

Tribes, Agencies Find Common Ground That Could Improve Fish And Wildlife

SETTLEMENT continued
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from fish ladders for upstream, and one example for downstream would be a bypass for juvenile fish so they don't go through the hydropower turbines.

"The terms also provide for a collaborative process for resolution of water temperature issues downstream of the project," the release said.

Outside of the agreement, PGE has "remodeled spillways and is building a new fish ladder at River Mill Dam."

"The system includes eight dams, seven reservoirs, four power houses and miles of pipelines, canals, tunnels and fish ladders, including the North Fork, Oak Grove, Faraday and River Mill developments. It runs from Timothy Lake in the Cascade Mountains to River Mill Dam at Estacada."

In all, the upgrades will cost PGE \$150 million, said PGE Spokesman Mark Fryburg, or \$200 million if you include operation and maintenance over the 45-year life of a renewed agreement. These costs will be passed on to customers, but Fryburg said it is too early to know how big a rate increase that will mean. "As this brings costs up, other things may bring costs down," he said.

More than 53,000 homes are served by the Clackamas system dams, and this number will be reduced by about 7 percent because of these projects, said Fryburg.

"We're real happy with what they're doing," said Baker. "It goes a long ways to improvement of the watershed."

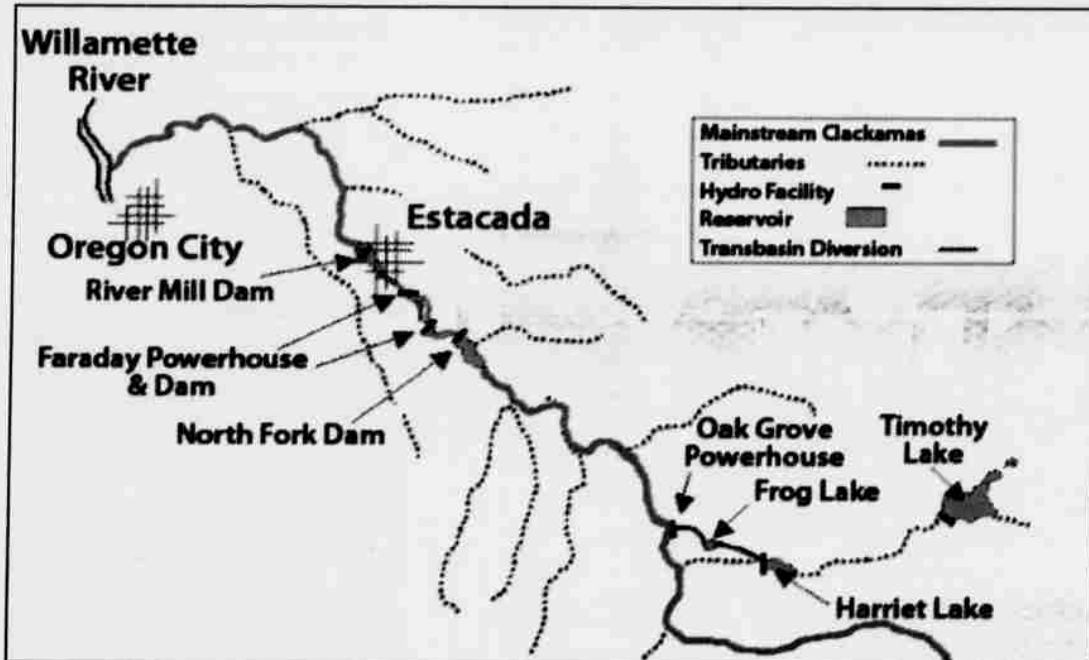
The agreement was seven years in coming.

And in that time, said Fryburg, "PGE has learned from Tribes that take a more holistic view."



Photo by Siobhan Taylor

Seven Years In Coming — Tribal Council Vice-Chair, Angie Blackwell, addresses the audience at the Clackamas Hydro Signing in the World Trade Center in Portland. Signers included representatives from state and federal agencies, environmental organizations, Native American Tribes, local governments, water districts and recreational business representatives. The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde have taken a lead role in this and other environmental issues throughout our ceded homelands.



At left is a drawing of PGE hydro projects on the Clackamas River. A recent agreement among some 33 stakeholders of these projects is intended to solve a number of problems, including the restoration of fish habitat. The agreement will cut electricity output on the river by some seven percent, and may result in a monthly rate increase.

Map courtesy of
Portland General Electric

Salmon Without Rivers: Why Spending More Money Won't Help Save Our Salmon

By Ron Karten

Fisheries Biologist Jim Lichatowich said that without two changes in approach, no amount of money will save Pacific salmon. Lichatowich is author of *Salmon Without Rivers*.

First, there needs to be one agency, one "institutional structure" whose sole function is to save the salmon; and second, that agency needs to set some concrete goals.

Lichatowich spoke on Wednesday night, March 8, at Portland State University (PSU) at the invitation of the PSU's Sigma Xi, the international honor society for scientists and engineers. The title of his lecture was, "Why does salmon recovery cost so much money for so little results?"

A recent *Oregonian* report, he said, estimated that the Northwest spends \$1 billion a year to stop the extinction of salmon, and \$6 billion if you take into account all of the ancillary costs, including higher energy costs and industries harmed by the efforts. And over the years, the Northwest has never come close to seeing the four million salmon swimming back up the river that used to end their lives there.



Jim Lichatowich,
Fisheries Biologist

"We haven't come to an agreement on what success looks like," he said.

We have, however, since the 1880s and 90s, imposed on the salmon "a faulty conceptual framework" by following the flawed principle that habitat losses could be overcome by plowing more money into hatcheries on one end and reduce harvests on the other.

"It was an entrepreneur's dream," said Lichatowich. "You have high quality fish that literally swim into

fishing nets at a predictable times of year," and by turning the babies out through hatcheries, you could develop similarly sized fish so that "industrial machinery was easily designed and employed to process them."

But the lifecycle of salmon have a number of elements or "links" that are necessary for the species survival and growth. Specifically, he said that salmon have to be certain places at certain times in their lives, and at these places they have jobs to do, like spawning, and when one or more of the links are broken, it makes little difference whether or not hatcheries increase their output or harvests are limited. The links have to be fixed.

"We have a lot of dedicated people but all are fixing links," said Lichatowich. "Nobody is making sure that all of the links are renewed." As a result, the salmon's lifecycle remains weakened and at risk.

When the salmon enjoyed "natural water systems," said Lichatowich, there might have been eight waves swimming down river to the ocean, and if ocean conditions were bad when one group swam through, the rest still survived. With hatch-

eries, he said, the whole group comes down together and when poor ocean conditions greet the group's arrival, all of the season's fish are decimated.

In addition, the salmon's natural course makes for a genetically diverse population while hatchery efforts end up with not nearly the diversity, so again, disease or other problems will kill more of each season's hatchery fish than it would of the same numbers of genetically diversified fish.

He compared the current way we look at the problem to icebergs. "The visible part of the iceberg includes the environmental issues, like habitat and fish ladders, water quality and temperature. The unseen part, however, he compared to "the assumptions, myths and beliefs that are buried so deep in our institutions that we're not even aware of them."

"It was a flawed view," agreed Mark Fryberg, PGE's spokesman. Still, he said, "It is very difficult to define success. We have to find numbers acceptable to a wide consensus. I don't know how close we'll get to better numbers without consensus."