



# Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

## Potter Creek Hydroelectric Project

P-13652- Montana

On April 22, 2010, an order issuing an exemption from the licensing requirements of Part I of the FPA was issued to Gary and Rita Hall, to operate, and maintain the 50-watt (W) Potter Creek Hydroelectric Project, after a licensing process of three and one-half months. The project will be located on an existing dam constructed by the Halls on Potter Creek, in Flathead County, Montana. The project dam, reservoir, penstock, and the bulk of the transmission line would occupy federal land administered by the U.S. Forest Service as part of the Flathead National Forest.

The Potter Creek Project will use an existing 50-foot-wide by 5-foot-high wood slat and rock dam with an installed bypass flume and bottom gate, which impounds a 0.07-acre reservoir. In addition to the existing dam and reservoir, the project will include a 4-inch-diameter, 111-foot-long polyvinyl chloride penstock, which will connect to an approximately 4-foot-long, 2.5-foot-wide turbine box containing one turbine/generator unit with a total installed generating capacity of 50 W. Water used for generation will be discharged from the turbine box directly into Potter Creek. Project power will be transmitted through a 12-volt, 335-foot-long transmission line from the turbine box to the Halls' residence.

The factors that contributed to an expedited licensing process included:

- The project's effects would be minimal;
- The project will be located on an existing dam and bypass flume;
- Staff was able to waive pre-filing three-stage consultation and post-filing scoping and solicitation of post-filing study requests, and also shortened comment periods;
- Staff worked with the applicant and the Forest Service, the State Historic Preservation Officer, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to ensure resolution of issues related to use of Forest Service lands, listed species, and cultural resources;
- Staff issued a single environmental assessment in lieu of draft and final NEPA documents; and
- The order was issued on the same day as the environmental assessment.