

FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION
Washington, D. C. 20426

OFFICE OF ENERGY PROJECTS

Project No. 2514-157 – Virginia
Byllesby and Buck Project
Appalachian Power Company

Mr. Frank M. Simms
Plant Manager, II
Appalachian Power Company
P.O. Box 2021
Roanoke, VA 24022

July 24, 2015

Subject: Deviations from reservoir elevation requirements – Article 401.

Dear Mr. Simms:

Thank you for the letter filed June 8, 2015, in which you reported deviations from the reservoir elevation requirements at the Byllesby and Buck Project No. 2514 that occurred from April 19, 2015 through June 8, 2015. The deviations will not be considered violations of Article 401 of your license, as discussed below.

License Requirement

Article 401 of the license requires you to operate the Buck reservoir at an elevation between 2,002.4 and 2,003.4 feet National Geodetic Vertical Datum (NGVD).¹ The license article also requires you to maintain the Byllesby reservoir between an elevation of 2,078.2 and 2,079.2 feet NGVD. You may temporarily modify normal reservoir operation if required by operating emergencies beyond your control or for short periods upon mutual agreement between yourself and the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (Virginia DGIF). If the operation is so modified, you are required to notify the Commission as soon as possible, but no later than 10 days after each such incident.

Deviation Incidents

In your June 8, 2015 letter, you state that you notified the Virginia DGIF on April 18, 2015 that you intended to drawdown the reservoir at both project developments

¹ *Appalachian Power Company*, 66 FERC ¶ 62,188 (1994).

by approximately 2 feet, in anticipation of forecasted heavy rainfall. You state that on April 19, 2015, the Buck reservoir reached an elevation of 2,000.83 feet NGVD and the Byllesby reservoir reached an elevation of 2,076.6 feet NGVD. You also state that on April 20, 2015, you again contacted the Virginia DGIF to inform the agency that river flows were in excess of plant capacity and you would be required to drop flashboards at the project to release the excess water. Due to this, you state that the reservoir would remain at the dam crest elevation until flashboards could be replaced. Your letter states that you replaced the flashboards and returned the Byllesby reservoir to its minimum required elevation on May 14, 2015 and the Buck reservoir to its minimum elevation on June 8, 2015.

Review

Based upon the available information, we will not consider this incident to be a violation of Article 401 of your license. The deviations were caused by a weather event and you took preemptive action to limit adverse impacts of the heavy rainfall. You also provided frequent updates to the Virginia DGIF throughout the incident and there were no reported adverse environmental impact from the deviations.

If you have any questions concerning this letter, please contact Steven Sachs at 202-502-8666.

Sincerely,

Kelly Houff
Chief, Engineering Resources Branch
Division of Hydropower Administration
and Compliance