

NEWS



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The Forest Service and Pend Oreille PUD are working together to develop and conduct a collaborative, public process to determine the interests of the Tribes, public, special interest groups, and local, state, and federal agencies regarding the future of the Sullivan Creek Hydroelectric Project.

The non-power generating Sullivan Creek Project is located on 504 acres of National Forest System lands at Sullivan Lake and along Sullivan Creek. It is owned and operated by the PUD, which uses the Sullivan Lake and Mill Pond dams to maintain water elevations. The current Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) license for the project will expire on October 1, 2008. It was originally licensed by the FERC in 1958. The PUD filed a Notice of Intent to not seek a new license in September 2003, which began a process for surrendering the license. In October 2006, the PUD filed a Petition for Declaratory Order to have the license voided or expire on its own terms. The Forest Service filed a Protest in November 2006, objecting to the Petition and seeking a FERC regulated surrender of the project. In August 2007, the FERC issued an Order for the Sullivan Creek Hydroelectric Project, under which the current license will expire by its own terms with no further FERC action on October 1, 2008. At that time, FERC would no longer have jurisdiction over the project. The Forest Service and others filed for a rehearing of the FERC Order. To date, FERC has not ruled on the rehearing requests.

Meanwhile, in order to determine how the project will be maintained and operated in the future, the Forest Service and PUD are working together to develop a collaborative process in order to gather information from members of the public, Tribes, and other agency representatives, to help identify the most viable options for the future of the project.

Public meetings will be scheduled between April 1 and June 30. Meeting dates and times will be advertised in local newspapers. "Although the Forest Service will be responsible for the final decision", said Forest Supervisor Brazell. "No decisions have been made at this time, and the comments and input received from the public and other agencies will be an important factor of the decision-making process." Ultimately, the PUD will present its proposal to the Forest Service for approval.

PUD General Manager, Bob Geddes, also said, “We really hope the public participates in this process and expresses their interests in this area. We need to know what others would like to see done with this beautiful area of Pend Oreille County”.