

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Final Environmental Impact Statement Issued Grant PUD's Priest Rapids Project Reaches Relicensing Milestone

EPHRATA, WA – One of the final milestones in the relicensing process for Grant PUD's Priest Rapids Project was reached on Friday, November 17 when the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) issued the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the Project.

The FEIS documents the view of governmental agencies, non-governmental organizations, affected Indian tribes, the public, Grant PUD and FERC Commission staff. It contains FERC staff's evaluations regarding Grant PUD's Final License Application proposal and the alternatives for relicensing the Priest Rapids Project.

"Securing another 50 year license is our top priority," said Grant PUD Director of Natural Resources, Stephen Brown. "Although relicensing of the project is not complete, we are delighted to reach this milestone in the relicensing process."

Before FERC Commissioners make a decision on the final license, they will take into account all concerns previously filed as part of the Priest Rapids Project record and relevant to the public interest. The FEIS will be part of the record from which the FERC Commission will make its decision.

Ratepayers in Grant County and millions of other electricity consumers throughout the Northwest have a stake in the outcome of this relicensing period. The license application Grant PUD filed with FERC in October 2003 requests a second, 50-year license and includes nearly \$800 million in proposed mitigation and enhancement measures for the natural and cultural resources affected by the project. It was developed through a collaborative process involving local stakeholders, federal and state agencies and tribes and is backed by the best science available.

The original Priest Rapids Project license expired in October 2005. The project will continue to operate under an annual license issued by FERC until a final decision is made on the new license. The current annual license extends through October 2007.

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Grant County Public Utility District is a Washington state municipal corporation that began electric service in 1942. Owned by the people it serves, Grant PUD generates and sells electricity to Grant County residents and millions of customers throughout Central Washington and the Pacific Northwest. The Priest Rapids Project, comprised of Priest Rapids and Wanapum Dams, produces nearly 2,000 megawatts of clean, renewable and reliable electricity – enough to supply a city the size of Seattle. A leader in science based technology; Grant PUD is committed to finding effective measures for the protection, mitigation and enhancement of salmon, steelhead and other natural and cultural resources.

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