

Paul Bladyka, Springfield, VT.

To: The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC)

As a frequent user of the Connecticut River waters between Ascutney, Vermont, and Bellows Falls, Vermont, I would like to submit comment on the regulations of the river between:

• Wilder Dam, P-1892-030

• Bellows Falls Dam, P-1855-050

I have gone into a bit more detail below, but in general terms, my concerns are as follows; fluctuation in water level, access to the river for the public, and the need for further development of small and non-motorized craft landings on the Vermont side of the river. I am especially interested in seeing a rowing facility established in the Springfield, Vermont area. Water level: It appears that the drastic and daily fluctuations of the river level due to hydro facility draw down is having an effect on wildlife populations and is causing sedimentation changes. Less fluctuation would be worth implementing and studying. Research funding sources should include the Hydro industry on this river.

I am a frequent user of the Hoyt's Landing Access, and, while the large majority of people are there at the river to relax, I have seen friction between individuals involved in sport fishing and individuals not involved in sport fishing. More specifically, some of those fishing feel that they finance the landing and it should be off limits to those not fishing. Unfortunately, the Vermont State Department of Fish and Game agrees with them. Since Springfield and surrounding towns do not have access to the river at any other point, this severely limits the options for those who might otherwise enjoy the river. This includes families who might want to have a picnic there, retirees who just want a quiet place to sit, alone or with friends, and others who would like to meet there, many of whom do not fish. In addition, Springfield has the Toonerville Trail, which is a bicycle and walking path that goes from the village to the river, and it would be nice to have a place for people to enjoy the river when they arrive. I suspect that privatization of the river frontage may be part of the problem here. The river is a public waterway and natural resource and I feel it should be available to all.

Development of recreation: I do not own a motor boat. I commonly use both Hoyt's landing and Herrick's cove to access the river with my rowboat and with my kayak. Because of the limitations of Hoyt's use as designated by the State Dept. of Fish and Wildlife, I feel that better options should be made available in the Springfield area, if possible. Great River Hydro does a great job of managing the Herrick's Cove area, a challenge that is made easier, I'm sure, by the amount of room available.

There is an interest in establishing a community rowing facility in the Springfield area which could be used for small craft instruction and for development of school teams, for community access to the river, and for canoe camping along the river. Outreach by Great River Hydro for a public/private partnership to establish such a facility would greatly enhance the diversity of recreation in the area and create more possibility for river stewardship.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Paul J Bladyka, Springfield, VT

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