

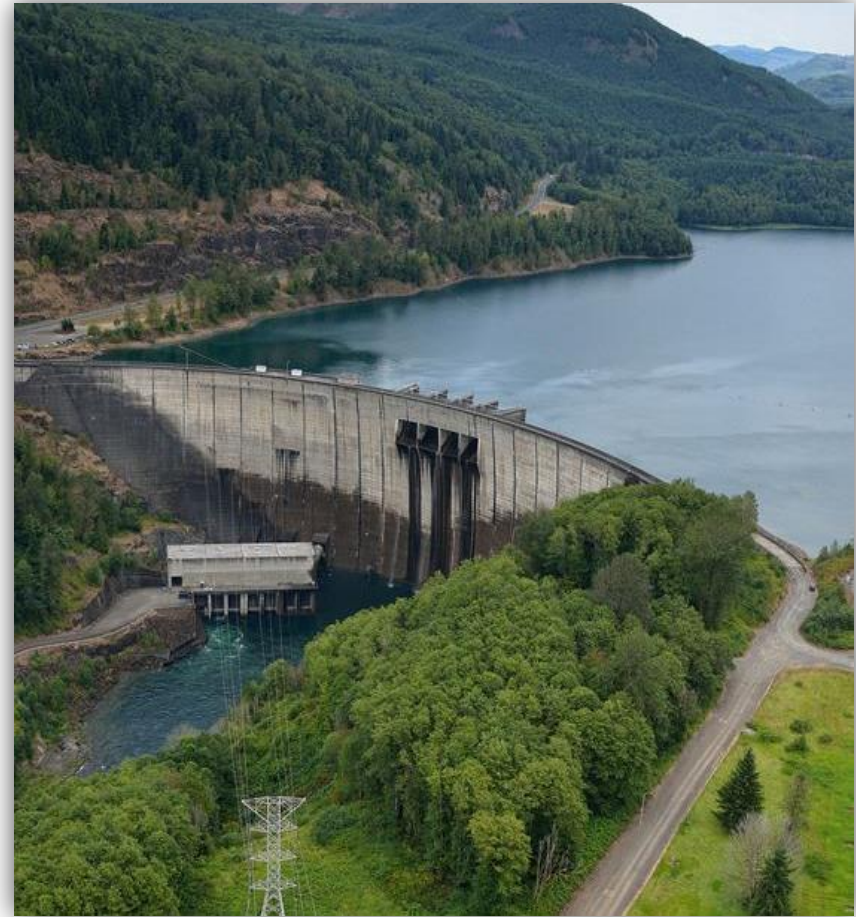
Cowlitz Basin Updates

Cowlitz River Fisheries and Watershed Science Conference

April 20, 2017

WHAT WE'LL COVER

- Background
- Recreation
- Cultural Resources
- Fisheries
- Emergency Notification Systems
- Cowlitz Flows Below Mayfield Dam
- Questions



BACKGROUND

Cowlitz River Project



MOSSYROCK SPILLWAY PIERS

- New seismicity numbers were released by USGS
- If piers fail, gates may fail, resulting in an uncontrolled release of water
- Submitted plan to FERC that proposed modifying Riffe Lake summer elevation to 749 feet



RECREATION

BOAT LAUNCHES

- Mossyrock Park: open and usable to 723 feet.
 - We are exploring temporary and permanent improvements.
- Taidnapam Park North: open and has a dock servicing elevations down to 720 feet.
- Kosmos and Taidnapam Park South: closed until further notice.

SWIM AREAS

- The Taidnapam Park swim area is closed until further notice.
- Mossyrock Park swim area is unusable at 749 feet.
 - We have proposed creating a new swim area.

PATH FORWARD - RECREATION

MOSSYROCK PARK

Proposed swim area modifications:



PATH FORWARD - RECREATION

MOSSYROCK PARK

- Proposed swim area and boat ramp modifications
 - Swim area construction timeline depends on when we receive permits
 - Construction for permanent improvements to the boat ramp would happen this winter (low water), pending permits

RECREATION – CULTURAL RESOURCES

“There is one positive aspect here. I had the day off and after only a couple of hours found more arrowheads and fishing lures than I would have with a full lake. Might turn into quite the tourist attraction to go out arrowhead hunting.”

– comment posted 02/24/17 on Lewis County Sirens.com (Riffe Lake article)

- FERC license requirement to protect cultural resources.
- We expect that FERC will ask for a mitigation plan and schedule as to how we’ll further protect the resources.
- Not a tourist attraction; still unlawful to remove minerals, wood and artifacts from the Cowlitz Wildlife Area and Tacoma Power lands without authorization.

FISHERIES – RIFFE LAKE

- Not an actively managed fishery
 - Resident coho
 - Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
- We cannot put non-native species into Riffe Lake due to the possibility of spill.
- Anglers agree that there are plenty of smallmouth bass in Riffe Lake. The following species were suggested as candidates for fish releases into Riffe:
 - Trout
 - Kokanee
 - Coho
 - Triploid program
 - German Browns



FISHERIES – RIFFE LAKE

Based on discussions with stakeholders and anglers, we have proposed the following actions:

- Consider planting 250,000 coho into Riffe Lake this spring.
- Continue to stock 100,000 rainbow trout between Mayfield Lake, Swofford Pond, South Lewis County Park Pond and Lake Scanewa annually.
- Consider planting 450,000 spring Chinook fingerlings into the upper basin this summer.
- Collect data through creel surveys.



FISHERIES – RIFFE LAKE

- We plan to host future public meetings to discuss policies and general Cowlitz fisheries information.
- Fisheries and Hatchery Management Plan update:
 - Done every six years as part of our federal license.
 - There will be an official 30-day public review period prior to the plan being finalized and submitted; we will host public meetings as part of that process (dates TBD).



FISHERIES – COWLITZ TROUT HATCHERY

- WDFW releasing steelhead and cutthroat trout April 15 – May 15.
- Should have a final count by the first week of June.



FISHERIES – COWLITZ TROUT HATCHERY

- Improvements for the 2017 release include:
 - Increased hazing
 - Fenced out baffleheads
 - Strung fishing line
 - Added block netting
 - Fish counters were serviced by the company that makes them (cleaned, replaced parts, recalibrated)

- Cowlitz Trout Hatchery Remodel Master Plan
 - Design and construction are scheduled to begin in 2018

EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION SYSTEMS

- We have tested our siren system annually for the past five years.
- This year, for the first time (unrelated to these changes), we conducted a coordinated test with the Lewis County Department of Emergency Management.
- Successful test was at 11 a.m. on Wednesday, April 5.
 - Siren test (Ike Kinswa State Park, Mayfield Lake Park and the Cowlitz Salmon Hatchery)
 - Lewis County alert notification system test: Sign up at lewiscountywa.gov or call (360) 740-1157 to register for the notification system (which has replaced “Code Red”)

COWLITZ RIVER FLOWS BELOW MAYFIELD LAKE

Tacoma Power adjusts the Cowlitz River flows below Mayfield Dam up and down as needed (called “ramping”) in order to operate in a manner that allows us to most effectively balance our objectives/responsibilities:

- Safety
- Power production
- Downstream flows for fish
- Regulatory requirements, such as the Endangered Species Act and Clean Water Act
- Adherence to reliability and physical/cyber security standards

COWLITZ RIVER FLOWS BELOW MAYFIELD LAKE

There have been, and will be, more frequent and less predictable flow fluctuations because we must maintain operational flexibility in order to respond to these factors:

- Varying load demands
- Maintaining system reliability
- Integrating volatile renewables, such as wind and solar, into the electric grid
- Economic conditions
- Weather
- An increase in the abundance of natural gas

RESOURCES

- Get updates at MyTPU.org/RiffeLake
- River flow and lake level information: MyTPU.org/lakelevels
- Email cowlitz@cityoftacoma.org

QUESTIONS?

