

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA 132 FERC ¶ 62,087
FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION

Littleville Power Company, Inc.	Project No.	2801-031
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ORDER APPROVING RECREATION PLAN

(Issued August 03, 2010)

1. On May 3, 2010, Littleville Power Company, Inc. (licensee) filed a recreation plan (plan) pursuant to article 406 of the license for the Glendale Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2801).[\[1\]](#) The project is located on the Housatonic River in Berkshire County, Massachusetts. The project does not occupy any federal land.

BACKGROUND

2. Article 406 requires the licensee to file, for Commission approval, a recreation plan for the project. The plan must be prepared in consultation with the Massachusetts Department of Fisheries and Wildlife (MDFW) and the Housatonic Valley Association (HVA), and must include, at a minimum:

- (a) a canoe portage around the dam consisting of a new take-out located upstream of the dam on the right bank near the gatehouse; a portage trail that uses an existing access road and crosses the power canal at an existing bridge; a new stairway/ramp at the bypassed reach that will serve as a canoe put-in location; formal vehicular and pedestrian access to the Glendale Dam area and bypassed reach via a parking area at an existing access road adjacent to the new portage trail and bypassed reach put-in; and signage and safety fencing as needed;
- (b) conceptual drawings of the facilities required in item (a) above;
- (c) an operation and maintenance component that specifies dates and times the recreation facilities will be available for public use; and
- (d) an implementation schedule.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED PLAN

3. A portage take-out would be located on the right bank, approximately 80 feet upstream of the Glendale Dam gatehouse, and upstream of the project's existing boat barrier and log boom. The take-out area would be cleared of vegetation and re-graded with crushed gravel. The access trail leading from the take-out would be approximately six feet wide, and would be re-graded with crushed gravel. To ensure streambank stability adjacent to the access trail above the gatehouse, an approximately four-foot high segmented block retaining

wall, approximately 80 feet in length, would be constructed on the right side of the trail.

Chain link fence would be erected along the wing wall upstream of the gatehouse to prevent access to dangerous currents in this area. Signage would also be installed directing in-water canoeists to the portage area take-out.

4. Downstream of the gatehouse, the portage trail would lead canoeists along the existing access road to the proposed parking area, described below. This section of the portage trail is approximately 575 feet in length with a very flat grade. Signage would be installed directing canoeists along the proposed portage route.

5. The lower portage trail would continue from the proposed parking area to the portage put-in and fishing access location near the bypassed reach. The initial portion of this trail from the parking area to the crest of the bypassed reach ravine (approximately 25 feet) would be approximately 6 feet wide, and would be re-graded with crushed gravel. From that point to the bypass reach, the licensee proposes one of two options:

(1) Install a stairway from the crest of the bypassed reach embankment down to the trail terminus to facilitate access to the bypassed reach.

(2) Construct a footpath down the embankment, traversing the steep slope at an appropriate gradient for canoe or kayak portaging. The trail could be constructed without switchbacks, terminating near the upper end of the bypass reach, or could be terminated near the mid-point of the bypass through the use of one or two switchbacks.

6. The lower portion of the portage trail has a slope of approximately 30-40%. Despite its steeply sloping nature, the area is stable, but the removal of some trees could be required to facilitate construction of a stairway. Alternatively, a foot trail could be routed so as to avoid removal of trees to the extent possible. In either case, the trail terminus where the put-in would be located is situated on a relatively flat stream terrace approximately 20 feet in width from the water's edge. The put-in area would be cleared of vegetation. Signage would be installed at the beginning and end of the lower portage trail, directing canoeists along this section of proposed route.

7. The licensee proposes to make improvements to the existing access road from State Highway 183 to Glendale Dam. The intersection of the access road and State Highway 183 would be straightened and re-graded to allow for safer vehicular entry and egress. These improvements would consist of widening the access road entrance from State Highway 183 to allow for two vehicles to enter and exit at the same time. In addition, the access road entrance would be straightened and re-graded with crushed gravel, so it intersects with Highway 183 at approximately 90 degrees.

8. This road would also provide access to the proposed parking area and the Housatonic River above Glendale Dam and the bypass reach. An informational sign would be installed at the road entrance from State Highway 183. The licensee would perform routine inspections of the road, especially during the spring and wet periods to insure the road is in good condition. Required repairs identified in these periods would be performed as necessary.

9. A gravel parking area would be installed adjacent to the access road. The parking area would measure approximately 40 feet by 68 feet and would provide parking for up to seven cars, including one handicapped space. The parking area would be re-graded with crushed gravel. Safety fencing, consisting of six-foot high chain link fencing, would be installed on the easterly and westerly sides of the parking area to prevent access to the power canal. The fencing would extend southerly, approximately 10 feet down the bypassed reach embankment as well. In addition, a gate with a walk-through for recreationists would be installed on the access road, adjacent to the safety fencing on the easterly side of the parking area, to prevent unauthorized vehicular access to the gatehouse.

10. In addition to the signage described above, the licensee would also post signage as necessary to warn recreationists of dangerous currents and other potentially hazardous conditions adjacent to publicly accessible areas.

11. The plan states that the recreation facilities would be available for public use during daylight hours from April 15 through October 15, annually, subject to site conditions allowing for suitable and safe access. The licensee would be responsible for the general operation and maintenance of the facilities.

12. The plan considers the needs of the disabled in the planning and design of the recreation facilities. The parking area and canoe portage trail leading to the canoe put-in location above the dam would maintain a suitable grade for wheelchair access. One handicapped parking space was included in the design of the parking area. Due to steep terrain between the parking area and bypassed reach, it is not feasible to provide wheelchair access.

13. The plan includes drawings that illustrate the facilities at the project. The plan also includes an implementation schedule for the recreation enhancements. Anticipating approval of the plan in July 2010, the licensee would solicit proposals and select a contractor in 2010, and the facilities would be constructed during the spring and summer of 2011. Figure 1 depicts the proposed recreation enhancements.

Figure 1: Proposed Recreation Enhancements (Source: Google with staff modifications)

CONSULTATION AND DISCUSSION

14. In accordance with the requirements of article 406, the licensee developed the plan in consultation with the MDFW and HVA. The licensee distributed draft copies of the plan to the consulting parties on March 31, 2010.

15. On April 6, 2010, the MDFW commented that it has no preference for the type of trail for the canoe portage (stairs versus path), and encouraged the licensee to keep the facilities open as long as weather permits rather than Memorial Day through Labor Day.

16. On May 3, 2010, the HVA recommended utilizing the least slope achievable to construct the access to the river as carrying a boat and gear down a steep slope is challenging. The HVA also proposed extending the availability of the portage and access from April 15 through October 15 as use of the river is increasing during the spring and fall.

17. The licensee indicated that it will make its final decision regarding the use of a stairway versus a footpath based on a final assessment of the site conditions and relative construction and maintenance costs. If the trail option is selected, the licensee indicates that the slope of the trail would be minimized to the extent possible. The licensee modified the plan to extend the opening and closing dates for the facilities from April 15 through October 15, subject to site conditions allowing suitable and safe access.

CONCLUSION

18. The plan identifies the proposed recreational enhancements at the project, and adequately addresses the requirements of article 406. Implementation of the plan would enhance public access to project lands and waters, and provide improved recreational opportunities. The licensee is encouraged to consider the HVA's recommendation to use the least slope possible to construct the access, and Commission staff recommends avoiding the removal of trees to the extent possible. At least 60 days prior to starting construction of the facilities, the licensee should notify the Commission of its final plans for the lower portage trail. The Commission reserves the right to require changes to the plan. The plan should be approved.

19. Within 90 days of construction of the facilities, the licensee should submit drawings showing the location and layout of the completed recreation facilities, as-built, in relation to the project boundary. Also, in order to accurately include these permanent recreation facilities in the Commission's geographic database for the project, the licensee should file site-specific information on their location.

The Director orders:

(A) Littleville Power Company, Inc's recreation plan for the Glendale Hydroelectric Project, filed May 3, 2010, is approved.

(B) Within 45 days of the date of this order, the licensee shall file location point data representative of each of the facilities provided under the recreation plan approved in ordering paragraph (A), above. The location point must be positionally accurate to comply, at a minimum, with National Map Accuracy Standards for maps at a 1:24,000 scale. The location point must include latitude/longitude, in decimal degrees, based on the horizontal reference datum of the North American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83).

(C) At least 60 days prior to starting construction of the facilities, the licensee shall notify the Commission of its final plans for the lower portage trail. The Commission reserves the right to require changes to the plan.

(D) Within 90 days of construction of the facilities, the licensee shall file as-built drawings showing the location and layout of the facilities in relation to the project boundary.

(E) This order constitutes final agency action. Requests for rehearing by the Commission may be filed within 30 days from the date of issuance of this order, pursuant to 18 CFR § 385.713.

Robert J. Fletcher
Chief, Land Resources Branch

Division of Hydropower
Administration and Compliance

[\[1\]](#) Order Issuing Subsequent License issued August 19, 2009 (128 FERC ¶ 62,123).
