

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION

Great River Hydro, LLC

Project No. 1904-078

Project No. 1855-050

Project No. 1892-030

NOTICE OF INTENT TO PREPARE AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT
STATEMENT

(June 5, 2024)

On May 1, 2017, and materially amended on December 7, 2020, Great River Hydro, LLC filed applications for new major licenses to operate its 32.4-megawatt (MW) Vernon Hydroelectric Project (Vernon Project; FERC No. 1904), 40.8-MW Bellows Falls Hydroelectric Project (Bellows Falls Project; FERC No. 1855), and 35.6-MW Wilder Hydroelectric Project (Wilder Project; FERC No. 1892 (collectively, projects)). The projects are located on the Connecticut River in Orange, Windsor, and Windham Counties, Vermont; and Grafton, Sullivan, and Cheshire Counties, New Hampshire.

During the application pre-filing process, on December 21, 2012, Commission staff issued Scoping Document 1, initiating the scoping process for the projects in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Commission regulations. On April 15, 2013, Commission staff issued a revised scoping document (Scoping Document 2). In accordance with the Commission's regulations, on February 22, 2024, Commission staff issued notices that the projects were ready for environmental analysis (REA Notice). Based on the information in the record, including comments filed during scoping and in response to the REA Notices, staff has determined that relicensing the project may constitute a major federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment. Therefore, staff intends to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the above-captioned projects.

A draft EIS will be issued and circulated for review by all interested parties. All comments filed in response to the REA notices, and on the draft EIS, will be analyzed by staff in a final EIS. Staff's conclusions and recommendations will be available for the Commission's consideration in reaching its final licensing decision.

The application will be processed according to the following schedule. Revisions to the schedule may be made as appropriate.

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MILESTONETARGET DATE

Issue draft EIS

December 2024

Draft EIS Public Meeting

January 2025

Comments on draft EIS due

February 2025

Commission issues final EIS

August 2025¹

Any questions regarding this notice may be directed to Steve Kartalia at (202) 502-6131 or stephen.kartalia@ferc.gov.

Debbie-Anne A. Reese,
Acting Secretary.

¹ The Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) regulations under 40 CFR 1501.10(b)(2) (2023) require that EISs be completed within 2 years of the federal action agency's decision to prepare an EIS. *See also* National Environmental Policy Act, 42 U.S.C. § 4321 *et seq.*, amended by section 107(g)(1)(A)(iii) of the Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2023, Pub. L. No. 118-5, § 4336a, 137 Stat. 42.

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