

FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON D.C. 20426  
November 8, 2012

OFFICE OF ENERGY PROJECTS

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| TransCanada Hydro Northeast Inc. | Project No. 1892 -000 New Hampshire -<br>Vermont<br>Project No. 1855-000 New Hampshire -<br>Vermont<br>Project No. 1904 -000 New Hampshire-<br>Vermont |
| FirstLight Power Resources       | Project No. 2485- 000 Massachusetts<br>Project No. 1889- 000 Massachusetts   |

Cedric Cromwell, Tribal Chair  
Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe  
483 Great Neck Road South  
Mashpee, MA 02649

**Reference: Consultation with the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe**

Dear Chairman Cromwell:

TransCanada Hydro Northeast Inc. and First Light Power Resources are beginning the process of relicensing five hydroelectric projects along the middle Connecticut River in the states of Vermont, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts. TransCanada owns and operates three of the projects (Wilder Dam Hydroelectric Project No. 1892, Bellows Falls Hydroelectric Project No. 1855, and Vernon Dam Hydroelectric Project No. 1904), and FirstLight Power Resources owns and operates another hydropower facility (Turner Falls Hydroelectric Project No. 1889) and a pumped storage project (Northfield Mountain Pumped Storage Hydroelectric Project No. 2485).

The Wilder project, located in Vermont and New Hampshire at river mile (RM) 217.4, consists of (1) a concrete gravity dam 1,541 feet long and 59 feet high, having a gated spillway with 6 tainter gates, 2 skimmer gates, and 4 stanchion bays; (2) the Wilder reservoir, extending 45 miles upstream, having a surface area of 3,100 acres at normal full pond elevation of 384.5 feet mean sea level (msl); (3) a powerhouse containing three generating units, two rated at 16.2 Megawatts (MW) and one at 3.2 (MW); (4) transmission interconnection facilities; (5) fish passage facilities; and (6) appurtenant facilities.

The Bellows Falls project, located in Vermont and New Hampshire at RM 173.7, consist of (1) a concrete gravity dam 643 feet long and 30 feet high, having a gated spillway with two roller gates and three stanchion flashboard bays; (2) the Bellows Falls reservoir, extending 26 miles upstream, having a surface area of 2,804 acres at normal full pond elevation of 291.63 feet msl; (3) a power canal 1,700 feet long with a forebay intake area and sluice gate; (4) a tailrace approximately 900 feet long; (5) a powerhouse containing three generating units, each rated at 13.6 MW; (6) transmission interconnection facilities; (7) fish passage facilities; and (8) appurtenant facilities.

The Vernon project, located at RM 141.9, consists of (1) a concrete gravity dam 956 feet long and 58 feet high, and consists of the integral powerhouse with a sluice gate block section that is about 356 feet long, and a concrete overflow spillway section about 600 feet long with 6 tainter gates, 2 hydraulic flashboard bays, 3 stanchion bays, and a sluice; (2) the Vernon reservoir, extending 26 miles upstream, having a surface area of 2,550 acres at normal full pond elevation of 220.13 feet msl; (3) a powerhouse containing ten generating units, with Units Nos. 1-4 rated at 2 MW, Unit Nos. 5-8 rated at 4 MW, and Unit Nos. 9-10 rated at 4.2 MW; (4) transmission interconnection facilities; (5) fish passage facilities; (6) appurtenant facilities.

The Turner Falls project, located in Massachusetts (extending a little north into Vermont and New Hampshire) at RM 122, consists of (1) two concrete gravity dams separated by an island and appurtenant facilities; (2) a gatehouse controlling flow to the main power canal; (3) the main power canal and a short branch canal; (4) two hydroelectric powerhouses, known as Station No. 1 and Cabot Station, with a total generating capacity of 67.7 MW; (5) the Turner Falls Impoundment (reservoir); and (6) one transmission line.

The Northfield Mountain project, located in Massachusetts and 5.2 miles upstream of Turner Falls dam, consists of (1) an upper reservoir, dams, and dikes; (2) an underground powerhouse with a total generating capacity of 1,119.2 MW; (3) a tailrace; and (4) two transmission lines.

In a policy statement issued July 23, 2003, the Commission noted that it would strive to improve communications with tribes affected by Commission actions.<sup>1</sup> Section 5.7 of our regulations requires us to hold a meeting with interested tribes within 30 days of an applicant's notice of intent to seek a hydropower license from the Commission.<sup>2</sup> The applicants filed notice of intent to seek new licenses for the

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<sup>1</sup> Policy Statement on Consultation with Indian Tribes in Commission Proceedings issued July 23, 2003. This statement and information about the Wilder, Bellow Falls, Vernon, Turner Falls, and Northfield Mountain projects are available on the Commission's website at [www.ferc.gov](http://www.ferc.gov).

projects on October 31, 2012, and will use the Commission Integrated Licensing Process.

Commission staff is interested in meeting with you to discuss the Commission's licensing process, how the tribe can participate to the fullest extent possible, your interests and concerns in the affected areas, and how to establish procedures to ensure appropriate communications between Commission and tribal staff. The meeting can be limited to members of our respective staff, or it can be open to the applicants, or any other stakeholder(s) you wish.

Please note that once license applications are filed with the Commission, our rules generally prohibit off-the-record communications between Commission employees and those outside of the Commission, where such communications are relevant to the merits of a contested on-the-record proceeding.<sup>3</sup>

**If at all possible, we would appreciate your response with 30 days from the date of this letter.** Please file your response electronically via the Internet. See 18 C.F.R.385.2001(a)(1)(iii) and the instructions on the Commission's website (<http://www.ferc.gov/docs-filing/efiling.asp>). For assistance, please contact FERC Online Support at [FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov](mailto:FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov); call toll-free at (866) 208-3676; or, for TTY, contact (202) 502-8659. Although the Commission strongly encourages electronic filing, your response may also be paper-filed. To paper-file, mail an original and seven copies to: Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street, NE, Washington, D.C. 20426. Please put the docket numbers, P-1892-000, P- 1855-000, P-1904-000, P-2485-000, P-1889-000 on the first page of your response.

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<sup>2</sup> Should the meeting date extend beyond 30 days from the notice of intent, we are hereby waiving that aspect of section 5.7 of our regulations.

<sup>3</sup>18 C.F.R. § 385.2201

If you have any questions or comments, please contact Kenneth Hogan at (202) 502-8434 or at [Kenneth.Hogan@ferc.gov](mailto:Kenneth.Hogan@ferc.gov) . Commission staff will contact your office shortly to follow-up on this letter.

Sincerely,

Timothy J. Welch, Chief  
West Branch  
Division of Hydropower Licensing

cc: Mailing list  
Public Files