

FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION
Washington, D. C. 20426

OFFICE OF ENERGY PROJECTS

Project No. 2785-080 – Michigan
Sanford Project
Boyce Hydro Power, LLC

Mr. Frank O. Christie, P.E.
General Manager
Boyce Hydro Power, LLC
6000 South M-30 (P.O. Box 15)
Edenville, MI 48624

December 18, 2012

Re: Article 411 Winter Drawdown Schedule Variance Request

Dear Mr. Christie:

This letter is in response to your request filed on August 20, 2012, and supplemented on September 25 and December 10, 2012, regarding a variance to the start date for the winter drawdown under Article 411 of the license for the Sanford Project No. 2785, as amended.¹

Article 411 requires the licensee to operate the Sanford Project so that the project reservoir elevation does not fluctuate more than 0.4 foot below or 0.3 foot above the normal pool elevation of 625.0 feet National Geodetic Vertical Datum (NGVD), except during the winter drawdown. The licensee shall begin the winter drawdown after December 15, and shall complete the winter drawdown by January 15 of each year. The licensee shall complete the refill of the reservoir, thus ending the winter drawdown period, prior to the surface water temperature of the reservoir reaching 39°F. During the winter drawdown, the licensee shall operate the Sanford Project such that the reservoir level does not fall below 622.0 feet NGVD, and the daily fluctuation in reservoir elevation does not exceed 0.7 foot. Management of reservoir fluctuations is required within sixty days of installation of reservoir level gages required by Article 402.

The required reservoir elevation may be temporarily modified if required by operating emergencies beyond the control of the licensee, and for short periods for project maintenance purposes, upon mutual agreement between the licensee and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. If the reservoir level fluctuation is so

¹ 85 FERC ¶ 61,066 (1998).

modified, the licensee shall notify the Commission as soon as possible, but no later than ten days after each such incident.

Your August 20 filing with the Commission and the Michigan DNR requested permission to start the annual winter drawdown on December 1, instead of December 15. You made the request to facilitate work by reducing the water elevation in the Edenville Project tailrace, which is lowered by approximately 2.5 feet during the Sanford Project winter drawdown. In a letter filed on September 25, 2012, the Michigan DNR concurred with your request. On December 10, 2012, you filed notification that the drawdown commenced on December 5, 2012.

As required under Article 411, you sought and received concurrence from the Michigan DNR for the short-term modification to the reservoir elevation, and filed a notification within 10 days of the modification. Based on the above, you have adequately fulfilled the requirements of Article 411, and the deviation will not be considered a violation of your license.

Thank you for your cooperation. If you have any questions about this letter, please contact Christopher Chaney at (202) 502-6778.

Sincerely,

William Guey-Lee
Chief, Engineering Resources Branch
Division of Hydropower Administration
and Compliance