

From: Plainfield Conservation Commission, Town of Plainfield  
P.O.Box 380  
Meriden, NH 03770

Date: April 10, 2024

To: Debbie-Anne Reese, Secretary  
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission 888 First Street, NE  
Room 1A, Washington, D.C. 20426

Re: Project Docket #P-1892, Wilder Dam

The Plainfield Conservation Commission, a group of Select Board appointed officials made up of residents of the Town of Plainfield, in the State of New Hampshire, does hereby submit a comment regarding the relicensing procedure of the Wilder Dam on the Connecticut River.

We urge the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to continue to scrutinize the application for relicensing submitted by Great River Hydro and to err on the side of residents welfare, town infrastructure sustainability, wildlife habitat and movement, and the natural environment that all exist in the zone of the dam's operation.

We as a citizenry have watched for years as the need for cheap power and increased profit margins have outweighed the risk and cost to our river banks and the people and wildlife who rely on a stable aquatic environment. We wish to reiterate the calls of others who would like Great River Hydro to be held responsible for the lasting changes to the river system that their power generation has caused and to insist that if they are allowed to continue to operate the Wilder Dam, and others along the upper Connecticut River, that it be with great care, oversight, and community involvement.

We also would like to reiterate the call for mitigation funds to help offset the inevitable damage to the river system that permanent blockage by a dam and continuous flow changes have on the flora and fauna. These funds, while not a perfect substitute for a naturally flowing river system, will help communities offset the cost of bank repair and stabilization, help to protect important wildlife habitat - such as for Jesup's Milk Vetch, Cobblestone Tiger Beetle, and Dwarf Wedgemussel - and through land conservation, and create safer and more accessible public access areas. Specifically, we would like to see funds allocated to the reconstruction of the public access area in Cornish, NH. As the only town in the Wilder Dam's flow area without a bridge or public access to the river, residents of Plainfield rely on sites in neighboring towns in order to access the River. The Cornish public access site is in severe disrepair. Massive erosion has caused the bank to give way and the dirt ramp to the water's edge is nearly impassible. Mitigation funds should be used to create a safe and accessible river access location for all.

We understand that there is a continued need for local electricity power generation. However, this generation should not come at the cost of our natural environment and the safety of our roads. We ask that the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission take our comment into consideration during the relicensing process of the Wilder Dam.

Sincerely,  
Plainfield Conservation Commission  
Plainfield, New Hampshire