

FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20426
September 6, 2016

OFFICE OF ENERGY PROJECTS

Project No. 2685-026—New York
Blenheim-Gilboa Pumped Storage Project
New York Power Authority

Mr. Robert Daly
Licensing Manager
New York Power Authority
123 Main Street
White Plains, NY 10601

Reference: Request to Amend ILP Process Plan and Schedule

Dear Mr. Daly:

On February 19, 2016, the New York Power Authority (NYPA) filed an initial study report (ISR) for the Blenheim-Gilboa Pumped Storage Project (Blenheim-Gilboa Project or project) which included full study reports for three of the six relicensing studies required by Commission staff's February 19, 2015 Study Plan Determination (SPD) for the project. In Commission staff's June 17, 2016, determination on requests for study modifications (study modification letter), staff stated that the remaining three study reports must be filed with the Updated Study Report (USR), due on February 18, 2017 according to the current process plan and schedule. The remaining study reports identified in the study modification letter were Study 4: *Recreation Use/User Contact Study and Assessment of Effects the Project has on Recreation Use* (Recreation Study), Study 5: *Effect of Project Operations on Downstream Flooding Study* (Downstream Flooding Study), and Study 6: *Socioeconomics Study*.

On August 11, 2016, NYPA filed a request to amend the process plan and schedule for the project, requesting that the Commission accelerate the deadline for filing the USR for the Recreation and Socioeconomics studies. NYPA stated that accelerating the review of these two studies would provide for earlier discussion and formal resolution of these studies, and that this resolution would enable NYPA to develop a more complete final license application (FLA) for the project. NYPA provided evidence of support for the acceleration of the USR for these two studies from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation; the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation; American Whitewater; and the Towns of Blenheim and Gilboa, New York. Lastly, NYPA proposed a modified

schedule that indicates the study reports for the Recreation Study and Socioeconomics Study would be completed and filed by September 15, 2016. No comments were filed in opposition of the accelerated review of these two studies.

In the interest of supporting the development of a more complete FLA, and recognizing the broad support for accelerating the USR for the Recreation and Socioeconomic studies, we are modifying the process plan for these two studies. The remainder of the process plan and schedule including the submittal of the Downstream Flooding Study will remain unchanged. The revised process plan is attached as Appendix A.

If you have any questions, please contact Andy Bernick at (202) 502-8660.

Sincerely,

Vince Yearick
Director
Division of Hydropower Licensing

Enclosure: Appendix A (Revised Process Plan)

cc: Service List
Mailing List
Public Files

Appendix A

Revised Process Plan for the Blenheim-Gilboa Pumped Storage Project

| Pre-Filing Milestone | Current Deadline | Revised Deadline¹ | Responsible Party |
|---|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Updated Study Report for the Recreation and Socioeconomics studies due §5.15(f) 2 years from initial study plan determination | February 18, 2017 | September 15, 2016 | NYPA |
| Updated Study Report Meeting for the Recreation and Socioeconomics studies §5.15(f) 15 days from initial report | March 5, 2017 | September 30, 2016 | All stakeholders |
| Updated Study Report Meeting Summary for the Recreation and Socioeconomics studies §5.15(f) 15 days from study meeting | March 20, 2017 | October 15, 2016 | NYPA |
| Study Disputes/Request to Modify Study Plan for the Recreation and Socioeconomics studies due §5.15(f) 30 days from study summary | April 19, 2017 | November 14, 2016 | All stakeholders |
| Responses to Disputes/Study Requests for the Recreation and Socioeconomics studies §5.15(f) 30 days from comment due date | May 19, 2017 | December 14, 2016 | All stakeholders |
| Directors Study Plan Determination for the Recreation and Socioeconomics studies §5.15(f) 30 days from response due date | June 18, 2017 | January 13, 2017 | FERC |
| Updated Study Report due §5.15(f) 2 years from initial study plan determination | February 18, 2017 | No change | NYPA |
| Updated Study Report Meeting §5.15(f) 15 days from initial report | March 5, 2017 | No change | All stakeholders |

¹ If the due date falls on a weekend or holiday, the due date is the following business day.

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|---|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Updated Study Report Meeting Summary §5.15(f) <i>15 days from study meeting</i> | March 20, 2017 | No change | NYPA |
| Study Disputes/Request to Modify Study Plan due §5.15(f) <i>30 days from study summary</i> | April 19, 2017 | No change | All stakeholders |
| Responses to Disputes/Study Requests §5.15(f) <i>30 days from comment due date</i> | May 19, 2017 | No change | All stakeholders |
| Directors Study Plan Determination §5.15(f) <i>30 days from response due date</i> | June 18, 2017 | No change | FERC |
| Preliminary Licensing Proposal §5.16(a) <i>150 days from filing application</i> | December 1, 2016 | No change | NYPA |
| Comments on Preliminary Licensing Proposal §5.16(e) <i>90 days from PLP filing</i> | March 1, 2017 | No change | All stakeholders |
| License Application §5.17 <i>2 years before expiration</i> | April 30, 2017 | No change | NYPA |