



**US Army Corps
of Engineers** ®
Walla Walla District

News Release

News Release 08-67

Contact: Public Affairs Office

Date: July 25, 2008

Phone: (509) 527-7020

Dworshak workers stop outlet gate leak; permanent repairs to follow

AHSAHKA, Idaho – U.S. Army Corps of Engineers workers quickly stopped the flow of water when a malfunctioning regulating outlet gate at Dworshak Dam began to leak water into a machinery room at about 10:30 p.m. yesterday, according to Walla Walla District operations officials.

Dworshak Dam has three regulating outlet gates controlling the flow of spill water from Dworshak Reservoir to the Clearwater River. This spill supports fish passage in the lower Snake River by supplementing flows and helping control water temperature.

Officials at the dam said Outlet Gate-2 was passing water and did not fully close during operations, yesterday afternoon. The outlet gate could not be safely inspected to determine the problem because the bulkhead, a water-stop device lowered by crane into position to stop water from entering the gate areas of the dam, was already in use at Outlet Gate-1 by workers performing planned maintenance.

In response to the Outlet Gate-2 malfunction, workers accelerated their maintenance tasks on Outlet Gate-1 and prepared to move the bulkhead from Gate-1 to Gate-2.

At about 10:30 p.m. the Gate-2 leak increased, causing water to flow into the machinery room, down a maintenance passageway and out the downstream face of the dam. Maintenance crews worked late into the night to finish repositioning the bulkhead and stopped the water flow at about 3:30 a.m. today. After the leak stopped, crews inspected Outlet Gate-2 and noticed the pin connecting the cylinder to the top of the gate worked itself free, preventing workers from raising or lowering the gate.

“We are conducting an assessment to ensure we know what transpired and determine what repairs are needed,” said Walla Walla District’s Chief of Operations Division Scott Ross. “There was never a threat to the dam or public safety. The mechanical damage to the gate is repairable. The force of the water caused some secondary damage to lighting and related equipment in the maintenance passageway and machinery room, which we will repair as well.

“Dworshak’s crew did exactly what was needed for this situation – they worked all night and got it fixed. This is typical for this professional group. They came together in a time of need and used excellent teamwork to resolve the issue. The dam is safe and stable,” Ross added.

For more information, please call the Public Affairs Office at (509) 527-7020.

-30-

Public Affairs Office, Walla Walla District Headquarters, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 201 N. Third Ave, Walla Walla, WA 99362-1876

Phone (509) 527-7020 FAX (509) 527-7824

Website: www.nwww.usace.army.mil

E-mail: cenww-pa@usace.army.mil

Public Affairs Office, Walla Walla District Headquarters, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 201 N. Third Ave, Walla Walla, WA 99362-1876

Phone (509) 527-7020 FAX (509) 527-7824

Website: www.nww.usace.army.mil E-mail: cenww-pa@usace.army.mil