comment on PAD and SD1; request studies	Participants
5/17/2007	Scoping Document No. 2 (SD2) issued (if necessary)	FERC
5/17/2007	File proposed study plan	Douglas PUD
6/18/2007	Hold study plan meeting	Douglas PUD
8/15/2007	Comment on proposed study plan	Participants
9/14/2007	File revised study plan	Douglas PUD
9/29/2007	File reply comments (to revised study plan)	Participants
10/15/2007	Issue study plan determination	FERC
11/4/2007	Filed study dispute notice	Agencies with mandatory conditioning authority
11/19/2007	Third panel member selected	FERC
11/24/2007	Convene dispute resolution panel (if necessary)	FERC
11/29/2007	File comments and information regarding dispute	Douglas PUD
12/4/2007	Technical conference held	FERC
12/24/2007	Determination on study dispute	Panel/FERC
1/13/2008	Study dispute determination filed	FERC
2008	Conduct studies and gather information (first season)	Douglas PUD
10/15/2008	File initial study report	Douglas PUD
10/30/2008	Hold initial study report meeting	Douglas PUD
11/14/2008	Meeting summary and study plan modifications (if necessary)	Douglas PUD
12/15/2008	Comments on meeting summary	Participants
1/14/2009	Response to meeting summary comments	Douglas PUD
2/13/2009	Director's study plan determination	FERC
2009	Conduct studies and gather information (second season as necessary)	Douglas PUD
10/15/2009	Update study report (as needed) and Notice of Intent to File a Draft License Application (if so selected)	Douglas PUD
10/30/2009	Hold updated study report meeting (as needed)	Douglas PUD
11/16/2009	Updated study report meeting summary	Douglas PUD
12/13/2009	Comments on meeting summary	Participants
12/31/2009	File Preliminary Licensing Proposal or Draft License Application	Douglas PUD
12/31/2009	File application for 401 Water Quality Certification from Washington Department of Environmental Quality	Douglas PUD
1/12/2010	Response to meeting summary comments	Douglas PUD
2/15/2010	Director's study plan determination	FERC
3/31/2010	Comment on Preliminary Licensing Proposal	FERC/Participants
5/31/2010	File Application for New License	Douglas PUD