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I am an ecologist and river conservationist with a Masters of Science and a strong professional community of river scientists, fluvial geomorphologists, aquatic biologists, engineers, town planners and officials, educators, farmers, artists, business owners, and other workers - yes, all of those fields are involved in river conservation. I am writing to voice my earnest and considered support of the comments and recommendations issued by the Connecticut River Joint Commission (CRJC) and the Connecticut River Conservancy (CRC) on the FERC relicensing of the Great River Hydro dams in VT and NH.

CRC and CRCJ have combined their technical expertise and sensitivity to communities' needs to synthesize 1) the significant and undeniable role that hydro power operations have in altering the healthy river functions on which VT, NH, and downstream communities depend, 2) the proposed operations changes that will improve GRH's impacts on river systems and communities, and should be implemented, and 3) the crucial changes or additions that are still needed to shore up GRH's proposed mitigation strategies before it can be said that equal consideration has been given.

I support the proposed GRH operations changes that CRC and CRCJ have identified as improving flows to benefit the ecosystem, including increased baseflows and reduced fluctuations upstream and downstream, as well as increased protection of shoreline habitat. I join CRC and CRJC in calling for increased mitigation efforts in the resource concerns of fish passage, erosion, recreation, and cultural resources. Their detailed comments offer a playbook for addressing these concerns, without which GRH's proposal is neither complete nor appropriate for the communities it impacts.

I have lived throughout the Connecticut River Watershed for my whole life, from growing up along the Farmington River and going to school near Long Island Sound in CT, to living and working now by the West River and the Connecticut River mainstem. It is not lost on me that the decisions made during this relicensing process will impact the river and watershed for the rest of my life. Thank you for engaging in this long-drawn process with diligence and not settling until the resource concerns of our watershed communities have been equally considered and amply met. Our health, quality of life, and economic prosperity depend on the health of the river and the maintenance and restoration of its natural processes.

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