

Pamela E. Klatt Annual Award

Please return to award@nwhydro.org by **January 7, 2022**



Criteria for Nomination

The Pamela E. Klatt Annual Award is presented to an individual within the regional hydropower industry who:

- Exemplifies the mission of NWAHA:
“NWAHA is dedicated to the promotion of the region’s waterpower as clean, efficient renewable energy while protecting the fisheries and environmental quality which characterize our Northwest region.”
- Approaches each project with a strong commitment to the balance between resource protection and resource development;
- Demonstrates a true appreciation for the views and responsibilities of everyone involved;
- Demands the best work, always, from themselves and others; and
- Encourages others’ professional development as mentor and colleague

For a sample of recommendations from previous awardees, please visit: <https://www.nwhydro.org/awards.html>. Nominators are invited to provide multiple letters supporting the nomination and help the steering committee fully learn about each nominee.

Nominee’s Information

Nominee Name: Elvin “Speed” Fitzhugh

Contact Information: speed.fitzhugh@gmail.com, 509-714-6350

Proposer Information

Proposed By: Bruce Howard

Contact Information: bruce.howard@avistacorp.com, 509-990-0984

Recommendation

Summary of Nominee’s career/actions exemplifying the criteria standards:

Speed exemplifies the qualities for the Pamela E. Klatt Award: he dedicated his professional career to promoting the value of hydropower as both an energy source and as a source of stewardship for our shared waters in the Northwest. Speed dedicated himself to promoting collaboration between all stakeholders through multiple relicensing efforts and in operating hydro systems in Montana, Idaho, and Washington for over 30 years. After serving in the

Marines, Speed returned to college at the University of Montana, securing both a bachelor's and master's degree in Recreation Management. His thesis work focused on conflict resolution and collaboration – and Speed actually went to work practicing what he'd excelled in at college!

A Commitment to Balancing Resource Protection and Development

Beginning his career at Montana Power, Speed helped manage the recreational assets of 14 hydroelectric projects and assisted in the relicensing of 9 of those projects. Speed worked tirelessly to find common interests and build common ground, facilitating agreements with agencies, NGOs, county officials and numerous other stakeholders with a shared interest in over 500 miles of recreational opportunity on the Madison and Missouri Rivers. Among many landmark achievements, one stands out and carries on today: the Missouri-Madison Project River Fund Grant Program, which, since its inception in 2007, has led to the investment of almost \$10 million into recreational opportunities for the public.

See <https://www.northwesternenergy.com/environment/missouri-madison-project-2188/missouri-madison-river-fund> for more info.

Speed also helped complete many creative land transactions while at Montana Power, which he carried on when he moved into consulting at American Public Land Exchange, based in Missoula. In these, Speed developed win-win solutions that opened new access and recreational opportunities, and established new partnerships that have continued for decades. While there, Speed continued to assist Montana Power while also beginning to support Avista. He developed projects that fostered collaboration between both companies and state agencies for property protection and recreation development on the Clark Fork River for the benefit of the recreating public.

Demonstrating an Appreciation for All Stakeholders' Views

As Avista began the effort to relicense its five-facility Spokane River Project in Idaho and Washington, they were able to lure Speed to Spokane for a key role in this effort. Speed led the recreation, land use and aesthetics efforts, and advised the overall relicensing effort, while serving as a mentor to other staff engaged in the project. He trained fellow staff and stakeholders in the art of collaborative negotiations.

In a highly complex and at times contentious setting, Speed forged agreements with tribes, state and federal agencies, local governments, NGOs and landowners. The agreements Speed led set the stage for ongoing collaboration with all these stakeholders. (And as an aside, Pam Klatt was a key part of the team that assisted Avista in this process.) Throughout these efforts, he built strong relationships internally and externally, especially important as he next became the manager of the new 50-year license issued for the Project. Importantly, Speed built lasting trust with stakeholders (see supporting comments below).

As noted by Brian Crossley, Water & Fish Program Manager for the Spokane Tribe of Indians:

I first met and worked with Speed Fitzhugh during the relicensing process of the Spokane River Project and have continued to interact with Speed as we served on the

Spokane River Forum Board together and addressed water quality issues affecting the Spokane Tribe. Speed has always been great to work with; approaching issues with an interest in understanding and helping reach an outcome that addresses those issues. The improvements at Long Lake Dam for total dissolved gas and dissolved oxygen have been accomplished with the assistance of Speed and his dedication to addressing this issue and reaching a common goal. Speed approached issues with an open mind and a sincere desire to understand and develop solutions that are pragmatic and feasible.

Demanding the Best from Himself and Encouraging it in Others

Speed led the critical first 10 years of license implementation, including the development of multiple new or improved recreational facilities, fisheries and water quality improvements, wetlands and habitat protection, and cultural resource enhancement. Notably, two projects that Speed led and championed won national awards for their creativity, engagement and results for both the public and hydro generation. These two projects, a riverbed restoration/aesthetic spill and a redevelopment of a riverside park, both in downtown Spokane, have become cherished by citizens and visitors alike. Speed went beyond the call of duty to ensure the success of these and other efforts – he became such an important fixture at the City of Spokane’s offices, he was awarded the Key to the City by the mayor! This effort paid off in improving collaboration on a host of projects even outside the realm of the hydro world.

During these years, Speed built and mentored a team of employees to implement the license and carry on when he transitioned into retirement in 2019. He helped develop and support staff outside of his own team as well, and even outside the company.

Throughout all the stages of Speed’s career, he set a personal example for excellence, honesty and teamwork. He respected everyone engaged in the hydro world, whatever their role or background. He built lasting relationships and friendships through every project. He actively sought to understand and help meet others’ interests, and ways to balance interests. He promoted constructive conflict resolution and durable partnerships. He worked to help others grow, no matter what “team” they were on. Speed also brought a healthy perspective and sense of humor to every situation, no matter how tough, and was dedicated to reaching common goals. In short, Speed exemplifies the characteristics, and character, needed to ensure the ongoing benefits of hydro to people throughout the Northwest. Below are examples of feedback from a few of Speed’s colleagues over the years in support of his nomination.

Quotes from Proposer or from Other Supporters to be used at presentation

Please provide a quote(s) that can be used during the presentation to recognize the nominee.

Mary Gail Sullivan, NWAHA President and Speed’s manager at MPC: “I wholeheartedly support the nomination of Elvin “Speed” Fitzhugh for the Pamela E. Klatt Award. He dedicated his career to improving hydroelectric projects and, although they may not know it, anyone who recreates on one of Speed’s projects or uses energy generated at those projects is better off because of the work he did.”

Steve Hocking, FERC: “I worked with Speed for over two decades in the licensing and compliance arenas. Speed was one of the most proactive and reliable relicensing and compliance managers I worked with...He always took time to personally notify FERC staff of any upcoming or unexpected issues at the project and would carefully explain all points of view...He always kept us informed and his easy-going manner made working with him a pleasure. He was a great communicator...it was clear that he really cared about the whole community. Speed’s honesty and integrity were well-known by Commission staff and we very much appreciated his work.”

Heather Campbell, FERC: “I often hear from parties that spin a great story about an issue. If there was a problem at a project that Speed was managing, I could always count on him to give me the straight story and propose realistic solutions ensuring that all issues were addressed thoroughly and fairly...it also fostered collaboration and increased trust in the hydropower industry. His ability and willingness to tackle any problem head on was much appreciated. I only wish he didn’t have me on ‘speed dial’...”

Marlene Feist, City of Spokane: “Speed communicated with citizens on Avista’s efforts to improve the health of the Spokane River and while he led the development of a public plaza [downtown]...Speed masterfully balanced Avista’s goals with environmental protection and community benefits. He listened and incorporated input from multiple stakeholders. He strived to create projects that resulted in long-term value for all.”

Bruce Bugbee, APLE: Speed’s “vision and support for quality public recreation experiences resulted in a wide variety of new and improved public recreation access [opportunities] for millions of visitors over thousands of river and reservoir miles in the Upper Columbia and Missouri River Basins.”

Chip Corsi, Idaho Fish & Game: “Speed exemplifies the collaborative approach embraced by Avista in providing the region with clean and reliable energy, while demonstrating a strong and continued commitment to protecting, mitigating and enhancing the fish and wildlife resources associated with their projects....Speed exercised a remarkable amount of leadership, diplomacy, creativity, patience and diligence in helping stakeholders stake out common ground.” (Full letter attached, also please see attached letter from Jon Jourdannais, GEI Consultants, formerly of Montana Power/Northwest Energy.)

Andy Dunau, Executive Director, Spokane River Forum: “I would like to enthusiastically support Speed Fitzhugh receiving the Pamela E. Klatt Annual Award. As you know, Speed was a Spokane River Forum board member. The Forum’s mission is to create materials, events and activities that promote regional dialogues for sustaining a healthy river system while meeting the needs of a growing population.

Avista’s six hydroelectric projects on the Spokane River are a central part of our work. Over and over again, Speed demonstrated extraordinary leadership in promoting the benefits of these

projects providing clean, renewable, efficient energy while protecting fisheries, water quality and recreational access. His help was instrumental in development of several river access points, development of the Spokane River Water Trail, promotion of fisheries and more. At our conferences and other events, he repeatedly helped make technical and policy staff available to review and discuss complex topics.

His honesty, integrity and love of the outdoors provided an authenticity that allowed him to walk into any setting and earn the respect and find common ground with people holding multiple viewpoints. For those he supervised and people like me he worked with, he led by example. He encouraged all of us to be life-long learners, engage in professional development and give back to the community.

I cannot think of anyone more worthy of this award.”

If your nominee is selected, you are requested to introduce them at the award ceremony.

Please check the appropriate box:

I would

Other. Please specify: _____