



**Federal Energy Regulatory Commission  
February 15, 2007  
Open Commission Meeting  
Statement of  
Commissioner Philip D. Moeller**

**Item H-1: Preliminary Permits for Wave, Current, and Instream New Technology Hydropower Projects (RM07-8-000)**

"Hydropower in the United States produces about nine to ten percent of our total generation. The new wave, current and instream technologies could potentially exceed that current amount of generation, and so these new technologies have, in themselves, generated a lot of enthusiasm throughout the country, particularly in coastal states, including my home state of Washington.

We need to explore how these new technologies can fit in the national energy framework. We should increase our efforts to reduce the regulatory barriers to harness the potential of this renewable power. Today's order, which seeks to improve the Commission's permitting process, is a great effort in promoting the development of such new technologies. The Commission has to carefully balance the legal, environmental, financial and safety considerations of these new technologies, but I do not want the surmountable barriers to dampen the enthusiasm or the potential of these projects.

The Commission is issuing a notice of inquiry that solicits comment on procedures with regard to preliminary permits under Part I of the Federal Power Act for wave, current, and instream new technology hydropower projects. We seek comments on the following proposed approaches: (1) maintain a standard preliminary permit approach; (2) adopt a stricter scrutiny approach; or (3) decline to issue preliminary permits. Commenters are invited to propose additional approaches. I hope that this notice of inquiry will encourage interested entities to submit their comments and also give a lot of attention to the effort we are undertaking today.

I am encouraged that in the interim, the Commission is taking steps to complete processing the 40 or so preliminary permit applications pending before us. H-5 on the February 15th agenda explains the interim approach.

Next, we should consider whether the hydropower licensing process can be streamlined for the new technologies. I requested that the Commission hold a technical conference on this issue. I appreciate the willingness of the Chairman and my fellow Commissioners to examine, at a future date, the potential of modifying the licensing process, maybe after we have gained some experience from processing our first license application for a tidal project, which is located in the waters of my home state of Washington.

Again, I go back to my home state where the voters passed a renewable portfolio standard last Fall, that is relatively aggressive. These new technologies can help meet that need, not immediately, but in a little while. I am glad that the Commission and Commission's staff have undertaken the current effort and I look forward to working with them as they conduct a further review of these technologies, with the hope that these technologies will be commercially feasible and successfully developed where appropriate."