

FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, DC 20426
December 21, 2012

OFFICE OF ENERGY PROJECTS

Project No. 1892-026 – NH & VT
Project No. 1855-045 – NH & VT
Project No. 1904-073 – NH & VT
TransCanada Hydro Northeast Inc.

Project No. 1889-081 – MA, NH, & VT
Project No. 2485-063 – MA, NH, & VT
FirstLight Hydro Generating Company

John Ragonese
Relicensing Project Manager
TransCanada Hydro Northeast Inc.
4 Park Street, Suite 402
Concord, NH 03301

John S. Howard, Director
FirstLight Hydro Generating Company
Northfield Mountain Station
99 Millers Falls Road
Northfield, MA 01360

Reference: Modification to Integrated Licensing Process Schedule

Dear Messrs. Ragonese and Howard:

On October 31, 2012, TransCanada Hydro Northeast Inc. (TransCanada) filed its Notification of Intent (NOI) and Pre-Application Documents (PAD) for the relicensing of the Wilder (P-1892-026), Bellows Falls (P-1855-045), and Vernon (P-1904-073) projects. On the same day, FirstLight Hydro Generating Company (FirstLight) filed its NOI and PAD for the Turners Falls (P-1889-081) and the Northfield Mountain Pumped Storage (P-2485-063) projects.¹

¹ Collectively, we refer to the three TransCanada projects and the two FirstLight projects as the Connecticut River Projects.

Section 5.8 of the Commission's regulation requires that we issue our Notice of Commencement of Proceeding and Scoping Document within 60 days of your filing of the NOIs and PADs (December 30, 2012) and hold a public scoping meeting and site visit (environmental site review) within 30 days of that notice and section 5.9 of the regulations requires that comments on the PAD, our Scoping Document 1 and study requests be filed with the Commission within 60 days. However, for the reasons discussed below we will modify that schedule.

Environmental Site Review

Prior to the filing of the NOIs and PADs, we anticipated that access to some project facilities would be limited by winter weather conditions during the early part of 2013 when scoping for these projects was scheduled. For this reason, and to provide all interested stakeholders an opportunity to view the projects' facilities, we hosted the environmental site reviews in early October 2012, before the onset of winter. Public notice of these environmental site reviews was issued on August 3, 2012, and published in eight newspapers from the Connecticut River projects' region. The environmental site reviews were widely attended by individuals representing, local, state, and federal government agencies, NGOs, and members of the public. As a result, and pursuant to section 5.29(f)(2), I am waiving the requirement of section 5.8(b)(3)(viii) to have a site visit within 30 days of the Notice of Commencement of Proceeding and Scoping Document.

Scoping Meeting, Comment on PAD & Scoping Document 1, and Study Requests

On December 21, 2012, we issued our Notice of Commencement of Proceeding and Scoping Document early, but within the required 60-day timeframe. Pursuant to section 5.8 of the Commission's regulations, the scoping meetings for the Connecticut River Projects must be held within 30 days or by January 20, 2013. Pursuant to section 5.9 of the Commission's regulations, the comments on the PADs, comments on Scoping Document 1, and study requests must be filed with the Commission within 60 days of the notice (February 19, 2013). However, we recognize that stakeholders are anticipating scoping meetings at the end of January and comment on the PADs, Scoping Document 1, and study requests 30 days after the scoping meetings. The early issuance of our December 21, 2012 notice would necessitate an expedited review of the PADs for the Connecticut River Projects and an accelerated schedule for comments and study requests. This expedited review period may influence the effectiveness of our scoping process; therefore, pursuant to section 5.29(f)(2), I am waiving the requirement of sections 5.8(b)(3)(viii) and 5.9(a) to have the scoping meetings

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within 30 days and the filing comments on the PADs, Scoping Document 1, and study requests within 60 days of the Notice of Commencement of Proceeding and Scoping Document. As a result, I am approving the schedule for scoping meetings from January 28 through January 31, 2013, and requiring that comments and study requests be filed by March 1, 2012, as provided in our December 21, 2012 notice.

Attached is the approved Process Plan and Schedule for the ILP for the Connecticut River Projects. If you have any questions, please contact Kenneth Hogan at (202) 502-8434 or via email at: Kenneth.Hogan@ferc.gov.

Sincerely,

Jeff C. Wright
Director
Office of Energy Projects

Attachment: Process Plan and Schedule for the ILP Relicensing of Wilder, Bellows Falls, Vernon, Northfield Mountain and Turners Falls Projects.

cc: Mailing List
Public Files

**PROCESS PLAN AND SCHEDULE FOR THE ILP RELICENSING OF WILDER,
BELLOWS FALLS, VERNON, NORTHFIELD MOUNTAIN AND TURNERS
FALLS PROJECTS**

**(shaded milestones are unnecessary if there are no study disputes; if due date falls
on a weekend or holiday, the due date is the following business day)**

18 C.F.R.	Lead	Activity	Timeframe	Deadline
§ 5.5(a)	TransCanada/ FirstLight	Filing of NOI		10/31/2012
§ 5.6(a)	TransCanada/ FirstLight	Filing of PAD		10/31/2012
§ 5.7	FERC	Initial Tribal Consultation Meeting	Within 30 Days of filing NOI and PAD	Pending
§5.8	FERC	FERC Issues Notice of Commencement of Proceeding and Scoping Document (SD1) and requests to Initiate Informal Consultation under Section 7 of the ESA Consultation and section 106 of the NHPA	Within 60 days of filing NOI and PAD	12/21/2012
§5.8 (b)(3) (viii)	FERC/ Stakeholders	Public Scoping Meetings	Within 30 days of NOI and PAD notice and issuance of SD1	1/28 to - 1/31/2013
§ 5.9	FERC/ Stakeholders	File Comments on PAD, SD1, and Study Requests	Within 60 days of NOI and PAD notice and issuance of SD1	3/1/2013
§5.10	FERC	FERC Issues Scoping Document 2 (SD2) (if necessary)	Within 45 days of deadline for filing comments on SD1	4/15/2013
§5.11(a)	TransCanada/ FirstLight	File Proposed Study Plans	Within 45 days of deadline for filing comments on SD1	4/15/2013
§5.11(e)	TransCanada/ FirstLight/ Stakeholders	Study Plan Meetings	Within 30 days of deadline for filing proposed Study Plans	5/15/2013
§5.12	Stakeholders	File Comments on Proposed Study Plan	Within 90 days after proposed study plan is filed	7/14/2013
§5.13(a)	TransCanada/ FirstLight	File Revised Study Plan	Within 30 days following the deadline for filing comments on proposed Study Plan	8/13/2013
§5.13(b)	Stakeholders	File Comments on Revised Study Plan (if necessary)	Within 15 days following Revised Study Plan	8/28/2013
§5.13(c)	FERC	FERC Issues Study Plan Determination	Within 30 days following Revised Study Plan	9/12/2013

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18 C.F.R.	Lead	Activity	Timeframe	Deadline
§5.14(a)	Mandatory Conditioning Agencies	Notice of Formal Study Dispute (if necessary)	Within 20 days of Study Plan determination	10/2/2013
§5.14(l)	FERC	Study Dispute Determination	Within 70 days of notice of formal study dispute	12/11/2013
§5.15(a)	TransCanada/ FirstLight	Conduct First Season Field Studies	Spring/summer 2014	
§5.15 (b)	TransCanada/ FirstLight	File Study Progress Reports	Spring/summer 2014	
§5.15(c)(1)	TransCanada/ FirstLight	File Initial Study Reports	No later than one year from Study Plan approval	9/12/2014
§5.15(c)(2)	TransCanada/ FirstLight	Initial Study Results Meeting	Within 15 days of Initial Study Report	9/27/2014
§5.15(c)(3)	TransCanada/ FirstLight	File Study Results Meeting Summary	Within 15 days of Study Results Meeting	10/12/2014
§5.15(c)(4)	Stakeholders/ FERC	File Meeting Summary – Disagreements/Modifications to Study/Propose New Studies	Within 30 days of filing Meeting Summary	11/11/2014
§5.15(c)(5)	TransCanada/ FirstLight	File Responses to Disagreements	Within 30 days of disputes	12/11/2014
§5.15(c)(6)	FERC	Resolution of Disagreements (if necessary)	Within 30 days of filing responses to disputes	1/10/2015
§5.15	TransCanada/ FirstLight	Conduct Second Season Field Studies	Spring/summer 2015	
§5.15 (f)	TransCanada/ FirstLight	File Updated Study Reports	No later than two years from Study Plan approval	9/12/2015
§5.15(c)(2)	TransCanada/ FirstLight	Second Study Results Meeting	Within 15 days of Updated Study Report	9/27/2015
§5.15(c)(3)	TransCanada/ FirstLight	File Study Results Meeting Summary	With 15 days of Study Results Meeting	10/12/2015
§5.15(c)(4)	Stakeholders / FERC	File Meeting Summary Disagreements/ Modifications to Study Requests, Requests for New Studies	Within 30 days of filing Meeting Summary	11/11/2015
§5.15(c)(5)	TransCanada/First Light/ Stakeholders	File Responses to Disagreements (if necessary)	Within 30 days of disputes	12/11/2015
§5.15(c)(6)	FERC	Resolution of Disagreements (if necessary)	Within 30 days of filing responses to disagreements	1/10/2016
§5.16(a)	TransCanada/ FirstLight	File Preliminary Licensing Proposal (or Draft License Application) with the FERC and distribute to Stakeholders	Not later than 150 days before final application is filed	12/4/2015

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18 C.F.R.	Lead	Activity	Timeframe	Deadline
§5.16 (e)	FERC / Stakeholders	Comments on TransCanada Preliminary Licensing Proposal, Additional Information Request (if necessary)	Within 90 days of filing Preliminary Licensing Proposal (or Draft License Application)	3/3/2016
§5.17(a)	TransCanada/ FirstLight	License Applications Filed		4/30/2016