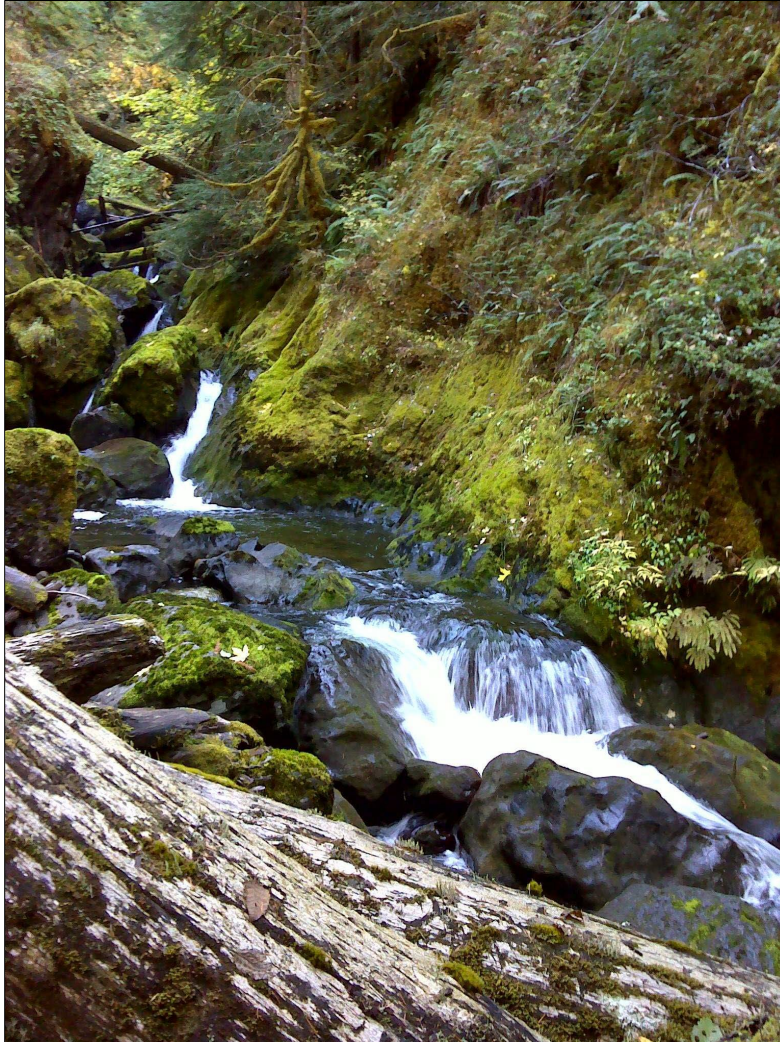


# Lewis River Hydroelectric Projects

*FERC Project Nos. 935, 2071, 2111, and 2213*



## 2023/2024 Aquatic Fund Annual Report



May 2024

## INTRODUCTION

The 2023/2024 Annual Report prepared by PacifiCorp and the Public Utility District No. 1 of Cowlitz County, Washington (Cowlitz PUD) (collectively the Utilities) is provided to the Lewis River Aquatic Coordination Committee (ACC) to fulfill the reporting requirement in Section 7.5.3.2 (3) of the Lewis River Settlement Agreement (SA). This report identifies the actions and selection of Aquatic Resource Projects (Resource Projects) funded from the Lewis River Aquatic Fund established under terms of the SA Section 7.5. Although the funding process is managed by the Utilities, the ACC provides final approval of funded projects. The report includes Resource Projects approved during the 2023/2024 funding cycle, and is available on PacifiCorp's website at:

<https://www.pacificorp.com/energy/hydro/lewis-river/aquatic-fund-applications.html>

## BACKGROUND

PacifiCorp owns the Merwin, Yale, and Swift No. 1 hydroelectric projects on the Lewis River in southwest Washington. Cowlitz PUD owns the Swift No. 2 hydroelectric project, also located on the Lewis River. These projects are operated as a coordinated system by PacifiCorp. On November 30, 2004, the Lewis River Settlement Agreement established the Lewis River Aquatics Fund (Fund). The purpose of the Fund is to support resource protection measures through funding aquatic related projects in the Lewis River basin.

As identified in the SA:

*“Resource Projects may include, without limitation, projects that enhance and improve wetlands, riparian, and riverine habitats; projects that enhance and improve riparian and aquatic species connectivity that may be affected by the continued operation of the hydroelectric projects; and projects that increase the probability for a successful reintroduction program upstream of Merwin Dam. Species that are targeted to benefit from Resource Projects include Chinook, steelhead, coho, bull trout, chum, and sea-run cutthroat.”*

Under the direction of the SA, the Utilities in Consultation with the ACC developed the “Aquatics Fund – Strategic Plan and Administrative Procedures” (September 2005 – Revised January 2009, September 2013, August 2016 and August 2017). This strategic plan provides: (a) a guide to Resource Project development, solicitation, and review; and (b) provides administrative procedures to guide implementation of the Aquatics Fund. The strategic plan is available on PacifiCorp's website:

<https://www.pacificorp.com/energy/hydro/lewis-river/acc-tcc.html> (Aquatic Coordination Committee - 2017)

On July 28, 2023, PacifiCorp announced the availability of calendar year (CY) 2023/2024 funds for aquatic related projects in the Lewis River Basin (letter to interested parties from Erik Lesko, PacifiCorp, see **Appendix A**). The letter requested that individuals or parties interested in obtaining project funding to submit their draft full proposal form to PacifiCorp by October 20, 2023.

All application materials and process timeline were provided electronically via the PacifiCorp website:

<https://www.pacificorp.com/energy/hydro/lewis-river/aquatic-fund-applications.html>

### 2023/2024 Aquatic Fund Schedule

Activity	Target Milestone Date
Availability of funds letter for aquatic related projects in the Lewis River Basin distributed to interested parties.	Jul 31, 2023
Draft proposals due to ACC	Oct 20, 2023
Conduct Proposed Project Information Meeting (applicant presentations)	Nov 9, 2023
ACC members submit written questions to project authors	Dec 1, 2023
Final proposals due	Dec 29, 2023
Full proposals and Evaluation template submitted to ACC for review and scoring	Jan 5, 2024
Completed scoring templates due to Utilities	Jan 31, 2024
Distribute combined scores to ACC	Feb 1, 2024
Conduct Project Selection Meeting*	Feb 8, 2024
Additional 7-day review period for absentee ACC participants completed	Feb 16, 2024
Submit annual aquatic funding report to FERC	Jun 30, 2024

\* project authors are not permitted to attend the selection meeting

No responses or project submissions were received by the October 20, 2023 due date. Therefore, no project selection process was initiated for the 2023/2024 funding cycle. In July 2024, the Utilities will again distribute a request for proposal letter to all interested parties indicating the amount of aquatic project funds available for the 2024/2025 funding cycle.

**APPENDIX A**  
**LETTER TO INTERESTED PARTIES**  
**FROM ERIK LESKO, PACIFICORP**

*Availability of Funds for Aquatic Related  
Projects in the Lewis River Basin: July 28, 2023.*





Pacific Power |  
Rocky Mountain Power  
825 NE Multnomah, Suite 1800  
Portland, Oregon 97232

July 28, 2023

**Subject: Availability of Funds for Aquatic Related Projects in the Lewis River Basin**

Dear Interested Party:

PacifiCorp owns the Merwin, Yale, and Swift No. 1 hydroelectric projects on the Lewis River in southwest Washington. Public Utility District No. 1 of Cowlitz County, Washington (Cowlitz PUD) owns the Swift No. 2 hydroelectric project, also located on the Lewis River. These projects are operated as a coordinated system. On November 30, 2004, the Lewis River Settlement Agreement (SA) established the Lewis River Aquatic Fund (Fund). On June 26, 2008, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission acknowledged this fund as a stipulation of project operating licenses. The purpose of the Fund is to support resource protection measures via aquatic related projects (Projects) in the Lewis River basin. To be considered for funding, the Projects must meet each of the following priority objectives as specified in the project operating licenses and the SA:

- (1) Benefit to fish recovery throughout the North Fork Lewis River, with priority to federal ESA-listed species;*
- (2) Support of the reintroduction of anadromous fish throughout the Basin; and*
- (3) Enhancement to fish habitat in the Lewis River Basin, with priority given to the North Fork Lewis River.*

This letter is to provide you the opportunity to submit proposals for Lewis River Aquatic Project funding. The total Fund amount available this year is limited to **\$729,860.97** for Resource Projects and **\$505,018.19** for Bull Trout Projects. Design-only projects will be considered during this 2023/2024 funding cycle and will be evaluated for biological merit. If you know of other entities that may have an interest in seeking funding, please forward this opportunity to them. All Lewis River Aquatic Fund documents, along with a process timeline, are located at the following link: <https://www.pacificorp.com/energy/hydro/lewis-river/aquatic-fund-applications.html>

The Aquatic Fund Subgroup to the Aquatic Coordination Committee (ACC) completed a **Lewis River Aquatic Fund Priority Reaches** document which provides priority rankings for stream reaches within the Lewis River watershed. The Priority Reaches document is aligned with the Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board (LCFRB) Interactive map which is found on their website at [www.lowercolumbiasalmonrecovery.org/mappage](http://www.lowercolumbiasalmonrecovery.org/mappage). The interactive maps provide a wealth of information that should help project proponents in selecting areas to focus their habitat improvement efforts. For consideration of funding the proponent must demonstrate that they have reviewed both the Priority Reaches and the LCFRB Interactive map and selected appropriate projects/reaches from those two tools. Additionally, proponent must show how proposed project is consistent with fund objectives and priorities. Projects proposed in reaches other than those identified in the Priority Reaches document or high priority reaches in the LCFRB habitat strategy (Tier 1 and Tier 2) need a clear explanation of why they still support Lewis River Aquatic Fund goals.

To be consistent with certain comprehensive plans such as the *Lower Columbia Salmon Recovery Plan and the Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife Subbasin Plan (LCFRB 2010)* relating to Lewis River reintroduction efforts and the recovery of ESA listed threatened salmon and steelhead species, higher priority will be given to Resource Projects that provide benefits to Recovery Plan priority fish species and stocks reintroduced to or originating from upstream of Merwin Dam, with emphasis on spring Chinook. Resource Projects must have specific objectives and expected outcome(s) that help attain the objectives of the Aquatic Fund.

Bull Trout Project funding is available this year and we invite you to review the December 2017 Bull Trout project identification assessment. Proposals will be evaluated according to alignment with the assessment.

<https://www.pacificorp.com/energy/hydro/lewis-river/aquatic-fund-applications.html>

To be considered, applicants must submit a completed draft **Full Proposal Form** by close of business **October 20, 2023** and obtain acknowledgement from all owners of land needed to access the proposed Resource Project. Landowner(s) must sign a **Landowner Acknowledgement Form** indicating they are aware that the project is being proposed on their property.

Each applicant will have an opportunity for a project presentation to the ACC on **November 9, 2023** with final full proposals due by **December 29, 2023**. Full proposals will be evaluated and scored based on four primary categories: 1) benefits to fish, 2) scientific validity, 3) feasibility and 4) cost effectiveness. The Utilities and representatives of the Lewis River ACC will finalize a list of selected aquatic projects on **February 16, 2024** and notify applicants shortly thereafter. The Utilities will submit the annual Aquatic Fund Report to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission by the submittal deadline of June 30, 2024.

Please give attention to this excellent opportunity. If you have any questions, I can be reached at 503-412-8401 or [erik.lesko@pacificorp.com](mailto:erik.lesko@pacificorp.com).

Sincerely,



Erik Lesko  
Aquatic Program Manager  
PacifiCorp – Renewable Resources