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Spillway Floodlighting Program  
Grand Coulee Dam

The colored lighting program runs continuously each evening during the period of the year when water is flowing over the spillway. Lighting is supplied by a bank of floodlights located on the west bank of the Columbia River immediately downstream from the Dam.

The bank contains 42 white, 110 green, 112 amber, 154 red and 336 blue colored floodlights.

These 754 lights, each rated at 1500 watts, are controlled by cam switches which make it possible to obtain various lighting effects on the waterfall.

A special program for photography is scheduled during the first 15 minutes of each hour. This program provides 14 different colors or patterns of light on the spillway. Each pattern remains for a period of approximately 50 seconds. Generally this is sufficient time to permit the long exposures required by most color films. The color patterns of this program are:

- |                    |                               |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. full brilliancy | 9. red, white and blue        |
| 2. amber-orange    | 10. rainbow                   |
| 3. amber           | 11. yellow, green, yellow     |
| 4. green           | 12. yellow, red, yellow       |
| 5. blue-green      | 13. red                       |
| 6. blue            | 14. red, blue, red            |
| 7. lavender        | 15. full brilliancy - all 754 |
| 8. red and blue    | lights on                     |

During the remaining 45 minutes of each hour there are three complete cycles of the regular lighting program. In addition to showing the various color combinations, this program attempts to portray the different times of the day and the seasons of the year. A synchronized music and narrative sound program can be heard at the Tour Center and West Vista parking areas during this program.

The time schedule is as follows:

- Start to 2 minutes -- Daybreak. The sunrise is followed by red, white, and blue symbolizing the raising of the flag.
- 2 to 4 minutes -- Parade of Colors. The spillway is lighted in the colors of red, amber-orange, yellow, green, blue and lavender.
- 4 to 6 minutes -- Winter Season. The red and green colors of the Christmas Holiday Season, the white of the snow, and the cool ice blue colors of winter represent this time of year.



- 6 to 7 minutes      -- Spring. Represented by the changing pastel shades of green, yellow and pink.
- 7 to 10 minutes      -- Summer. A summer rainstorm is portrayed in this section of the program. The storm clouds, moving in from the west, cast their shadows on the waterfall. Flashes of lightning can be seen from time to time as the storm reaches its climax and then fades into the east. After the storm, the rainbow appears and moves through several variations in the next two minutes.
- 10 to 12 minutes      -- Fall. The red and yellow colors, predominant in this part of the program, represent the golden fields of harvest and the red leaves of autumn.
- 12 to 15 minutes      -- End of the day. The early afternoon and evening hours are described in lighting of this section of the program. The red, white and blue symbolizes the lowering of the flag at sundown.

After you have viewed the lighting program from one or more of the numerous vantage points at Coulee Dam, it is suggested you visit Crown Point. From this vista the color on the spillway appears more vivid than when viewed from close-up. To reach Crown Point, take Highway 10-B (to Chief Joseph Dam) from Grand Coulee, or go past the Feeder Canal Headworks and the Left Switchyards until you intersect 10-B. Continue along 10-B for about one mile to the Crown Point turnoff (first road to the right after you pass the switchyard).