

FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION

Washington, DC 20426

February 22, 2017

OFFICE OF ENERGY PROJECTS

Project No. 1892-026 – New Hampshire / Vermont
Project No. 1855-045 – New Hampshire / Vermont
Project No. 1904-073 – New Hampshire / Vermont
TransCanada Hydro Northeast Inc.

Subject: Revised Process Plan and Schedule – Wilder, Bellows Falls, and Vernon Projects

To All Interested Parties:

On April 15, 2013, Commission staff issued a process plan and schedule under the Integrated Licensing Process for TransCanada Hydro Northeast Inc.'s (TransCanada) Wilder Hydroelectric Project No. 1892, Bellows Falls Hydroelectric Project No. 1855, and Vernon Hydroelectric Project No. 1904.¹ The process plan and schedule set pre-filing milestones and deadlines for, among other things, filing study reports, requesting modifications to the approved study plan, filing preliminary licensing proposals (or draft license applications), and filing final license applications.

After Commission staff issued the process plan and schedule, the operator (Entergy) of the Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Plant (Vermont Yankee) announced plans to decommission the nuclear facility during the fourth quarter of 2014.² On February 21, 2014, a study plan determination for TransCanada's projects was issued, which amended the schedule for a number of aquatic studies that were expected to be affected by Vermont Yankee no longer operating. Specifically, the time to conduct these aquatic studies was delayed by one year (i.e., until the 2015 field season) and March 1, 2016, was established as the due date for the final study reports for these studies.

On January 16, 2015, TransCanada filed an application requesting that the Commission extend the term of its three licenses by one year. On July 22, 2015, the Commission granted TransCanada's request and extended the license terms of the three

¹ Commission staff modified the process plan and schedule on August 14, 2013.

² Operation of Vermont Yankee affected Connecticut River water temperatures within the Vernon Hydroelectric Project reservoir.

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projects to April 30, 2019.³

To address the effect of the delayed aquatic studies and extended license terms on pre-filing milestones and deadlines, Commission staff issued a revised process plan and schedule on September 14, 2015. The revised process plan and schedule required TransCanada to file final study reports for the delayed aquatic studies, and any other outstanding studies, by March 1, 2016, or indicate in its filings when any outstanding study reports will be completed and filed with the Commission.

To establish the schedule for resource agencies and other stakeholders to request modifications to the approved study plan for final study reports filed after March 1, 2016, Commission staff issued a revised process plan and schedule for TransCanada's projects on May 5, 2016. The revised process plan and schedule required TransCanada to file final study reports on May 16 and August 1, 2016, and Commission staff issued determinations on requested study modifications and new studies associated with these study reports on September 12 and November 29, 2016, respectively.⁴

To establish the schedule for resource agencies and other stakeholders to request modifications to the approved study plan for revised and final study reports (including study report addenda) filed after November 29, 2016, we are issuing the attached revised process plan and schedule for TransCanada's projects. As appropriate, the process plan and schedule may be revised in the future.

If you have any questions, please contact Brandon Cherry at (202) 502-8328 or brandon.cherry@ferc.gov.

Sincerely,

Vince Yearick
Director
Division of Hydropower Licensing

Attachment: Revised Process Plan and Schedule
cc: Mailing List, Public Files

³ 152 FERC ¶ 62,048 (2015).

⁴ The determinations required TransCanada to file a number of revised study reports and study report addenda.

REVISED PROCESS PLAN AND SCHEDULE

The process plan and schedule include a list of pre-filing milestones, but do not include all post-filing milestones that will be needed to process the final license applications. Shaded milestones are unnecessary if there are no study disputes. If the due date falls on a weekend or holiday, the due date is the following business day. Early filings or issuances will not result in changes to these deadlines.

Responsible Party	Milestone	Date	FERC Regulation
TransCanada	File Preliminary Licensing Proposals (PLPs)	12/1/16	5.16(a)-(b)
All Stakeholders	File Comments on PLPs ¹	3/1/17	5.16(e)
TransCanada	File Revised and Final Study Reports (including Study Report Addenda) – <i>Studies 2, 3, 6, 9, 10, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 27, and 33</i> ²	11/30/16 to 3/15/17	5.15(c) 5.15(f)
All Stakeholders	Study Report Meeting	3/30/17	5.15(c)(2)
TransCanada	File Study Report Meeting Summary	4/14/17	5.15(c)(3)
TransCanada	File Final License Applications	4/30/17	5.17(a)
All Stakeholders	File Disagreements/Requests to Amend Study Plan	5/14/17	5.15(c)(4)
All Stakeholders	File Responses to Disagreements/Amendment Requests	6/13/17	5.15(c)(5)
FERC	Issue Director's Determination on Disagreements/Amendments	7/13/17	5.15(c)(6)

¹ In a letter filed on December 16, 2016, the Connecticut River Watershed Council requested that the Commission extend the comment deadline on TransCanada's PLPs by 30 days (i.e., to March 31, 2017) to, among other things, allow stakeholders adequate time to review and comment on the revised study reports prior to filing comments on the PLPs. However, the deadline for filing comments on the PLPs remains as March 1, 2017, because: (1) extending the deadline to March 31, 2017, would still require comments on the PLPs to be filed before the deadline to file comments and requests to modify the approved study plan for revised and final study reports (i.e., May 14, 2017); and (2) extending the PLP comment periods beyond May 14, 2017, would be impractical, because section 15(c)(1) of the Federal Power Act requires TransCanada to file its final license applications by May 1, 2017.

² TransCanada has already filed many of its revised reports and addenda prior to the March 15, 2017, due date established in the process plan and schedule. Specifically, TransCanada filed revised reports for studies 14, 15, 17, and 23, and addenda to studies 10, 18, and 27 on November 30, 2016; a Phase II report for study 33 on December 1, 2016; revised reports for studies 6 and 25 on December 15, 2016; a revised report for study 22 on January 17, 2017; and revised reports for studies 2 and 3 on February 6, 2017. TransCanada has indicated that it will file an addendum to study 23, revised reports for studies 19 and 21, and final reports for studies 9 and 24 by February 28, 2017.

Document Content(s)

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