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REGULATORY COMMISSION

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Dam Relicensing

Comments to the FERC Docket No. Wilder Project No. 1892-030---Vermont/New Hampshire Bellows Falls Project No. 1855-050—Vermont/New Hampshire Vernon Project No. 1904-078—Vermont/ New Hampshire

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Regarding the open period for public comments on the re licensing of the Wilder-Bellows Falls and Vernon Hydro dams I would like to suggest the consideration of developing the following three recreational oriented projects. I forward these suggestions from the perspective of an individual that has a long history in the world of competitive cycling, running and marathon canoe racing. Regarding my 30+ years of National and international canoe racing to be competitive I have had the luxury of being able to train on the Ct. River. I'm on the river as much as five times a week from March to November. Few if any individuals I believe has as much knowledge and familiarity to the river as I have. The projects I would suggest being developed in order of which would be of greatest benefit to communities along my section of the river are as follows.

The first would be to plank over the abandoned rail road bridge South of the new vehicle bridge connecting Hinsdale, New Hampshire to Brattleboro, Vermont. Access would be attained by developing a parking area at the end of Riverside Dr. in Brattleboro. This point would be adjacent to Brattleboro's Water Treatment plant. This development would be a Westerly trail head to connect to the existing rail trail in Hinsdale.NH. This system already reaches areas of New Hampshire but also reaches uninterrupted into areas of Massachusetts. By my guess over sixty miles.

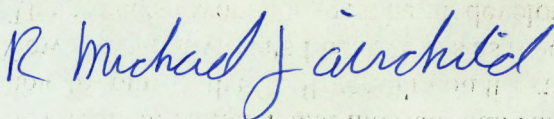
The second project I believe in a number of ways would be beneficial to recreational pursuits and would levitate a dangerous parking problem. This has to do with access to the the Retreat meadows (a back water area of the Ct. River) from Rt. 30 in Brattleboro. Right now parking is only along busy Rt. 30. Right now seasonally it is used by ice skaters, ice and open water fisherman and canoe/kayakers.

An alternative to this at time congested access area is to develop a parking lot off the driveway to Brattleboro's well water plant. Already there is a deep channel as part of the meadows. The site would allow construction of not only a safe and convenient parking lot but a boat launching area.

The third project that would again benefit recreational interests is in this same area. Beneficial would be to build a pedestrian bridge over the West River adjacent to Brattleboro's recreational fields. A bridge would connect to the West River rail trail system. An advantage is that on the Rt. 30 side of the river parking and restroom infrastructure already exists. The site also lends itself to being an ideal site to launch a kayak or canoe

I hope my thoughts are helpful. I'd be willing to share my thoughts at any time

R. Michael Fairchild



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