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PacifiCorp to begin work on Soda Springs fish passage projects

Scheduled for completion in 2012, the ladder and screens will provide passage for steelhead and salmon on North Umpqua River

ROSEBURG, Ore. — Work begins in May on the most significant project under PacifiCorp's 35-year license to operate hydroelectric facilities on the North Umpqua River.

The Soda Springs fish passage project includes a fish ladder for upstream movement of adults and a screening system to safely pass juvenile salmon and steelhead downstream of the dam. Construction will include a fish-handling facility immediately below the dam to evaluate the long-term effectiveness of fish passage. PacifiCorp will employ a number of construction contractors to complete the fish passage project.

“We have been working toward this point for several years now,” said Monte Garrett, program manager. “Under the license granted in 2003, we have been improving upstream fish habitat in the Umpqua and the tributary streams. When the new fish passage system is done in 2012, nearly six miles of historic habitat above Soda Springs Dam will again be open for fish.”

The work is being done as prescribed in the 2001 settlement agreement signed by PacifiCorp and seven state and federal agencies for relicensing of the North Umpqua hydroelectric project by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. Special care will be taken to minimize any disruption for downriver users. The public will be advised, when possible, about any planned events likely to affect the river.

Preliminary work will begin in May with major in-water work starting in June. Forest Road No. 11 accessing Soda Springs Dam and the Boulder Creek wilderness trailhead along with a portion of the North Umpqua Trail that follows the river through the project area will be closed for an extended time.

In addition to the fish passage project, a tailrace barrier will be constructed at the Slide Creek powerhouse, upstream of Soda Springs, in 2011. This project will be similar to the one completed below the Soda Spring powerhouse in 2007 and will protect upstream migrating fish from effects related to outflows from the powerhouse. Other ongoing work along the North Umpqua includes improvements to the intake at Toketee Dam as well as numerous habitat enhancement projects for fish and wildlife.

Capital investment by PacifiCorp at the North Umpqua hydro project related to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission license over the next 30 years will total approximately \$120 million.

The 194-megawatt North Umpqua Hydroelectric Project is located in southwest Oregon in a remote area of Douglas County, about 60 miles east of Roseburg. With the exception of some transmission facilities, the North Umpqua Hydroelectric Project is located entirely within the Umpqua National Forest. Several state and federal resource agencies, some with overlapping mandates, are involved in resource management in the project vicinity.

Constructed between 1947 and 1956, the eight hydroelectric developments use water primarily from the North Umpqua River and from two of its major tributaries, the Clearwater River and Fish Creek, to generate electricity.

About PacifiCorp

PacifiCorp is one of the lowest-cost electricity producers in the United States, providing approximately 1.7 million customers in the West with reliable, efficient energy. Celebrating 100 years of service to customers and communities, PacifiCorp began in 1910 as Pacific Power. Today, 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 10,400 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.

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