

June 21, 2013

To whom it may concern,

My name is Robert Escott, Fire Chief in the Town of Montague for the Fire District Turners Falls. I am writing today on behalf of the Franklin County Fire Chiefs Association in reference to FERC project # 1889 Turners Falls project, FERC project # 2485 Northfield Mountain project. The concern that we have that we hope you will research during the relicensing process is with the levels of the Connecticut River during operations of the project.

As emergency responders to the Connecticut River we do not have the ability to choose when we enter the waterway. When the call for assistance comes in we must respond in a timely manner. Although high river levels do present challenges from time to time they do not prevent us from responding. However on the other side of the spectrum low river levels present challenges that greatly slow down or at times prevent a response.

When a response is needed on the Connecticut River by standard operating procedure any bordering town to the incident responds. For example purposes only let's assume an incident at the French King Bridge. This incident would bring Turners Falls Fire launching their boat from the Turners Falls Rod & Gun Club, Gill Fire launching their boat from the Barton Cove/Gill boat ramp, Northfield Dive Team launching from the Northfield boat ramp, Greenfield Fire as a safety boat launching from the Turners Falls Rod & Gun Club, Erving Fire for manpower. As you can see many resources are needed to complete an effective and safe rescue. A rescue operation such as this is greatly deterred due to low water levels which slow down or at times prevent the launching of boats.

The Franklin County Fire Chiefs Association would like you to consider the effects of low water levels on emergency responses to the Connecticut River in the areas from the Turners Falls Dam to the Vernon Dam.

If there are any questions or explanations needed please feel free to contact me.

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Thank you,

Chief Robert Escott

Turners Falls Fire

Document Content(s)

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