

BY ELECTRONIC FILING

December 19, 2014

Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
Mail Code: DHAC, PJ-12
888 First Street, N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20426

RE: Priest Rapids Hydroelectric Project No. 2114 License Compliance Filing – Article 410 – Wildlife Habitat Monitoring, Information, and Education Plan – 2014 Annual Report

Dear Secretary Bose:

Please find enclosed Public Utility District No. 2 of Grant County, Washington's (Grant PUD's) 2014 Wildlife Habitat Monitoring, Information, and Education annual report consistent with the requirements of Article 410 of the Priest Rapids Hydroelectric Project License.

On October 12, 2009, Grant PUD filed its Wildlife Habitat Monitoring, Information, and Education Plan (Plan) pursuant to Priest Rapids Project (P-2114) License Article 410, which was modified and approved by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) on September 8, 2010. As identified in the Plan, Grant PUD is to: 1) monitor recreation effects on wildlife and sensitive wildlife habitats; 2) provide signage, educational outreach, etc. to educate the public about the potential adverse effects of dispersed recreation on sensitive habitats; and 3) identify and implement corrective actions to control recreation impacts and to rehabilitate wildlife habitats. The Plan also requires Grant PUD to file with FERC an annual report that describes the results of the habitat monitoring efforts and status of the information and education program by December 31 of each year following FERC approval of the Plan.

In February 2014 Grant PUD identified a fracture in Wanapum Dam monolith 4, prompting Grant PUD to dewater Wanapum reservoir and institute a closure of the reservoir and associated access points. Grant PUD's website was valuable in communicating the closure of Wanapum Reservoir to recreation use. Due to the shoreline closure of Wanapum reservoir and labor resources assigned to work on issues associated with the adult salmonid and Pacific Lamprey passage at Wanapum Dam, Grant PUD did not conduct spring surveys to assess dispersed recreation impacts. A November 2014 survey confirmed that no dispersed recreational impacts had occurred at West Bar, Babcock Bench and Quilomene Bar, which can be directly attributed to the shoreline closures. Although the Priest Rapids Reservoir was open to public use, no dispersed recreational impacts were observed at North or South Lake Geneva. This was confirmed by a survey conducted in November 2014.

During 2014, Grant PUD completed several construction and restoration projects at wildlife and recreation access sites; which included Buckshot, Wanapum Upper Boat Launch and Huntzinger Fishing Pier. In association with these projects, Grant PUD installed signs and kiosks informing the public about responsible recreation practices and the potential adverse effects of dispersed recreation on sensitive habitats.

On October 15, 2014 a poster titled *Preserve Sensitive Habitat – Recreate Responsibly* was presented at Grant PUD's annual Archaeology Days along with a wood duck box display and tutorial on wildlife species. Grant PUD continues to explore, review, and select appropriate themes related to educating the public about responsible recreation practices and the potential adverse effects of irresponsible dispersed recreation on sensitive habitats. Finally, in 2014 Grant PUD continued to review, and select for installation at recreations sites, appropriate I&E Program media to be used, such as signs and kiosks (roadside and at key sites), brochures, pamphlets, audio tours, nature trails, newsletters, etc.

FERC staff with questions or comments, please contact Tom Dresser Grant PUD Fish, Wildlife and Water Quality Manager, at 509-754-5088, ext. 2312.

Respectfully,



Ross R. Hendrick
License Compliance Manager

Cc: Patrick Verhey – Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Steve Lewis – U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Chris Parsons – Washington State Parks
Todd Welker - Washington Department of Natural Resources
Mike Beckwith – U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
Rex Buck Jr. – Wanapum
Diane Priebe – U.S. Bureau of Land Management
Jim Eychner – Washington Recreation and Conservation Office
LeRoy Adams, Jr. – Yakama Nation

Priest Rapids Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2114)

**Wildlife Habitat Monitoring and Information and
Education Program**

2014 Progress Report

License Article 410

By
Public Utility District No. 2 of Grant County, Washington

December 2014

Executive Summary

On October 12, 2009, Public Utility District No. 2 of Grant County, Washington (Grant PUD) filed its Wildlife Habitat Monitoring, Information, and Education Plan (WHMIEP) pursuant to Article 410, which was modified and approved by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) on September 8, 2010. As identified in the WHMIEP, Grant PUD was to implement the WHMIEP over a five year period (beginning in 2011), including: 1) monitoring recreation effects on wildlife and sensitive wildlife habitats; 2) providing signage, educational outreach, etc. to help educate the public about responsible recreation practices to help minimize potentially adverse effects of dispersed recreation on sensitive habitats; and 3) identifying and implementing corrective actions to help reduce recreation impacts and to rehabilitate wildlife habitats. The Plan also requires Grant PUD to file, with FERC, an annual report that describes the results of the habitat monitoring efforts and status of the information and education program by December 31 of each year following FERC approval of the WHMIEP. This document is the annual report for calendar year 2014.

Year 2014 marked the fourth full year of implementation of the WHMIEP. In 2014, five habitat areas within the Priest Rapids Project (Project) were surveyed in the fall seeking potential dispersed recreation effects on wildlife and sensitive wildlife habitats. In total, approximately 3 miles of Priest Rapids shoreline was surveyed in 2014.

Emergency conditions associated with a fracture discovered on monolith #4 of the Wanapum Dam spillway (on February 27, 2014) resulted in the slow steady drawdown of Wanapum Reservoir to an elevation of 541 feet to 543 feet above mean sea level. Concerns over public safety and exposure of sensitive cultural resources resulted in the closure of the Wanapum Reservoir shoreline to public access throughout the entirety of the recreation season.

Due to the shoreline closure of Wanapum reservoir and labor resources assigned to work on issues associated with the adult salmonid and Pacific Lamprey passage at Wanapum Dam, Grant PUD did not conduct spring surveys to assess dispersed recreation impacts. A November 2014 survey confirmed that no dispersed recreational impacts had occurred at West Bar, Babcock Bench and Quilomene Bar, which can be directly attributed to the shoreline closures. Although the Priest Rapids Reservoir was open to public use, no dispersed recreational impacts were observed at North or South Lake Geneva. This was confirmed by a survey conducted in November 2014.

During 2014, Grant PUD proceeded with several construction and restoration projects at wildlife and recreation access sites; which included Buckshot, Wanapum Upper Boat Launch and Huntzinger Fishing Pier. These projects provided an opportunity for installation of signage and kiosks.

Grant PUD continues to implement the Information and Education (I&E) Program, with the ongoing development of a public website and in-person education program designed to help inform the public about responsible recreation practices and the potential adverse effects of irresponsible dispersed recreation on sensitive habitats. In 2014, the website was valuable in communicating the closure of Wanapum Reservoir to recreation use.

On October 15, 2014 a poster titled *Preserve Sensitive Habitat – Recreate Responsibly* was presented at Grant PUD's annual Archaeology Days along with a wood duck box display and tutorial on wildlife species. Grant PUD continues to explore, review, and select appropriate

themes related to educating the public about responsible recreation practices and the potential adverse effects of irresponsible dispersed recreation on sensitive habitats. Finally, in 2014 Grant PUD continued to review, and select for installation at recreations sites, appropriate I&E Program media to be used, such as signs and kiosks (roadside and at key sites), brochures, pamphlets, audio tours, nature trails, newsletters, etc.

Table of Contents

1.0	Introduction.....	1
2.0	Monitoring, Information and Education Plan Methods	1
2.1	Monitoring Recreation Effects on Wildlife and Sensitive Wildlife Habitats	1
2.1.1	West Bar.....	4
2.1.2	Babcock Bench	4
2.1.3	Quilomene Bar	4
2.1.4	North of Lake Geneva.....	4
2.1.5	South of Lake Geneva.....	4
2.2	Monitor Wanapum Reservoir and Incident Response	4
2.3	Wildlife Information and Education Program Approach.....	5
3.0	Monitoring, Information, and Education Plan Results	5
3.1	Monitoring Recreation Effects on Wildlife and Sensitive Wildlife Habitats	5
3.1.1	West Bar, Babcock Bench and Quilomene Bar	5
3.1.2	North and South of Lake Geneva.....	6
3.2	Website	6
3.3	Signage.....	7
3.3.1	Education Outreach.....	8
4.0	Summary	9
	List of Literature	11

List of Figures

Figure 1	Habitat monitoring areas for Wanapum Reservoir.	2
Figure 2	Habitat monitoring areas for Priest Rapids Reservoir.	3
Figure 3	Screen shot of the Grant PUD Recreation Map website.....	7
Figure 4	Public Use Rules Sign.....	8
Figure 5	Huntzinger Fishing Pier Kiosk and Educational Signage.....	8
Figure 6	Archaeology Days attendees inspect the wood duck box.....	9

1.0 Introduction

On October 12, 2009, Public Utility District No. 2 of Grant County, Washington (Grant PUD) filed its Wildlife Habitat Monitoring, Information, and Education Plan (WHMIEP) pursuant to Article 410, which was modified and approved by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) on September 8, 2010. As identified in the WHMIEP, Grant PUD has begun implementation of the WHMIEP over the next five years (beginning in 2011), which has included:

- 1). monitoring recreation effects on wildlife and sensitive wildlife habitats;
- 2). providing signage, educational outreach, etc. to help potentially avoid adverse effects of dispersed recreation on sensitive habitats; and
- 3). identifying and implementing corrective actions to help reduce recreation impacts and to rehabilitate wildlife habitats.

The WHMIEP requires Grant PUD to file with FERC an annual report that describes the results of the habitat monitoring efforts and status of the information and education program by December 31 of each year following FERC approval of the WHMIEP. This document is the annual Wildlife Monitoring, Information and Education (I&E) report for calendar year 2014.

2.0 Monitoring, Information and Education Plan Methods

2.1 Monitoring Recreation Effects on Wildlife and Sensitive Wildlife Habitats

In 2011, Grant PUD identified five habitat areas to be monitored (three on Wanapum Reservoir and two on Priest Rapids Reservoir). The five locations monitored in 2014 included: 1) West Bar (7 miles); 2) Quilomene Bar (2 miles); 3) Babcock Bench (3 miles); 4) North of Lake Geneva (2 miles); and 5) South of Lake Geneva (1 mile). Selected habitat areas monitored in 2014 are illustrated in Figure 1 and Figure 2. Provisions and criteria for identifying and implementing corrective actions to control impacts and to rehabilitate habitats were identified in the WHMIEP.

These sites were selected because they contain one or more state and/or federally listed plant species or were identified as priority habitat by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife Priority Habitats and Species (PHS) database (WDFW 2008). In addition to the condition of the habitat at the site, the proximity of the site to public access, evidence of recreation occurring at or near the site, and the potential for recreation impacts at the site in the future was also considered during the selection of the monitoring locations.

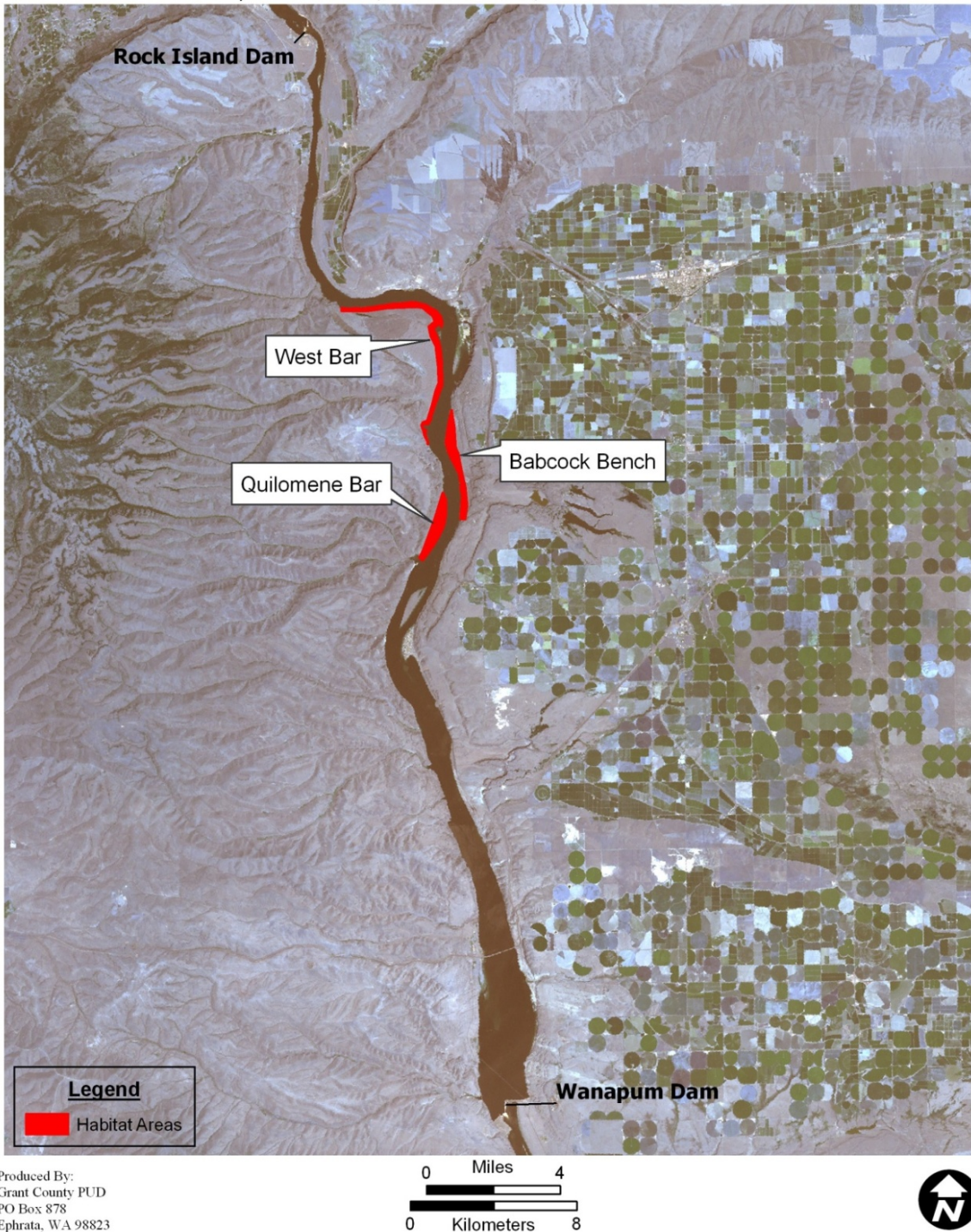
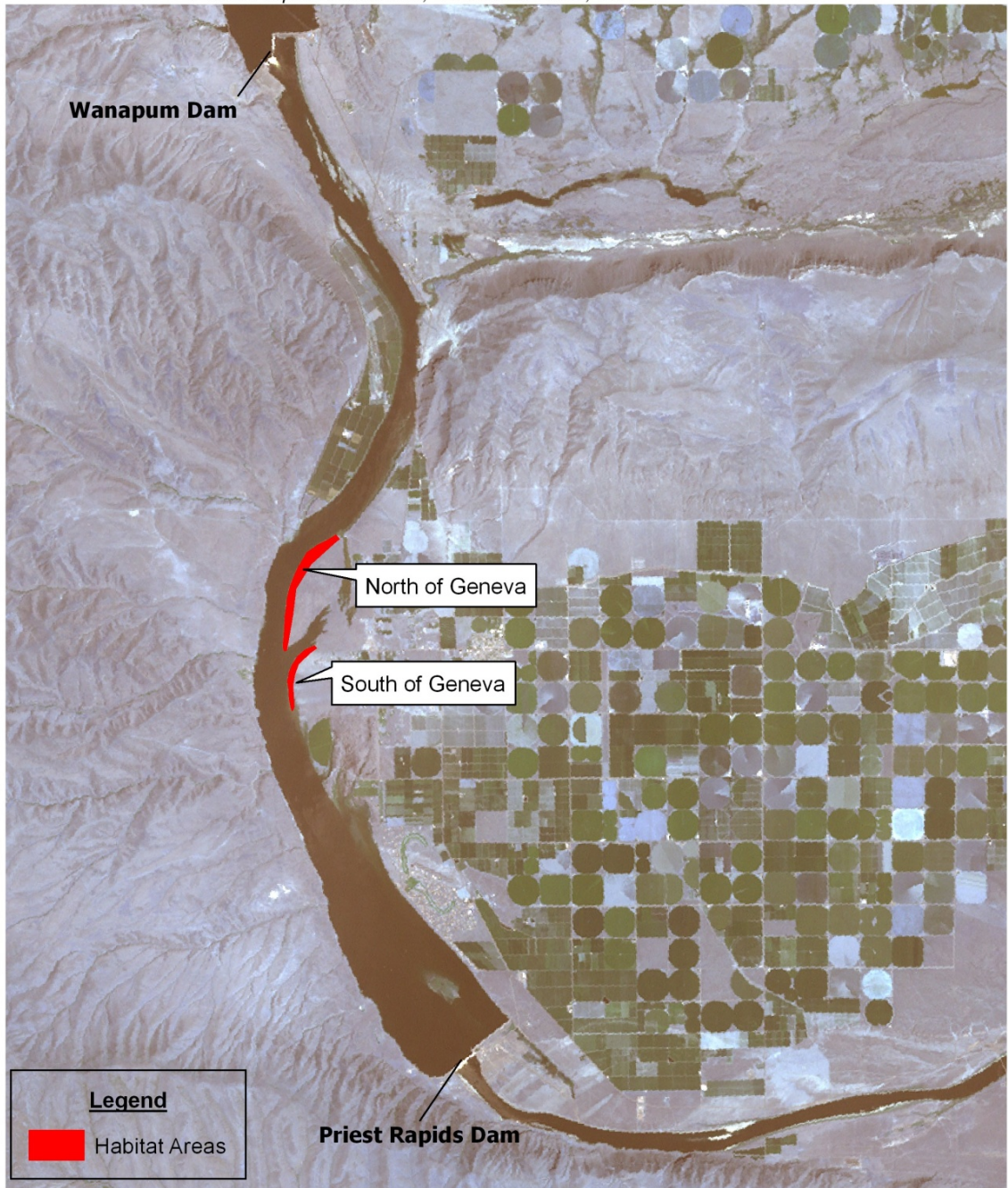


Figure 1 **Habitat monitoring areas for Wanapum Reservoir.**



Produced By:
Grant County PUD
PO Box 878
Ephrata, WA 98823

Figure 2 **Habitat monitoring areas for Priest Rapids Reservoir.**

2.1.1 West Bar

West Bar is located on Wanapum Reservoir directly across the river from Crescent Bar (Figure 1), a popular recreation area. This site was selected for monitoring because (1) it is listed as priority habitat for mule deer and elk in WDFW's PHS database (WDFW 2008), (2) in normal operating conditions it is readily accessible to the public, (3) it is located near Crescent Bar, a known and established recreation site, and (4) the habitat at the site is currently in good condition.

2.1.2 Babcock Bench

Babcock Bench is located on the left bank south of Crescent Bar (Figure 1) and, in normal years, is readily accessible by boat from both Crescent Bar and Sunland boat launches. This site was selected for monitoring because (1) it is listed as priority habitat for chukar in WDFW's PHS database (WDFW 2008), (2) in normal operating years it is readily accessible to the public, (3) it is located near Quilomene Dune, Crescent Bar, and Sunland, all known and established recreation sites, and (4) the habitat at the site is currently in good condition.

2.1.3 Quilomene Bar

Quilomene Bar is located on the right bank just north of Quilomene Dune (Figure 1). Quilomene Bar, in normal years, is readily accessible by boat from both Crescent Bar and Sunland boat launches. This site was selected for monitoring because (1) it is listed as priority habitat for mule deer and elk in WDFW's PHS database (WDFW 2008), (2) in normal operating years it is readily accessible to the public, (3) it is located near Quilomene Dune, Crescent Bar, and Sunland, all known and established recreation sites, and (4) the habitat at the site is currently in good condition.

2.1.4 North of Lake Geneva

Lake Geneva is a large cove located on the left bank of Priest Rapids Reservoir (Figure 2). North of Lake Geneva is a popular area for hunting and fishing. This site was selected for monitoring because (1) it is listed as priority habitat for urban natural open space in WDFW's PHS database (WDFW 2008), (2) it is readily accessible to the public, (3) it is commonly used by both hunters and fishermen, and (4) the habitat at the site is currently in good condition.

2.1.5 South of Lake Geneva

Lake Geneva is a large cove located on the left bank of Priest Rapids Reservoir (Figure 2). South of Lake Geneva is a popular area for hunting and fishing. This site was selected for monitoring because (1) it is listed as priority habitat for urban natural open space in WDFW's PHS database (WDFW 2008), (2) it is readily accessible to the public, (3) it is commonly used by both hunters and fishermen, and (4) the habitat at the site is currently in good condition.

2.2 Monitor Wanapum Reservoir and Incident Response

On February 27, 2014, a horizontal fracture was discovered in the spillway monolith No. 4 at Wanapum Dam. The fracture occurred on the upstream face of the structure, measuring approximately 2 inches high by 65 feet long on the spillway monolith. Grant PUD immediately initiated its Emergency Action Plan (EAP; level B) and began to draw the Wanapum Reservoir down in a steady controlled state.

As of March 4, 2014, the Wanapum Reservoir was lowered from a standard operating range of 560-571.5 feet to a safe operating elevation range between 541 and 545 feet. On December 1, 2014 Grant PUD achieved a major milestone by completing an intermediate refill of Wanapum Reservoir. The operation range of this intermediate pool raise is 558 - 562 feet above sea level.

As a result of the drawdown 38 river miles of shoreline between Wanapum and Rock Island dams was dewatered up to almost 26 vertical feet. To avoid damage to aquatic and riparian habitat exposed by the drawdown, as well as to protect the public from hazards associated with the exposed shoreline and protect sensitive cultural resources, access to the reservoir and shorelines was closed to the public.

Grant PUD, the Wanapums, and representatives from multiple law enforcement entities monitored the Wanapum Reservoir shoreline throughout the recreation season and through the date of this report. Monitoring occurred on a daily basis utilizing foot and vehicular-based inspections, monitoring stations at boat launches, boat-based surveys and occasional helicopter inspections. The focus of inspections was on potential human uses in violation of closures, but also included monitoring of potential erosion and risk to sensitive natural and cultural resources.

2.3 Wildlife Information and Education Program Approach

Grant PUD has been developing and implementing an Information and Education (I&E) Program featuring a website (<http://www.grantpud.org/community/rec-area-maps>) used to educate the public about responsible recreation practices and the potential adverse effects of irresponsible dispersed recreation on sensitive habitats. In addition, Grant PUD has participated in Archeology Days presenting information to schoolchildren about the types of wildlife and habitat in the project area, and their importance to the environment and quality of life in the Mid-Columbia River. Educational signage has been developed for installation at access points under construction in late 2013 and 2014. Lastly, Grant PUD has been designing an Interpretive Center that would include a section of the Interpretive Center focused on wildlife species and habitat. Once constructed the Interpretive Center would be open to the public with regularly scheduled hours.

3.0 Monitoring, Information, and Education Plan Results

In total, over 12 miles of Wanapum Reservoir shoreline and 3 miles of Priest Rapids Reservoir shoreline were surveyed in 2014 for potential impacts to sensitive wildlife habitat areas. In normal years monitoring is completed prior to the recreation season in March/April and again in October. As a result of the emergency action associated with the fracture, spring monitoring in 2014 was canceled. Thus monitoring was limited to the fall. Spring and fall monitoring will resume in 2015.

3.1 Monitoring Recreation Effects on Wildlife and Sensitive Wildlife Habitats

No recreational use of sensitive wildlife areas was found in 2014. Thus no disturbed areas/exposed soils (fire pits, trampling, and trails) were found during inspections, necessitating corrective action.

3.1.1 West Bar, Babcock Bench and Quilomene Bar

West Bar, Babcock Bench and Quilomene Bar were surveyed in November 2014. As anticipated no dispersed recreation sites were found at these sites, as a result of the shoreline closure.

3.1.2 North and South of Lake Geneva

Consistent with observations that occurred in 2013, no dispersed recreation sites or signs of dispersed recreation impacts were found at either the north or south Lake Geneva during the survey conducted on November 20, 2014. A spring survey was not completed in 2014, as labor resources were allocated to address adult anadromous fish and Pacific lamprey passage at Wanapum Dam throughout the bulk of 2014.

3.2 Website

In 2014 Grant PUD continued to develop and implement the Information and Education (I&E) Program featuring a website used to educate the public about responsible recreation practices and the potential adverse effects of irresponsible dispersed recreation on sensitive habitats, as well as provide information that will help educate the public about the types of wildlife, and their importance to the environment in the Project area. The recreation and wildlife information and education website was a valuable tool communicating with public regarding closures of boat launches, recreation sites and shorelines of Wanapum Reservoir, in response to the fracture over the past year.

The I&E Program website was activated in 2013 and has been coordinated with I&E provisions of Article 409, 410, and 418. To maintain the I&E Program website over the term of the new license, Grant PUD has been providing long-term internal web development support for the program, and has funded annual operation and updating as new information is collected and wildlife, shoreline, and recreation measures are implemented for the duration of the license. We will continue web development in 2015.

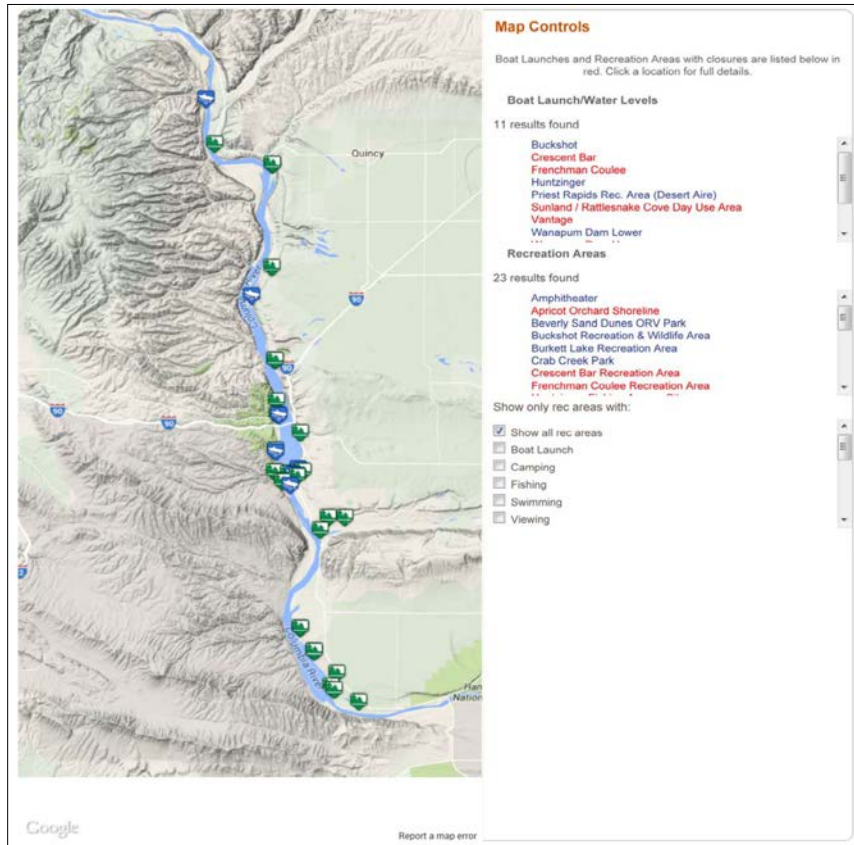


Figure 3 Screen shot of the Grant PUD Recreation Map website.

3.3 Signage

In addition to the I&E website, Grant PUD’s Fish Wildlife and Water Quality (FWWQ) department, Lands and Recreation department, and Communications staff have collaboratively developed posters and signage to educating the public about the importance of preventing adverse effects of recreation on the river, shorelines and sensitive habitats. In 2014 Grant PUD developed and installed numerous signs (Figure 4) and kiosks (Figure 5), at recreation sites constructed during the year. We will continue development and installation of signs and kiosks in 2015.

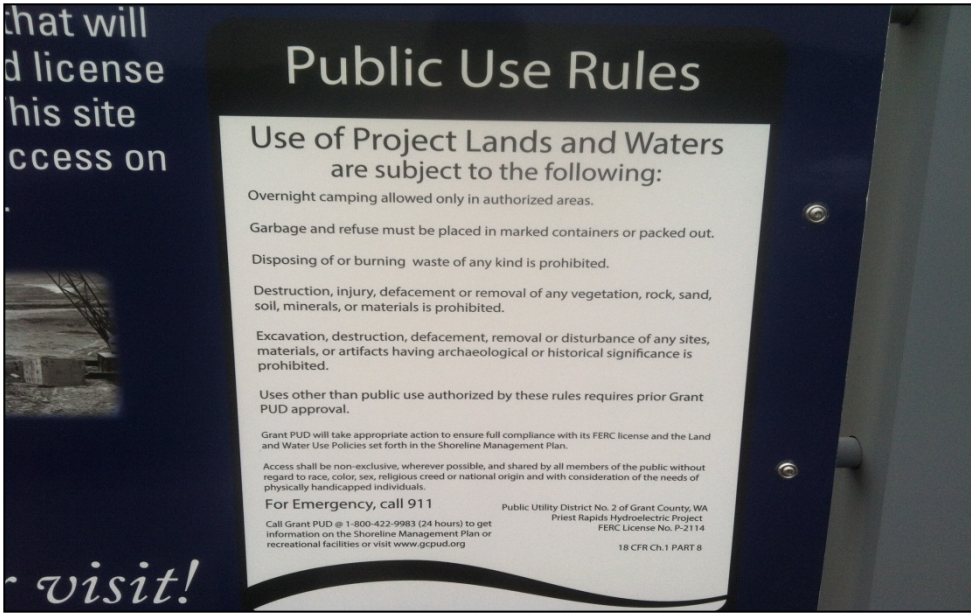


Figure 4 Public Use Rules Sign



Figure 5 Huntzinger Fishing Pier Kiosk and Educational Signage

3.3.1 Education Outreach

On October 15, 2014 a poster titled *Preserve Sensitive Habitat – Recreate Responsibly*, a wood duck box model display, a poster of wildlife species in the project area and associated materials

were presented at the annual Archaeology Days held annually in Beverly, Washington. A total of 585 students attended the event, with numerous adult chaperones present as well. The presented poster highlighted the adverse impacts irresponsible recreation practices can have on sensitive wildlife habitat, and included the following:

- 1). focusing on off-road vehicle use in undesignated areas,
- 2). leaving trash and garbage behind,
- 3). riding or walking off designated trails, and
- 4). irresponsible campfire practices.



Figure 6 Archaeology Days attendees inspect the wood duck box.

4.0 Summary

Grant PUD completed its fourth full year of wildlife monitoring, information and education efforts as documented in this WHMIEP, which included:

- 1). surveying five habitat areas for dispersed recreational effects on sensitive wildlife habitat areas,
- 2). monitoring and responding to emergency drawdown of Wanapum Reservoir,
- 3). website development and usage,
- 4). signage development and installation, and
- 5). public education and outreach.

Grant PUD will continue with to monitor the five habitat areas bi-annually for dispersed recreational effects on sensitive habitat areas, once prior to recreation season and once following

recreation season. We will continue to monitor the potential effects of the drawdown on shoreline and riparian habitats and respond to any adverse effects accordingly. Grant PUD will continue to develop web, sign and education and outreach programs in 2015.

List of Literature

FERC (Federal Energy Regulatory Commission). 2008. Order Issuing New License for Public Utility District No. 2 of Grant County, 123 FERC ¶ 61,049, Washington D.C.

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. 2008. Priority Habitat and Species List. Olympia, Washington. 172 pp.

Washington Natural Heritage Program (WNHP). 2010. Geographical Information Systems Data Set. Olympia, Washington. Updated 2010.