

FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20426
May 11, 2023

OFFICE OF ENERGY PROJECTS

Project No. 4679-050 – New York
Vischer Ferry Hydroelectric Project
New York Power Authority

VIA Electronic Mail

Mr. Robert Daly
Director of Licensing
New York Power Authority
Robert.Daly@nypa.gov

Re: Request for Additional Information

Dear Mr. Daly:

On March 31, 2022, the New York Power Authority (NYPA) filed a report entitled “A Numerical Model Study on Ice Jam Flooding in the Lower Mohawk River” (Ice-Jam Report)¹ to support its final license application (FLA) for the Vischer Ferry Hydroelectric Project (project) No. 4679 filed on May 25, 2022. The Ice-Jam Report contains preliminary analyses and modeling results of several options, as part of the State of New York’s Reimagine the Canals Initiative,² to reduce the extent and severity of ice-jam induced flooding on the Mohawk River upstream of the project. The modeled options include the use of ice-breaking vessels, physical modifications of the Vischer Ferry dam (including the installation of pneumatic crest gates), and upstream channel re-configuration of the Mohawk River. In a letter filed on December 22, 2022, NYPA states that its preferred alternative to minimize ice-jam flooding on the Mohawk River is to replace the project’s existing (fixed) flashboards with pneumatic crest gates.³

On March 16, 2023, NYPA provided a summary of its simulations for various crest gate modification alternatives and a description of its preferred alternative (P-1),

¹ https://elibrary.ferc.gov/eLibrary/docinfo?accession_number=20220331-5395.

² <https://www.ny.gov/programs/reimagine-canals-initiative>.

³ https://elibrary.ferc.gov/eLibrary/docinfo?accession_number=20221222-5192.

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which would include installing 27-inch pneumatic crest gates at dams D and E and a combination of 27-inch and 48-inch pneumatic crest gates at dam F of the Vischer Ferry dam.⁴ The gates would operate in concert with ice-breaking vessels. However, NYPA did not provide the modeling results of this preferred alternative. Therefore, please file, within 60 days of the date of this letter, the modeling results of the preferred alternative for the 2018 winter ice-jam event, similar to the modeling results presented in the Ice-Jam Report (i.e., flow and ice conditions during the ice-breaking stage with ice thicknesses of 0.15 meter and 0.3 meter, and a comparison of ice thicknesses and water depths between the baseline and preferred alternative during the ice-breakup stage). Commission staff needs this information to conduct its environmental analysis and assess the potential effectiveness of various ice-jam mitigation options, including NYPA's preferred alternative.

The Commission strongly encourages electronic filing. Please file the requested information using the Commission's eFiling system at <https://ferconline.ferc.gov/LogIn.aspx>. For assistance, please contact FERC Online Support at FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov, (866) 208-3676 (toll free), or (202) 502-8659 (TTY). In lieu of electronic filing, you may submit a paper copy. Submissions sent via the U.S. Postal Service must be addressed to: Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street NE, Room 1A, Washington, DC 20426. Submissions sent via any other carrier must be addressed to: Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 12225 Wilkins Avenue, Rockville, Maryland 20852. The first page of any filing should include docket number P-4679-050.

If you have any questions concerning this letter, please contact Jody Callihan at (202) 502-8278 or jody.callihan@ferc.gov.

Sincerely,

JOHN
SMITH

Digitally signed
by JOHN SMITH
Date: 2023.05.11
10:30:09 -04'00'

John B. Smith, Chief
Mid-Atlantic Branch
Division of Hydropower Licensing

⁴ https://elibrary.ferc.gov/eLibrary/docinfo?accession_number=20230316-5123

Document Content(s)

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