

- endangered and threatened species;
- cultural resources;
- air quality and noise;
- public safety; and
- cumulative impacts.

We will also evaluate reasonable alternatives to the proposed project or portions of the project, and make recommendations on how to lessen or avoid impacts on the various resource areas.

The EA will present our independent analysis of the issues. The EA will be available in the public record through eLibrary. Depending on the comments received during the scoping process, we may also publish and distribute the EA to the public for an allotted comment period. We will consider all comments on the EA before making our recommendations to the Commission. To ensure we have the opportunity to consider and address your comments, please carefully follow the instructions in the Public Participation section, beginning on page 2 of this Notice.

With this notice, we are asking agencies with jurisdiction by law and/or special expertise with respect to the environmental issues of this project to formally cooperate with us in the preparation of the EA.<sup>4</sup> Agencies that would like to request cooperating agency status should follow the instructions for filing comments provided under the Public Participation section of this notice.

#### Consultations Under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act

In accordance with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's implementing regulations for section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, we are using this notice to initiate consultation with the applicable State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), and to solicit their views and those of other government agencies, interested Indian tribes, and the public on the project's potential effects on historic properties.<sup>5</sup> We will define the project-specific Area of Potential Effects (APE) in consultation with the SHPO as the project develops. On natural gas facility projects, the APE at a minimum encompasses all areas subject to ground disturbance (examples include construction right-of-way, contractor/

pipe storage yards, compressor stations, and access roads). Our EA for this project will document our findings on the impacts on historic properties and summarize the status of consultations under section 106.

#### Currently Identified Environmental Issues

We have already identified two issues that we think deserve attention based on a preliminary review of the proposed facilities and the environmental information provided by Northwest. This preliminary list of issues may be changed based on your comments and our analysis.

- Effects of construction on residential properties.
- Impacts on sensitive fish species during stream construction activities.

#### Environmental Mailing List

The environmental mailing list includes federal, state, and local government representatives and agencies; elected officials; environmental and public interest groups; Native American Tribes; other interested parties; and local libraries and newspapers. This list also includes all affected landowners (as defined in the Commission's regulations) who are potential right-of-way grantors, whose property may be used temporarily for project purposes, or who own homes within certain distances of aboveground facilities, and anyone who submits comments on the project. We will update the environmental mailing list as the analysis proceeds to ensure that we send the information related to this environmental review to all individuals, organizations, and government entities interested in and/or potentially affected by the proposed project.

If we publish and distribute the EA, copies of the EA will be sent to the environmental mailing list for public review and comment. If you would prefer to receive a paper copy of the document instead of the CD version or would like to remove your name from the mailing list, please return the attached Information Request (appendix 5).

#### Becoming an Intervenor

In addition to involvement in the EA scoping process, you may want to become an "intervenor" which is an official party to the Commission's proceeding. Intervenor play a more formal role in the process and are able to file briefs, appear at hearings, and be heard by the courts if they choose to appeal the Commission's final ruling. An intervenor formally participates in the proceeding by filing a request to

intervene. Instructions for becoming an intervenor are in the "Document-less Intervention Guide" under the "e-filing" link on the Commission's Web site. Motions to intervene are more fully described at <http://www.ferc.gov/resources/guides/how-to/intervene.asp>.

#### Additional Information

Additional information about the project is available from the Commission's Office of External Affairs, at (866) 208-FERC, or on the FERC Web site at [www.ferc.gov](http://www.ferc.gov) using the "eLibrary" link. Click on the eLibrary link, click on "General Search" and enter the docket number, excluding the last three digits in the Docket Number field (*i.e.*, CP17-441). Be sure you have selected an appropriate date range. For assistance, please contact FERC Online Support at [FercOnlineSupport@ferc.gov](mailto:FercOnlineSupport@ferc.gov) or toll free at (866) 208-3676, or for TTY, contact (202) 502-8659. The eLibrary link also provides access to the texts of formal documents issued by the Commission, such as orders, notices, and rulemakings.

In addition, the Commission offers a free service called eSubscription which allows you to keep track of all formal issuances and submittals in specific dockets. This can reduce the amount of time you spend researching proceedings by automatically providing you with notification of these filings, document summaries, and direct links to the documents. Go to [www.ferc.gov/docs-filing/esubscription.asp](http://www.ferc.gov/docs-filing/esubscription.asp).

Finally, public sessions or site visits will be posted on the Commission's calendar located at [www.ferc.gov/EventCalendar/EventsList.aspx](http://www.ferc.gov/EventCalendar/EventsList.aspx) along with other related information.

Dated: June 21, 2017.

**Nathaniel J. Davis, Sr.**,  
Deputy Secretary.

[FR Doc. 2017-13383 Filed 6-26-17; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6717-01-P

## DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

### Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Project No. 14822-000]

#### Merchant Hydro Developers, LLC; Notice of Preliminary Permit Application Accepted for Filing and Soliciting Comments, Motions To Intervene, and Competing Applications

On January 18, 2017, Merchant Hydro Developers, LLC, filed an application for a preliminary permit, pursuant to section 4(f) of the Federal Power Act (FPA), proposing to study the feasibility

<sup>4</sup> The Council on Environmental Quality regulations addressing cooperating agency responsibilities are at Title 40, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 1501.6.

<sup>5</sup> The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's regulations are at Title 36, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 800. Those regulations define historic properties as any prehistoric or historic district, site, building, structure, or object included in or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

of the Aroo Pioneer Peak Pumped Storage Hydro Project to be located near Archbald Borough and Jefferson Township in Lackawanna County, Pennsylvania. The sole purpose of a preliminary permit, if issued, is to grant the permit holder priority to file a license application during the permit term. A preliminary permit does not authorize the permit holder to perform any land-disturbing activities or otherwise enter upon lands or waters owned by others without the owners' express permission.

The proposed project would consist of the following: (1) A new upper reservoir with a surface area of 116 acres and a storage capacity of 1,740 acre-feet at a surface elevation of approximately 2,265 feet above mean sea level (msl) created through construction of a new roller-compacted concrete or rock-fill dam; (2) a new lower reservoir with a surface area of 184 acres and a storage capacity of 2,088 acre-feet at a surface elevation of 1,400 feet msl; (3) a new 10,000-foot-long, 48-inch-diameter penstock connecting the upper and lower reservoirs; (4) a new 150-foot-long, 50-foot-wide, 25-foot-high powerhouse containing two turbine-generator units with a total rated capacity of 123 megawatts; (5) a new 2,640-foot-long transmission line connecting the powerhouse to the PPL Electric Utilities' Peckville 230-kilovolt circuit; and (6) appurtenant facilities. The proposed project would have an annual generation of 450,380 megawatt-hours.

*Applicant Contact:* Adam Rousselle, Merchant Hydro Developers, LLC, 5710 Oak Crest Drive, Doylestown, PA 18902; phone: 267-254-6107.

*FERC Contact:* Woohee Choi; phone: (202) 502-6336.

*Deadline for filing comments, motions to intervene, competing applications (without notices of intent), or notices of intent to file competing applications:* 60 days from the issuance of this notice. Competing applications and notices of intent must meet the requirements of 18 CFR 4.36.

The Commission strongly encourages electronic filing. Please file comments, motions to intervene, notices of intent, and competing applications using the Commission's eFiling system at <http://www.ferc.gov/docs-filing/efiling.asp>. Commenters can submit brief comments up to 6,000 characters, without prior registration, using the eComment system at <http://www.ferc.gov/docs-filing/ecomment.asp>. You must include your name and contact information at the end of your comments. For assistance, please contact FERC Online Support at [FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov](mailto:FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov), (866) 208-3676 (toll free), or (202) 502-8659

(TTY). In lieu of electronic filing, please send a paper copy to: Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street NE., Washington, DC 20426. The first page of any filing should include docket number P-14822-000.

More information about this project, including a copy of the application, can be viewed or printed on the "eLibrary" link of the Commission's Web site at <http://www.ferc.gov/docs-filing/elibrary.asp>. Enter the docket number (P-14822) in the docket number field to access the document. For assistance, contact FERC Online Support.

Dated: June 21, 2017.

**Nathaniel J. Davis, Sr.,**

*Deputy Secretary.*

[FR Doc. 2017-13387 Filed 6-26-17; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 6717-01-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

### Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Project No. 14825-000]

#### **Merchant Hydro Developers, LLC; Notice of Preliminary Permit Application Accepted for Filing and Soliciting Comments, Motions To Intervene, and Competing Applications**

On January 18, 2017, Merchant Hydro Developers, LLC, filed an application for a preliminary permit, pursuant to section 4(f) of the Federal Power Act (FPA), proposing to study the feasibility of the Four Mile Pumped Storage Hydro Project to be located near the City of Frostburg in Allegany County, Maryland. The sole purpose of a preliminary permit, if issued, is to grant the permit holder priority to file a license application during the permit term. A preliminary permit does not authorize the permit holder to perform any land-disturbing activities or otherwise enter upon lands or waters owned by others without the owners' express permission.

The proposed project would consist of the following: (1) A new upper reservoir with a surface area of 168 acres and a storage capacity of 2,520 acre-feet at a surface elevation of approximately 2,800 feet above mean sea level (msl) created through construction of a new roller-compacted concrete or rock-fill dam; (2) a new lower reservoir with a surface area of 55 acres and a storage capacity of 3,024 acre-feet at a surface elevation of 2,250 feet msl; (3) a new 5,823-foot-long, 48-inch-diameter penstock connecting the upper and lower reservoirs; (4) a new 150-foot-long, 50-foot-wide, 25-foot-high powerhouse

containing two turbine-generator units with a total rated capacity of 114 megawatts; (5) a new 2,640-foot-long transmission line connecting the powerhouse to the Frostburg-Jennings 138-kilovolt circuit owned by Potomac Edison; and (6) appurtenant facilities. The proposed project would have an annual generation of 414,741 megawatt-hours.

*Applicant Contact:* Adam Rousselle, Merchant Hydro Developers, LLC, 5710 Oak Crest Drive, Doylestown, PA 18902; phone: 267-254-6107.

*FERC Contact:* Woohee Choi; phone: (202) 502-6336.

*Deadline for filing comments, motions to intervene, competing applications (without notices of intent), or notices of intent to file competing applications:* 60 days from the issuance of this notice. Competing applications and notices of intent must meet the requirements of 18 CFR 4.36.

The Commission strongly encourages electronic filing. Please file comments, motions to intervene, notices of intent, and competing applications using the Commission's eFiling system at <http://www.ferc.gov/docs-filing/efiling.asp>. Commenters can submit brief comments up to 6,000 characters, without prior registration, using the eComment system at <http://www.ferc.gov/docs-filing/ecomment.asp>. You must include your name and contact information at the end of your comments. For assistance, please contact FERC Online Support at [FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov](mailto:FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov), (866) 208-3676 (toll free), or (202) 502-8659 (TTY). In lieu of electronic filing, please send a paper copy to: Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street NE., Washington, DC 20426. The first page of any filing should include docket number P-14825-000.

More information about this project, including a copy of the application, can be viewed or printed on the "eLibrary" link of the Commission's Web site at <http://www.ferc.gov/docs-filing/elibrary.asp>. Enter the docket number (P-14825) in the docket number field to access the document. For assistance, contact FERC Online Support.

Dated: June 21, 2017.

**Nathaniel J. Davis, Sr.,**

*Deputy Secretary.*

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