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Docket Nos. RM17-4-000, RM16-19-000

Item Nos. H-3, H-1

FERC Seeking Comment on Policy for Establishing Length of Hydropower Licenses

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) is inviting comments on whether, and, if so, how, to revise its policy for establishing the length of original and new licenses it issues for hydroelectric projects located at nonfederal dams.

The Commission's current policy is to set a 30-year term where there is little or no authorized redevelopment, new construction or environmental mitigation and enhancement; a 40-year term for a license involving a moderate amount of these activities; and a 50-year term where there is an extensive amount of such activity.

Today's Notice of Inquiry (NOI) outlines five potential options for establishing license terms:

- Retain the existing license term policy;
- Add to the existing license term policy the consideration of measures implemented under the prior license;
- Replace the existing license term with a 50-year default license term;
- Add a more quantitative cost-based analysis to the existing license term policy; and
- Alter current policy to accept the longer license term agreed upon in an applicable settlement agreement.

FERC issued another hydro-related NOI today, seeking comment on its methodology for calculating annual charges for the use of government lands for hydropower projects in Alaska. The Federal Power Act requires hydropower licensees that use federal lands to compensate the United States through payment of an annual fee established by the Commission. Since 2013, FERC has used a fee schedule to calculate annual charges for the use of federal lands. The fee schedule, which the Commission publishes annually, identifies per-acre rental fees by county or geographic area.

This NOI follows a petition for rulemaking filed by hydropower licensees in Alaska, which requests that the Commission use a statewide average per-acre land value to calculate annual charges for the use of government lands in Alaska.

Comments on both NOIs are due 60 days after publication in the *Federal Register*.

R-17-09

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