

**Seattle City Light Wildlife Report (Article 410)**  
**Skagit River Hydroelectric Project No. 553**  
**2007 Report (Covers 2001 to date)**

**Wildlife Management Review Committee/Land Acquisition Group**

Meetings have been held a minimum of once a year. At the beginning of each year, committee members receive a report on the previous year including a spending report, along with a plan for the coming year including anticipated expenditures.

**Land Management Plan**

Seattle City Light (SCL) finalized the Land Management Plan in 2006.

**Land Acquisitions**

SCL has been focusing primarily on land management rather than land acquisition, to be certain that potentially costly needs can be met within the budget allocated to the program. However, we have continued to pursue exceptional opportunities for acquisition of additional parcels.

In 2002, SCL acquired 140 acres of land on the Sauk River adjacent to property already owned by SCL. SCL is continuing to investigate the possibility of acquiring additional land adjacent to our present ownership. We made an offer in 2007 but have not yet received a response.

In 2003, SCL acquired two parcels from the Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) under the state's Trust Land Transfer Program. The two parcels were within land already owned by SCL in the Illabot and Nooksack areas. SCL is continuing to express interest to DNR in acquiring additional parcels of land in the Skagit watershed under this program.

In February 2007 we submitted a new set of maps to FERC along with a table that accounts for all land now owned by SCL under the Skagit Wildlife Mitigation Lands program.

**Road Maintenance and Abandonment Plan (RMAP)**

Under new rules adopted in 2001, the State of Washington requires owners of forest lands to maintain roads, including culverts and other drainage features, or abandon them to DNR standards. Each forest land owner must submit an RMAP for roads under its ownership. SCL filed an RMAP with DNR in 2002, and we have continued to communicate with DNR and provide updates. We hired a forest engineer to survey our roads and report on what needed to be done. SCL is abandoning roads not needed by others to access their property and obtaining DNR certification that abandonment is complete.

## Parcel-Specific Reports

- **Nooksack:** SCL's Nooksack lands include a bridge originally constructed for logging but no longer needed for that purpose. The river has been causing serious erosion to the north abutment. Rather than try to save the bridge, we have decided it makes more sense to remove it. We have signed a cooperative agreement with the Lummi Indian Nation to remove the bridge.
- **Bacon Creek:** The U. S. Forest Service road that crosses SCL's Bacon Creek property was rerouted away from the creek in 2004. SCL is now finalizing negotiations with the Forest Service for a new easement. The permit for the gravel pit on this parcel expired in 2004. Restoration activities at the pit, including tree planting, are substantially complete.
- **Skagit Lands:** SCL abandoned 17 miles of forest roads on the hillside south of the Skagit River in 2005. Additional small roads were abandoned in 2006. We did maintenance on one road section in 2006. Only one small road segment remains to be addressed, and we are working on getting permits.
- **Sauk Properties:** The Sauk River has been very active and some changes in the channel have altered the acreage of our ownership. We do not plan additional surveys. Since portions of roads were washed away, we have been having discussions with our neighbors about next steps.

## Wildlife Research Center

The Wildlife Research Center in Newhalem continues to operate under the management of the National Park Service.

## Long-Term Monitoring Funding to the National Park Service

SCL has continued to fund wildlife-related studies conducted by the National Park Service. Work is being or was conducted on the following projects:

- Inventory and distribution studies for bats and harlequin ducks
- Forest carnivore inventory
- Rare and sensitive plant surveys
- Population estimation for mountain goats
- Lake ecology and water quality study

## Wildlife Research Grant Program

The Wildlife Research Advisory Committee awarded its last project in 2003 before a hiatus of two years due to financial constraints. In May 2005, SCL re-activated the Research Grant program and reformed the Committee with two new members. To catch up with the Settlement Agreement obligation, the Committee decided to solicit proposals twice a year instead of only once. In the spring 2005 cycle, the program received a total of seven pre-proposals ---the most ever for this program. The Committee reviews all pre-proposals and selects some of these to

prepare full-length, detailed proposals, which are peer-reviewed prior to final selection and SCL dollar commitment as grants.

Since 2005, there have been two solicitation cycles each year for research proposals. The website <http://www.ci.seattle.wa.us/light/environment/WildlifeGrant/> has been upgraded significantly. Application materials and final reports are now available on the Internet. Table 1 shows the research projects that have been funded since the start of the program.

**Table 1: Wildlife Research Grants Awarded by Seattle City Light**

| Award Year | Research Topic  | Amount Awarded | Principal                               | Report Status        |
|------------|---|----------------|---|----------------------|
| 1999       | Do <b>Introduced Trout</b> reduce the genetic integrity of <b>long-toed salamanders</b> in high-elevation lakes       | \$51,667       | Liss, OSU                               | On website           |
| 1999       | <b>Grizzly Bear</b> presence and population estimate for the North Cascades   | \$61,331       | Wielgus, WSU                            | On website           |
| 2000       | <b>Grizzly Bear</b> presence and population estimate for the North Cascades   | \$25,000       | Wielgus, WSU                            | On website           |
| 2000       | Species identification and genetic differentiation among <b>Ranid Frog</b> populations in the Skagit River watershed  | \$29,642       | LaCava, OSU                             | Completed            |
| 2000       | Pilot study to develop a long-term <b>Landbird Monitoring</b> program at North Cascades National Park Service Complex | \$20,000       | Kuntz, NPS                              | Completed            |
| 2000       | <b>Macroinvertebrate drift</b> in non-fish bearing streams within the North Cascades Ecoregion                        | \$15,000       | Svensen, SVC                            | On website           |
| 2000       | Habitat selection by <b>Lynx</b> in the North Cascades  | \$74,555       | Kohler WDF&W                            | On website           |
| 2001       | <b>Avian Distributions</b> and habitat relationships across North Cascades National Park Service Complex              | \$44,200       | Kuntz, NPS                              | Completed            |
| 2001       | <b>Macroinvertebrate Drift</b> in headwater streams of the North Cascades   | \$39,052       | Svensen, SVC                            | Completed            |
| 2003       | <b>Grizzly Bear</b> outreach project evaluation   | \$49,952       | Conservation Partnership Ctr, Jim Davis | Completed            |
| 2003       | <b>Mountain Goat</b> habitat relations in the North Cascades  | \$59,137       | Rice, WDF&W                             | Completed            |
| 2003       | Potential impact of regulated flows on the life history and ecology of <b>black cottonwood</b> along the Skagit River | \$58,771       | Jeff Braatne                            | Draft being reviewed |
| 2005       | <b>Mountain goat</b> sightability surveys   | \$32,625       | Cliff Rice                              | Draft being reviewed |
| 2006       | <b>Wolverine</b> distribution and ecology in the North Cascades   | \$32,270       | Keith Aubrey                            | In progress          |

| Award Year | Research Topic  | Amount Awarded   | Principal                    | Report Status |
|------------|---|------------------|------------------------------|---------------|
| 2006       | <b>Clark's nutcracker</b> habitat use and relative abundance in the Cascade range | \$78,900         | Teresa Lorenz, Utah State    | In progress   |
| 2006       | Space use and habitat selection by <b>dunlin</b> in the Skagit river delta        | \$50,782         | Slater, Ecostudies Institute | In progress   |
|            | <b>Total</b>  | <b>\$722,884</b> |                              |               |