



**TOWN OF CONCRETE
NOTICE OF HEARING
LOWER BAKER
DAM - CREST
IMPROVEMENT
PROJECT,
FILE #: LU26-004**

Notice is hereby given that an application was made for the following proposal: Puget Sound Energy (PSE) has applied for a Conditional Use Permit (Zoning), Variance (Zoning), Shoreline Substantial Development Permit (SSDP), Shoreline Conditional Use Permit (SCUP), Shoreline Variance (S/VAR), SEPA environmental review, & a Fill & Grade permit to permit the Lower Baker Dam Crest Improvement Project (DCIP), which will make critical improvements to Lower Baker Dam, is anticipated to occur over a four-year period, beginning in the summer of 2026 and ending 2030. The crest improvement and scour protection activities are anticipated to be constructed in phases, progressing from the left abutment to the right abutment. The slope modification activity will likely occur concurrent with the other left abutment work during the first phase. To meet flood protection, minimum instream flow, and LBK system operation requirements, the powerhouse and many of the spillway gates will remain operational throughout the Project.

To meet FERC requirements for dam operation and safety, the Project includes the following **three (3) major components:**

1. Crest Rehabilitation: The Project proposes widening spillway bays and gates, increase height, and add a non-overflow section to prevent overtopping of abutments, add hoists to all gates, and raise access roads and critical equipment above probable maximum flood (PMF) levels. The Project includes improvements to the hydraulic capacity of the spillway by removing all spillway bay piers to widen the existing spillway bays, replacing every other pier, and by installing 11 double-wide and one narrow spillway gates that can be operated remotely and raised higher in the gate slots. The Project will also include installing a gantry crane and raising the elevation of the non-overflow sections of the LBK to prevent overtopping and erosion during the PMF. Additionally, the left abutment access roadway will be raised. During construction, heavy equipment will be stationed on shore and on barges; other equipment and materials may be on the left abutment. A cofferdam on the upstream side of the LBK in the Lake Shannon forebay will protect work areas and extend work windows. To meet flood protection, minimum instream flow, and dam system operation requirements, the power plants and many of the spillway gates will remain operational throughout the Project.

2. Scour Protection: The Project includes additional scour protection on the downstream side of the LBK crest and abutments extending into the plunge pool. As a result of the planned increase in spillway hydraulic capacity associated with the crest rehabilitation, additional hydraulic erosion studies were completed by PSE consultants. That analysis indicated that the impact of water passing over the LBK crest during flood events would extend slightly farther downstream and higher up in elevation than the existing scour protection covers. The proposed downstream abutment protection improvements ensure large spill events do not negatively impact dam safety due to excessive scour of the existing armoring and underlying rock and adjacent unarmored rock. These measures collectively enhance the resilience of the abutments against scour, uplift, and long-term deterioration. Scour protection activities on the left and right abutments are anticipated to be constructed in separate seasons of work, generally coinciding with the progression of the crest improvement work from the left abutment in phase 1 to the right abutment in phase 3.

3. Slope Modification: The Project includes an upland slope stabilization above the left abutment. The steep and sparsely vegetated slope above the left abutment has shown signs of past sliding. FERC noted that a slope stability analysis completed in 2022 showed it is "only marginally stable" and concluded that it needs to be stabilized since construction activities "will likely impact this slope." Accordingly, FERC is requiring that the slope be regraded to reduce the potential risks to dam and staff safety, dam operations, and dam access. Following the installation of appropriate erosion control measures, an approximately 6,000-square-foot area of mixed bedrock; some loose cobble, gravel, and sand (glacial till overlying bedrock); weedy herbaceous vegetation; and young trees and shrubs on the steep slope above the left abutment would be regraded to a consistent, shallower slope. Analysis by geotechnical engineers shows that the slope requires regrading to 1.5 horizontal to 1 vertical to make it stable. Except where the ground is rock, the exposed surface would be seeded and then covered with an erosion control blanket. Rows of wattles would be staked parallel to the slope every 15 horizontal feet. Approximately 3,300 square feet of the slope modification area contains woody vegetation and would be restored by planting native woody shrub species through the erosion control blanket. Additional information regarding the revegetation of the slope modification area is provided in the Project's Restoration Plan.

The Project is planned to begin in summer 2026 and would be conducted in phases over a four-year period. After Project completion, approximately 101,766 square feet (2.34 acres) of construction staging areas that were permitted for and used by the recently completed Seepage Reduction Project would be restored. Previously forested areas would be revegetated with native tree and shrub species and areas previously containing herbaceous vegetation would be hydroseeded with a native seed mix. Approximately 8,510 cubic yards of material will be removed, and 9,900 cubic yards of material filled.

Completeness: The subject applications were deemed complete for review purposes on March 5, 2026.

Applicant: Puget Sound Energy, Emily Hagin, 1110 Kentucky Street, Bellingham, WA 98225

Landowner: Puget Sound Energy, PO Box 97034, Bellevue, WA 98009

Project Location: The project is located on property owned by PSE in the Town of Concrete, on and adjacent to the lower Baker River and Lake Shannon, approximately 1 mile north of the confluence of the lower Baker River and the Skagit River. The subject parcel is located in a portion of Section 02; Township 35 North; Range 08 East; Willamette Median (**Parcel #: P43333**). The parcel is ~24.10 acres in size.

Zoning & SMP: The project area lies in the Open Space Zoning District & Comprehensive Plan Designation. Additionally, the project area lies in the High Intensity & Aquatic Shoreline Environments.

Public Comment Period: A required **30-day public comment period** ended on April 06, 2026. Comments continue to be accepted up until the close of the Open-Record Public Hearing.

Required Project Permits/Approvals: The following may be required in addition to the above: Washington State Department of Ecology: Shoreline Conditional Use Permit and Shoreline Variance approval; NEPA compliance from FERC; Section 7 ESA; Section 106; HPA from WDFW, Section 404 from USACE; Section 401 from WA State DOE

Preliminary Determination of Consistency: At this time, no determination of consistency with Town of Concrete plans, regulations, or standards has been made. At a minimum, this project will be subject to the following plans and regulations: Town of Concrete Comprehensive Plan; Municipal Code (Zoning, etc.), Shoreline Master Program (SMP), & Engineering Design and Building Standards.

LEAD AGENCY: Town of Concrete, Planning Department

SEPA Review: A SEPA **Mitigated Determination of Non-Significance (MDNS)** for this project was issued on April 23, 2026, with a 14-day appeal period. No appeals were received.

Existing Environmental Documents: Master Permit Application, SEPA Environmental Checklist, JARPA, Narrative, Shoreline Consistency Letter, Restoration Plan, Biological Assessment Addendum, Wetland Delineation Verification, Zoning Conditional Use Permit + Variance Letter, Geotechnical Left Abutment Hillside Stability and Seepage Review, Critical Area Report (2019), & Drawings

PLANNING COMMISSION: Notice is given that a **Public Meeting** will be held by the **Planning Commission at 6:00 PM or soon thereafter on Tuesday, May 19, 2026, at Town Hall** (45672 Main Street, Concrete, WA). Any person may attend the Planning Commission Hearing and comment on the proposed project. The Planning Commission will make a recommendation to the Town Council regarding the matter.

TOWN COUNCIL: An **Open-Record Public Hearing** will be held by the **Town Council at 6:00 PM or soon thereafter on June 8, 2026, at Town Hall**. Town Council will hear any public testimony regarding proposed project and make a decision on the application(s).

How to become a party of record: You may become a party of record by submitting written comments, including a (USPS) mailing address, to the Town of Concrete at the address listed below. E-mailed comments include a return (USPS) mailing address in order for the sender to be considered a party of record. Questions about this proposal, requests to receive future notices of hearings and/or the decision, or any appeal procedures should be directed to the contact person listed below. The application and complete case file are available for review at the Town of Concrete Planning Department, located at 45672 Main St., Concrete, WA 98237. A decision on this application will be made within 120 days from the date of completeness.

For Project Information: Kevin Cricchio, AICP, ISA, Town Planner; Phone: (425) 239-6930; Email: townplanner@concrete-wa.gov; Address: 45672 Main Street, Concrete, WA 98237

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