

# Relicensing Study 3.6.1

## RECREATION USE/USER CONTACT SURVEY

### Updated Study Report Summary

Northfield Mountain Pumped Storage Project (No. 2485)  
and Turners Falls Hydroelectric Project (No. 1889)

*Prepared for:*



*Prepared by:*



**SEPTEMBER 2015**

## 1.1 Study Summary

FirstLight is conducting a study to determine the existing recreational use and demand at the Turners Falls and Northfield Mountain Projects (Projects) and an assessment for the need to enhance recreation opportunities and access at the Projects. The objectives of the study are to: (1) determine the amount of recreation use and demand at the Turners Falls and Northfield Mountain recreation sites; and (2) interview the recreating public to determine user opinions and goals with regard to the recreation sites, including the perceived adequacy of recreation facilities and access at the Project. The first year of the study primarily involved study preparation needed for conducting the field work, and conducting the field work, as detailed in the Initial Study Report (ISR). The second year has been used to complete on-site visitor surveys, conduct remaining research, enter data and begin statistical analysis.

## 1.2 Study Progress Summary

### Task 1: Study Preparation

Study preparation work was primarily conducted in 2014.

Since the ISR, FirstLight has consulted with the MA Environmental Police and local police departments about the various issues, if any, regarding recreational use that they have observed within the Turners Falls Impoundment (TFI), bypass, and downstream. FirstLight has also consulted with recreation departments in the local towns and recreation/open space committees to confirm that the most current recreation and open space plans are being utilized.

### Task 2: Field Work

Field work for the spot and calibration counts, the user contact survey, and the Northfield Mountain trail user survey was completed in December of 2014.

Traffic counters were removed from all locations when the sites closed in the fall of 2014 or prior to the first snowfall, whichever came first.

In February, 2015, FirstLight requested information from the Franklin County Boat Club, Turners Falls Rod and Gun Club, the Northfield Mount Hermon School, and the Massachusetts Division of Fish and Wildlife regarding recreation use at their facilities within the Projects' boundaries. Responses were received from the Turners Falls Rod and Gun Club and the Northfield Mount Hermon School.

### Task 3: Data Entry and Statistical Analysis

Use and survey data were QA/QC'd and entered into electronic spreadsheets for statistical analysis. Data analysis of the Northfield Mountain trail user survey results were conducted and results presented in the Study No. 3.6.7 *Recreation Study at Northfield Mountain, including Assessment of Need for Shared use Trails*, which was posted on the relicensing website on June 30, 2015.<sup>1</sup> Remaining use data and data from the user contact survey are currently being analyzed and results will be presented in the final report.

### Task 4:

As reported in the ISR, a final report is anticipated to be completed during the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2015.

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<sup>1</sup> The report for Study 3.6.7 is also being filed with FERC as part of this USR.

### **1.3 Variances from Study Plan and Schedule**

There were no variances from the study plan or schedule in the second year of the study.

### **1.4 Remaining Activities**

- Data analysis is ongoing and expected to be completed prior to the end of 2015.
- The study report is under development and anticipated to be filed prior to the end of 2015.