



Contact

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Community engagement & acceptance

Skagit, USA

Overview

Scheme Specifications

Dam Name

Scheme operator
Seattle City Light

Size of scheme (MW)
690 MW

Country
Washington State, USA

Catchment area
19 209 acres

River
Skagit River

Effective reservoir capacity
Ross Lake 1 435 000 acre-feet
Gorge dam 8 500 acre-feet

Construction years
Gorge Dam 1919-1924
Diablo Dam 1927-1929
Ross Dam 1937-1967

Reservoir size
Gorge Dam 11 700 acres
Diablo Dam 910 acres
Ross Dam 240 acres

Details on sustainability aspect

Seattle City Light's license to operate the three dams that are part of the scheme expired in 1977. Several parties (including state and federal agencies, Indian tribes and an environmental group) moved to intervene in 1979. The Federal Power Commission (FPC), and its successor the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC),

“has required the City to consider the relevant issues with the intervening parties and to conduct studies necessary to the resolution of identified issues.”

It took 14 years of studies and negotiation to reach a comprehensive set of agreements in 1991. During this period Seattle City Light operated under an annually renewed license. The set of agreements encompassed:

- Fisheries
- Recreation and aesthetics
- Erosion control
- Wildlife
- Archaeological and historic resources and
- Cultural properties.

The agreements, according to a prior director of the FERC Office of Hydropower Licensing were the “most comprehensive set of Settlement Agreements for the public good ever submitted to FERC”.

[Passage of aquatic species](#)

The Fisheries Agreement resulted after negotiation with the parties on how to best operate the dams without depleting the salmon resource. The agreement primarily covers environmental flows and ramping rates in order to mitigate effects on salmon and steelhead as well as monitoring and compliance.

[Multiple use benefits](#)

The Recreation and Aesthetics Agreement provides funds for Seattle to continue to provide recreation opportunities and to improve visual quality, including such measures as screening and revegetation.

[Erosion and sedimentation](#)

Erosion control will occur at 37 priority shoreline sites and 18 road sites, both actively (placement of control structures, vegetation, etc.) and passively (monitoring to obtain additional information on the rates of erosion) and at any other sites identified during the license period.

[Environmental assessment and monitoring](#)

The Wildlife Agreement makes available funds for acquisition of wildlife habitat and habitat enhancement. Funds are also provided for long term monitoring and research.

[Heritage](#)

The Archaeological and Historic Resources Agreement makes provision for field testing and evaluation of archaeological sites that have potential to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places as well as mitigation and management measures for these sites.

The Cultural Properties Agreement will allow for completion of studies to catalogue cultural properties and analysis of the potential impacts the project may have on these.

Further Information

<http://www.lowimpacthydro.org/appdetails.asp?x=7>

[http://lnweb18.worldbank.org/ESSD/ardext.nsf/18ByDocName/EnvironmentalFlowAssessment-NOTEC2EnvironmentalFlowsCaseStudies/\\$FILE/NoteC2EnvironmentalFlowAssessment2003.pdf](http://lnweb18.worldbank.org/ESSD/ardext.nsf/18ByDocName/EnvironmentalFlowAssessment-NOTEC2EnvironmentalFlowsCaseStudies/$FILE/NoteC2EnvironmentalFlowAssessment2003.pdf)

<http://www.ci.seattle.wa.us/light/>

http://www.lowimpacthydro.org/Skagit/Press_Release.pdf