



DVWD PIPELINE NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER, 2020

LOTS OF CHANGES AT DESCHUTES VALLEY WATER DISTRICT!

OPAL SPRINGS FISH PASSAGE COMPLETION

When the Opal Springs Hydroelectric Project was built in the mid-1980s it did not require fish passage capabilities. Over time, and after fish passage was reintroduced to fish migration barriers downstream of Opal Springs, Opal Springs Dam was prioritized as the next hurdle to fish passage up the Crooked River by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Discussions regarding fish passage began in earnest in 1999 due to the possibility of Bull Trout being placed on the Endangered Species List. In the next few years several different agreements were reached, licensing orders established, a fish ladder work group formed and in 2014 a temporary fish transfer facility was completed. This allowed fish to be physically transported from the foot of the dam into the pool above.

In 2016, after the initial bid for construction of the Fish Ladder was well over the District budget, partnerships were formed with various agencies and contractors to reduce costs and raise additional capital for the project. Tough discussions and hard negotiations over settlement agreements and grant funding paid off in the end. Together with many partners,



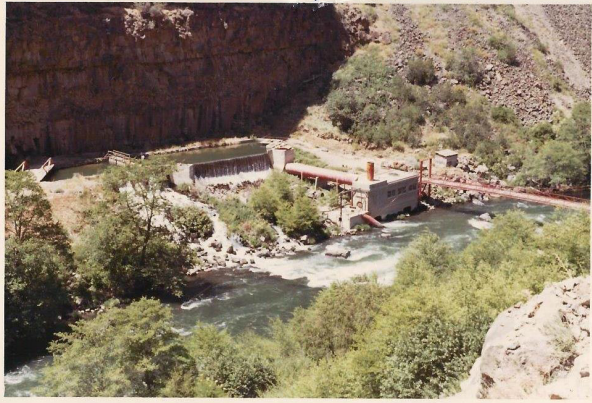
including the Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife, US Department of the Interior Fish and Wildlife Service, National Marine Fisheries Service, US Bureau of Land Management, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Trout Unlimited, Crooked River Watershed Council and PacifiCorp,

costs to the District went from \$14 million to about \$4 million. In 2018 construction finally began, with RSCI Inc. of Boise, Idaho as contractor. On November 15, 2019, after nearly 2 years of construction, the fish passage was finally completed and operational, and on November 20, 2019, the first Steelhead fish passed through the newly completed fish ladder – the first volitional passage in over 30 years! Ladder Characteristics: Vertical Slot Design with 38 cells (steps), 9 inch step height, 30 cfs discharge with 20 cfs attraction flow. A fish counter/camera keeps track of how many adult fish utilize the ladder.

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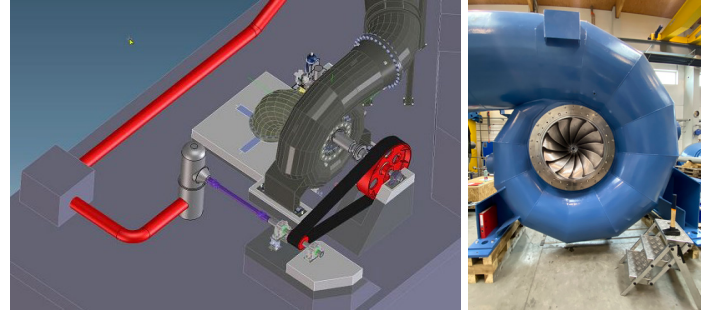
RIVER TURBINE

Before electric power was available for pumps at Opal Springs, water was pumped to the top of the nearly 900 foot canyon using the force of the river with two river turbines. Since 1985 the District has been utilizing electric pumps to drive the water up out of the Canyon. In 2019, the District began researching either restoring the old river turbines or replacing them with newer turbines. It was found to be more economical to replace the old turbines with a single, new, high-efficiency turbine. In 2019 the District ordered a new river turbine from Voith, Inc. The new, efficient turbine will be able to pump about 1500 gallons per minute (gpm) out of the canyon. The recent



Old Opal Springs River Turbine taken June 1966.

storm in May left Opal Springs without power for several days and unable to pump water out of the canyon. The new river turbine will save the District money in power costs and will also make it possible to supply customers with basic water supply even in the event of a power outage. The new river turbine is scheduled to be operational by the end of 2020.



Runner blades of new Voith river turbine.

NEW SMART METERS

The District has started replacing legacy meters with ultrasonic smart meters capable of transmitting meter reading remotely via radio signal. These new meters will improve the quality and consistency of our readings, resulting in more accurate and timely reporting and billing. The new meters will also provide leak detection capabilities. The District will soon begin to activate an alert system for our customers that will let them know, via email or text, of any potential leak. The new meters will also reduce the time needed to read each meter in person reducing overall cost of our meter reading operations. These new meters allow the District to provide additional customer support and ensure accountability for this community's essential water resource.



NEW "OPEN" OFFICE HOURS

Beginning June 15, 2020 our open office hours are 11am to 4pm. You can reach us by phone between the hours of 7:30am and 4:30pm. Other times are available by appointment by calling 541-475-3849.

MANAGER'S MESSAGE

2020 has been a year of change for many of us. The District has also seen some significant changes over the last year beginning with me. I became the new General Manager last August upon Ed Pugh's retirement after 33 years with the District. I am excited to be with the District and to be involved with this great community. Some additional changes for the District include this new billing format which provides a more comprehensive look at your bill including past water usage and other pertinent information. We are also expanding the District's offerings for paperless billing, online account access and additional online payment options. I'm excited to be part of these changes in anticipation that these changes will assist the District in our mission to provide safe and good tasting drinking water at a reasonable cost to existing and future District patrons while continuing a high level of customer service.



Joel Gehrett

– Joel Gehrett