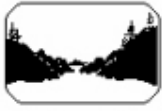


Letter to the Editor, October 23, 2008



The Enterprise

220 Jewett Blvd, PO Box 218, White Salmon, WA 98672, Phone: 509.493.2112

Getting facts straight about Condit Dam

With the Condit Dam issue heating up, it would stay cooler if we stuck to facts.

First, let's get the facts straight about the power generated by Condit. Although Condit's maximum generating capacity is 14.7 megawatts, its actual production is slightly less than 10 megawatts. This is reported in, among other places, the 2002 CH2M Hill report for the Klickitat County PUD, which reports an average of 9.1 MW from 1916 to 1999.

Maybe this isn't a big deal, since this Condit is less than 0.1 percent of PacifiCorp's generating capacity, but I think our elected representatives have an obligation to be factually accurate.

Second, let's get the facts straight about the cost cap. The cost cap is in the Settlement Agreement, an agreement negotiated between PacifiCorp and intervenors in the dam relicensing process that began in 1991. The Final Environmental Impact Statement for the project required fish passage and other requirements which were expected to result in a license costing from \$30 million to \$50 million. (A CH2M study estimated the PUD would need a bond issue of \$63.5 million to acquire the Condit project.)

Facing that cost, PacifiCorp initiated discussion with intervenors in the licensing process. The resulting Settlement Agreement contains the cost cap. If projected dam removal costs exceed the cost cap in the agreement, PacifiCorp can walk away from the Settlement Agreement. However, if the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission issues a surrender order, and PacifiCorp accepts the surrender order, then PacifiCorp has the obligation to meet all the terms of the order, including all financial and other obligations associated with that order which will certainly include cleanup and restoration.

Klickitat County should stop spending hundreds of thousands of dollars of our money fighting dam removal and should come to the table to work toward a surrender order that is a win for everyone involved, including the fish. The Marmot dam removal experience last year shows that the sediment may not be an issue, and there is significant potential for public benefit from dam removal.

I invite our County Commissioners to get their facts straight and spend our money to maximize the benefits of dam removal.

Pat Arnold
Trout Lake