



August 2023
Henry's Fork Watershed Council
PacifiCorp Ashton Hydroelectric Project Site Visit

Including:

- Ashton Reservoir Boat Launch
- PacifiCorp Pond/Wetland Complex Easements
- Ashton Dam Angler Access
- Ashton Powerhouse

Tuesday, August 15, 2023



Tour Itinerary – Tuesday, August 15, 2023

9:45 AM

- Meet at [Ashton Reservoir Boat Launch](#) (Watershed Council attendees may elect to meet at HFF to carpool).

9:45 AM - 10:15 AM – Ashton Reservoir Boat Launch

- Safety - Campbell
- History and facility overview - Stenberg
- Recent Osprey perch/nest and cavity nesting box monitoring (from 8/10/23) - Campbell
- Nest and perch maintenance assessment project - Campbell
- Boat Launch partnership with Fremont County and IDFG - Stenberg
 - In-Progress Recreational Use study to support relicensing - Campbell
- Wildlife Enhancement Plan Maps to provide spatial orientation for itinerary - Campbell

10:15 AM – 10:30 AM

- Carpool travel to [wetland complex](#)
- Get vehicles parked along roadway

10:30 AM – 11:00 AM – PacifiCorp Pond / Wetland Complex

- Overview of [Wildlife Enhancement Plan \(WEP\)](#) – map attached* - Stenberg
- History of easement acquisition - Stenberg
- Baum Conservation Easement with Teton Land Trust - Stenberg
- Irrigation piping projects – Rob VanKirk, Henry's Fork Foundation

11:00 AM – 11:15 AM

- Travel to [angler access](#) below Ashton Dam

11:15 AM – 11:45 AM – Ashton Dam Angler Access (If we are pushed for time we can forgo walking down to the angler access and move these discussion items to the lawn at the shop)

- Run of River Mode - Stenberg
- Flow Continuation Measures - Stenberg
- Diurnal flow fluctuations – Rob VanKirk, Henry's Fork Foundation

11:45 AM – 12:00 PM

- Return to PacifiCorp Shop/Office
- Relicensing overview and updates - Campbell
 - Study plan progress
 - Next stages
 - License verse License Exemption - Stenberg

12:00 PM – 1:00 PM



- Two groups to visit the Dam and Powerhouse – Campbell / Stenberg

What to bring:

- Sun protection – Long sleeved shirt, long pants, wide brim hat, sunblock
- Safety – closed toe shoes, layers, raincoat
 - Areas around pond and wetland complex may be wet*
 - Sturdy shoes are required for dam and powerhouse exhibit*
- Food and hydration – water, snacks for the tour, and a brown bag lunch

Anticipated Conditions:

PacifiCorp emphasizes safety throughout every role in the organization. Conditions in the field are always subject to change so it is important to be prepared, pay attention, and keep each other safe.



Tue 15 | Day

85° 

 15%
 SSW9 mph

Generally sunny despite a few afternoon clouds. A stray shower or thunderstorm is possible. High around 85F. Winds SSW at 5 to 10 mph.

 Humidity
43%

 UV Index
8 of 11

 Sunrise
6:29 am

 Sunset
8:30 pm

Tue 15 | Night

53° 

 15%
 ESE9 mph

Partly cloudy. A stray shower or thunderstorm is possible. Low 53F. Winds ESE at 5 to 10 mph.

 Humidity
54%

 UV Index
0 of 11

 Moonrise
5:26 am

● New Moon

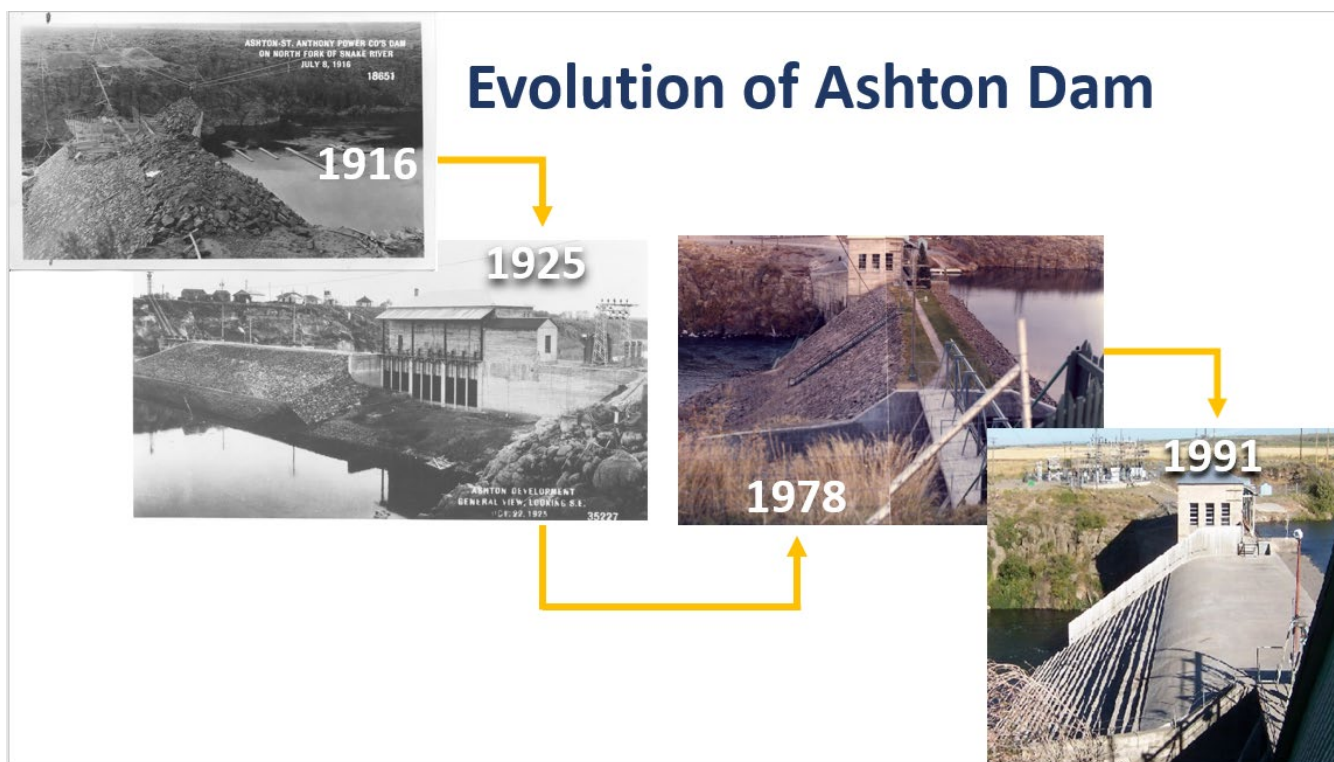
 Moonset
8:42 pm



Ashton Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2381)

Project Overview – History and Purpose

- Ashton Dam was originally constructed by the Ashton – St. Anthony Power Company between 1913-1916
- Purchased at a Sheriff's sale by Utah Power & Light (UP&L) in 1925
- 1989 UP&L becomes part of PacifiCorp along with Pacific Power.
- 1991 project to lower the dam crest to pass flood flows
- PacifiCorp changed the Utah Power & Light name to Rocky Mountain power in 2006
- Dam remediation project in 2010-2012
- License amendment to remove St. Anthony development from existing license in 2013
- Currently in process to relicense before expiration of current license on December 31, 2027





Project Overview – History and Purpose Continued

The primary purpose of the Ashton Hydroelectric Project is power generation with a maximum output of 6.7MW. Although it may be small by comparison to others, it's location and effective management offers efficient support to our customers energy needs. The project is operated in a run-of-river mode so does not experience drawdowns for agricultural water deliveries or flood control. The project provides two recreation sites, the headwater boat-launch and a river access below the dam.

The Ashton Dam is 56 feet high and 222 feet long and is constructed with a roller compacted concrete face, a placed concrete spillway crest, rock filled core and upstream compacted filter materials. The reservoir is 392 acres. Maximum flow capacity through the powerhouse is 2,575 cfs (by unit, 875, 850 and 850 cfs). Lowest flow month is typically in November. A sample of monthly flows are shown in the table below.

Ashton Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2381)

Table 3-3. Monthly, annual, average monthly, and average annual energy production at the Project, 2017–2021.

Month	Generation (MWh)					
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Average
January	1,550	2,893	2,747	2,827	2,296	2,463
February	1,588	2,430	2,628	2,569	2,118	2,267
March	2,569	2,900	3,182	2,866	2,367	2,777
April	4,470	3,827	4,016	3,426	2,864	3,721
May	4,782	4,909	4,932	4,326	3,225	4,435
June	3,849	3,856	4,085	3,406	3,416	3,722
July	3,147	3,871	3,777	4,214	4,062	3,814
August	3,232	3,246	3,308	3,274	2,806	3,173
September	3,163	2,957	3,135	2,599	2,235	2,818
October	2,855	2,410	2,769	1,976	1,504	2,303
November	2,762	2,149	2,260	1,850	1,414	2,087
December	2,883	2,600	2,750	2,206	1,721	2,432
Total	36,850	38,048	39,589	35,539	30,028	36,011



Ashton Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2381) Boundary and plant components



Wildlife Enhancement Plan (WEP) Overview

The Ashton Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2381) implemented an updated Wildlife Enhancement Plan (WEP) in 2016. This plan incorporated changes in management focus initiated by Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) for off-site measures at the Sand Creek Wildlife Management Area and the need to address expiring wetland preservation leases among other updates.

This updated plan describes the complete enhancement measures developed in consultation with the agencies to fulfill the requirements of License Article 405. To avoid potential problems associated with multiple documents or a complex amendment to the approved 1995 WEP, this update includes all current enhancement measures and replaces all previous WEP versions. All measures in this plan whether existing, new or modified have been approved by Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS). PacifiCorp intends to implement the measures outlined in this updated WEP for the remaining term of the license (expiring December 31, 2027).

Enhancement measures include:

- **Exclusion Fencing, 4.8 miles**
- **Raptor perches, 15**
- **Osprey nesting platforms, 11**
- **Wetland Conservation and Preservation Easements, 279 acres**
- **Fee owned habitat lands, 121 acres**
- **Cavity Nesting Boxes, 16 + or -**
- **Noxious weed control**

PacifiCorp has tracked the implementation and success of these tasks with yearly monitoring and adaptive management. Recent monitoring on 8/10/23, focused on identifying areas for fence repair and taking stock of the use and condition of perches and nest platforms around the reservoir. **The image to the right depicts observations in the 2020 annual report of cavity nest box use.** An additional comprehensive report is compiled every 5 years for submittal to IDFG, FWS and FERC.

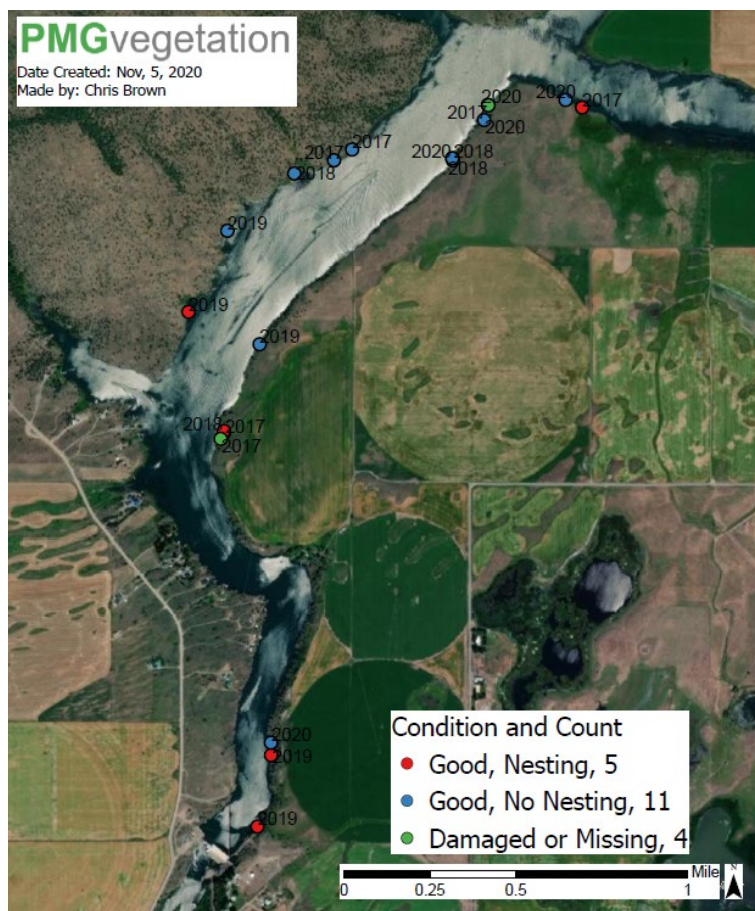




Table 4. Osprey Nesting Platform Nesting Success

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Number of nest platforms occupied (out of 11 possible)	5	6	7	5	4
Number of nest platforms fledging young (out of 11 possible)	3	4	4	3	3
Average number of young fledged/occupied nest (range)	1	1	1	1	1
Total number of young known fledged from all platforms	6	5	7	4	5

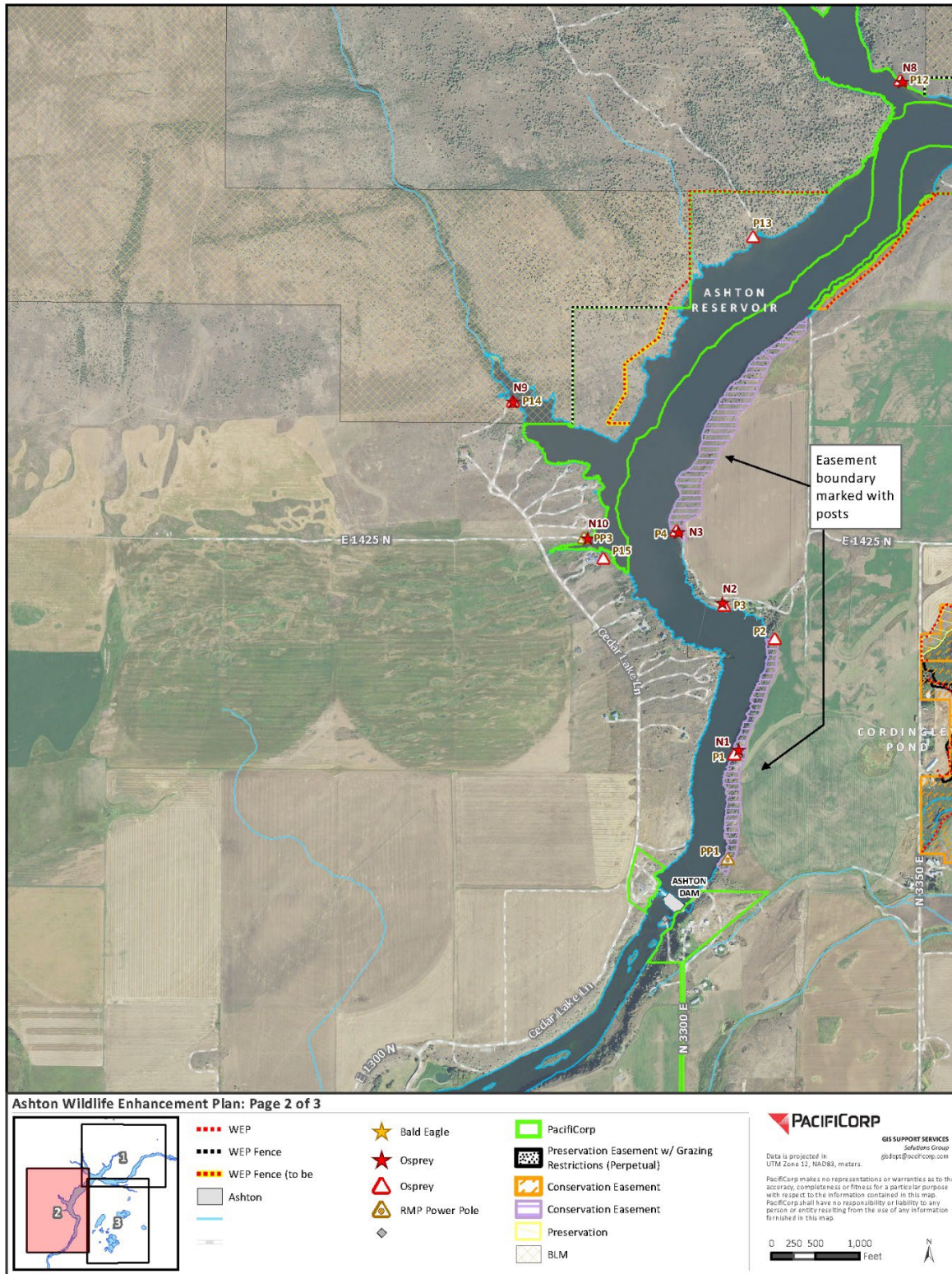


WEP – HWY 20 to Ashton Reservoir

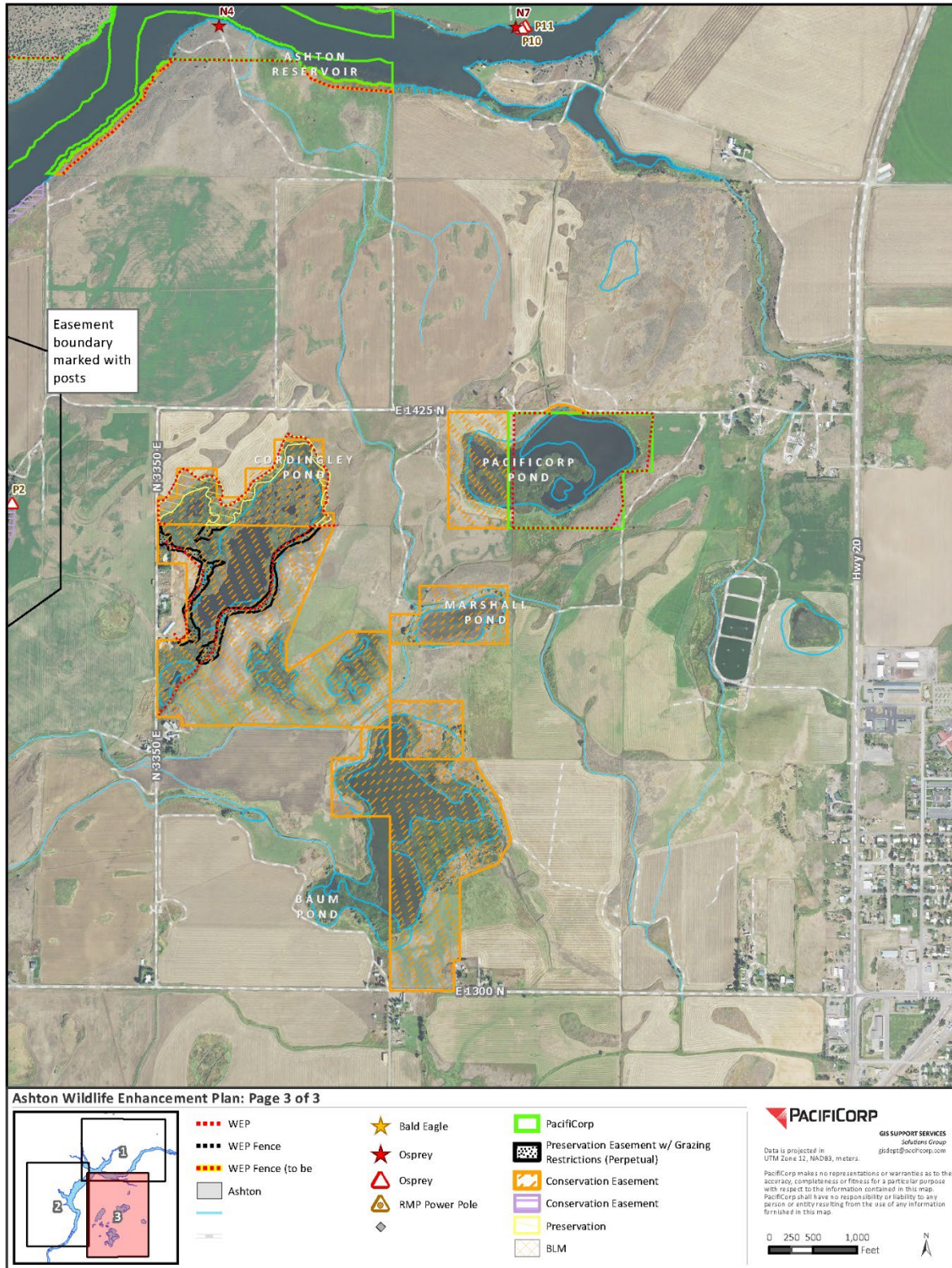




WEP – Ashton Reservoir to Ashton Dam



WEP – Wetland Easement Complex and PacifiCorp Pond





Run-of-River Mode

The Ashton FERC License requires that the project be operated in an instantaneous run-of-river mode. This is accomplished by using a load control system to operate the generating units to maintain the reservoir within a dead band of plus or minus, 0.15 foot.

In our relicensing pre-application document, we've proposed to operate in the future with a larger reservoir dead band of plus or minus .25 foot. This wider dead band will be more protective of downstream resources when diurnal upstream flow fluctuations occur.

Flow Continuation Measures

PacifiCorp has implemented two voluntary measures to provide downstream flow in the event of plant trips. When the powerhouse comes offline unexpectedly flow through the generating units is interrupted.

PacifiCorp voluntarily installed a 42" bypass valve that can open on battery backup power in the event of a plant trip even when there is a loss of station power. This valve can provide up to 300 cfs.

In 2021, PacifiCorp implemented an additional measure to make up the difference between the 42" valve and inflow to the project. One of the spillway gates was automated to open upon plant trips. The percent of opening is set in advance by the operators to make up the difference between inflow and the 42" valve. At this time this automated spillway gate will not open if station power is off-line and it cannot be enabled during ice conditions.



Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) Relicensing

- Begins with filing of the Notice of Intent (NOI) and Pre-Application Document (PAD) within 5½ to 5 years prior to license expiration
 - Filed July 5, 2022
- Either of Three Processes
 - Integrated Licensing Process (ILP)
 - Traditional Licensing Process (TLP)
 - Alternative Licensing Process (ALP)
- TLP
 - Requires FERC approval
 - (approved: August 29, 2022)
 - Ideal for less controversial/complex projects
 - Three-stage process with a flexible schedule
- Other option similar to TLP
 - Exemptions – potential for perpetual licenses contingent on providing capacity increases. Include regular benchmarks for revisiting an adaptive management plan.

Activity	Responsible Party	Time Frame	Target Date
File NOI and PAD, Request use of TLP	PacifiCorp	5 to 5.5 year before current license expires	July 5, 2022
Comments on TLP Request	FERC, Stakeholders	Within 30 days of Public Notice	August 4, 2022
FERC Issues Notice of Commencement and TLP Approval	FERC	Within 60 days of Public Notice	August 29, 2022
Notify FERC and Stakeholders of Joint Meeting and Site Visit and Publish Public Notice	PacifiCorp	At least 15 days prior to meeting	September 15, 2022
Joint Meeting and Site Visit with Stakeholders	PacifiCorp	30-60 days after FERC Notice of Commencement	October 4, 2022
Comments and Study Requests	Stakeholders	No later than 60 days after site visit	December 5, 2022
Study Plan Development	PacifiCorp	Following receipt of comments and study requests	January 11, 2022
Perform Field Studies	PacifiCorp	Up to 2 years	October 8, 2024
Circulate Draft Study Reports and Receive Comments from Stakeholders	PacifiCorp and Stakeholders	After completion of field studies	November 7, 2024
Draft License Application and Study Reports	PacifiCorp	After receiving comments on Draft Study Reports	July 4, 2025
Comments on Draft License Application	Stakeholders	90 days after receipt of Draft License Application	October 2, 2025
Final License Application	PacifiCorp	At least 2 year prior to license expiration	December 31, 2025
FERC Issues Public Notice of Application	FERC	Within 14 days of Application filing	January 14, 2026
Current FERC License Expires	FERC		December 31, 2027



Relicensing Study Plan Development and Status

PacifiCorp is licensed by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC or Commission) to operate the 6.7-Megawatt (MW) Ashton Hydroelectric Project (Project, FERC No. 2381). This current license to operate the Project was issued on August 3, 1987, and expires on December 31, 2027. On July 5, 2022, PacifiCorp commenced relicensing the Project by filing with the Commission a Notice of Intent (NOI) to File Application for New License, a request to relicense the Project using the Commission's Traditional Licensing Process (TLP), and a Pre-Application Document (PAD).

On April August 29, 2022, the Commission approved PacifiCorp's request to use the TLP, which authorized PacifiCorp to relicense the Project following the TLP. Subsequently, PacifiCorp held two joint meetings and a site visit on October 4, 2022. At the joint meetings, PacifiCorp informed the resource agencies and other interested parties, of its intention to perform:

- A baseline water quality study
- A Ute Ladies'-Tresses survey
- A wetland complex delineation
- A recreational use survey and condition assessment
- A cultural resources survey

Within 60-days following the joint meetings and site visit, the Idaho Governor's Office of Energy and Mineral Resources (OEMR), on behalf of the State of Idaho, provided two study requests – a baseline water quality monitoring study and an American with Disabilities Act (ADA) access study at the Project's Ashton Reservoir boat launch – to PacifiCorp. No other study requests were received.

Subsequent to receiving the study requests, PacifiCorp prepared a Draft Study Plan (DSP). On April 13, 2023, PacifiCorp distributed a Draft Study Plan (DSP) document to facilitate consultation with the resource agencies and interested parties so that a set of site-specific study plans are developed by PacifiCorp with input from the resource agencies and other interested parties. Comments on the DSP were received from the Idaho State Historic Preservation Office (ISHPO), the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), and the Idaho Governor's Office of Energy and Mineral Resources (IOEMR).

There is no requirement to prepare a formal study plan, as is required by the Integrated Licensing Process (ILP); therefore, there is no subsequent study plan determination by FERC. The purpose of the Final Study Plan (FSP) is to: address comments received from the resource agencies and other interested parties on the DSP; and, provide a revised set of individual study plans for those studies adopted and proposed by PacifiCorp.

The original list of studies was amended to include a winter season recreation use study to capture growing use by the public for ice fishing.