

FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20426

October 25, 2018

OFFICE OF ENERGY PROJECTS

Project No. 10489-016 -WI
River Falls Hydroelectric Project
City of River Falls Municipal Utilities

**Subject: Scoping Document 1 for the River Falls Hydroelectric
Project (FERC No. 10489-016)**

To the Parties Addressed:

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (Commission) is currently reviewing the Pre-Application Document filed August 30, 2018, by the City of River Falls Municipal Utilities (City of River Falls) for relicensing the upper 250-kilowatt (kW) Junction Falls development and decommissioning the lower 125-kW Powell Falls development of the River Falls Hydroelectric Project (River Falls Project) (FERC No. 10489). The project is located on the Kinnickinnic River in the City of River Falls in Pierce County, Wisconsin. The project does not occupy federal lands.

Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended, Commission staff intends to prepare a draft and final environmental assessment (EA), which will be used by the Commission to determine whether, and under what conditions, to issue a new license for the project. To support and assist our environmental review, we are beginning the public scoping process to ensure that all pertinent issues are identified and analyzed, and that the EA is thorough and balanced.

We invite your participation in the scoping process and are circulating the enclosed Scoping Document 1 (SD1) to provide you with information on the River Falls Project. We are also soliciting your comments and suggestions on our preliminary list of issues and alternatives to be addressed in the EA. We are also requesting that you identify any studies that would help provide a framework for collecting pertinent information on the resource areas under consideration necessary for the Commission to prepare the EA for the project.

We will hold two scoping meetings for the River Falls Project to receive input on the scope of the EA. An evening meeting will be held at 6:30 p.m. on November 15, 2018, at the River Falls City Hall Training Room, 222 Lewis Street, River Falls, WI, 54022. A daytime meeting will be held at 9:00 a.m. on November 16, 2018, at the River Falls City Hall Council Chambers, 222 Lewis Street, River Falls, WI, 54022. We will also visit the project facilities on November 15, 2018, beginning at 1 p.m.

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Participants should meet at the Old Power Plant at Junction Falls dam, 401 S. Winter Street, River Falls, WI, 54022. Section 2.2, *Comments, Scoping Meetings, and Environmental Site Review* of the scoping document contains information on how to RSVP.

We invite all interested agencies, Indian tribes, non-governmental organizations, and individuals to attend one or both of these meetings. Further information on our environmental site review and scoping meetings is available in the enclosed SD1.

SD1 is being distributed to both City of River Falls' distribution list and the Commission's official mailing list (see section 10.0 of the enclosed SD1). If you wish to be added to, or removed from, the Commission's official mailing list, please send your request by email to FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov, or by mail to: Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street, N.E., Room 1A, Washington, D.C. 20426. All written or emailed requests must specify your wish to be added to, or removed from, the mailing list, and must clearly identify the project name and FERC project number (i.e., River Falls Hydroelectric Project No. 10489-016) on the first page.

Please review SD1 and, if you wish to provide comments, follow the instructions in section 6.0, *Request for Information and Studies*. If you have any questions about SD1, the scoping process, or how Commission staff will develop the EA for this project, please contact Shana Wiseman at (202) 502-8736, or shana.wiseman@ferc.gov. Additional information about the Commission's licensing process and the River Falls Project may be obtained from our website (<http://www.ferc.gov>) or City of River Falls' relicensing website (<http://www.rfmu.org/582/Hydroelectric-Relicensing>). The deadline for filing comments is December 28, 2018. The Commission strongly encourages electronic filings.

Enclosure: Scoping Document 1

SCOPING DOCUMENT 1
RIVER FALLS HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT
WISCONSIN
FERC PROJECT NO. 10489-016



Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
Office of Energy Projects
Division of Hydropower Licensing
Washington, D.C.

October 2018

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SCOPING DOCUMENT 1

River Falls Hydroelectric Project No. 10489-016

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (Commission or FERC), under the authority of the Federal Power Act (FPA),¹ may issue licenses for terms ranging from 30 to 50 years for the construction, operation, and maintenance of non-federal hydroelectric projects. On August 30, 2018, the City of River Falls Municipal Utilities (City of River Falls) filed a Pre-Application Document (PAD) and Notice of Intent to seek a new license for part of the River Falls Hydroelectric Project (River Falls Project or project) (FERC Project No. 10489).^{2, 3} The project consists of the upstream 250-kilowatt (kW) Junction Falls development and the downstream 125-kW Powell Falls development, for a total installed capacity of 375 kW. The City of River Falls proposes to apply for a subsequent license to continue operation and maintenance of the Junction Falls development. The City of River Falls also proposes to decommission the Powell Falls development and remove the dam.

The River Falls Project is located on the Kinnickinnic River in the City of River Falls in Pierce County, Wisconsin (figure 1). The total annual generation of the project from 2012 through 2017 was 1,724,833 kilowatt-hours. A detailed description of the project is provided in section 3.0, *Proposed Action and Alternatives*. The project does not occupy federal land.

The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA),⁴ the Commission's regulations, and other applicable laws require that we independently evaluate the environmental effects of relicensing the River Falls Project as proposed, and also consider reasonable alternatives to the licensee's proposed action. At this time, we intend to prepare a draft and final environmental assessment (EA) that describes and evaluates

¹ 16 U.S.C. §§ 791(a)-825(r).

² The current license for the River Falls Project was issued on September 27, 1988, with an effective date of December 1, 1988, for a term of 30 years, and was set to expire on August 31, 2018. *River Falls Municipal Utility*, 44 FERC ¶ 62,298 (1988).

³ The license term for the River Falls Project was extended for five years and expires on August 31, 2023. *City of River Falls, Wisconsin*, 154 FERC ¶ 61,214 (2016) (March 17 Order).

⁴ National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (Pub. L. 91-190, 42 U.S.C. 4321-4347, January 1, 1970, as amended by Pub. L. 94-52, July 3, 1975, Pub. L. 94-83, August 9, 1975, and Pub. L. 97-258, §4(b), September 13, 1982).

the probable effects, including an assessment of the site-specific and cumulative effects, if any, of the proposed action and alternatives. The EA preparation will be supported by a scoping process to ensure that all pertinent issues are identified and analyzed.

Although our current intent is to prepare an EA, there is a possibility that an environmental impact statement (EIS) may be required. The scoping process will satisfy the NEPA scoping requirements, irrespective of whether the Commission issues an EA or an EIS.

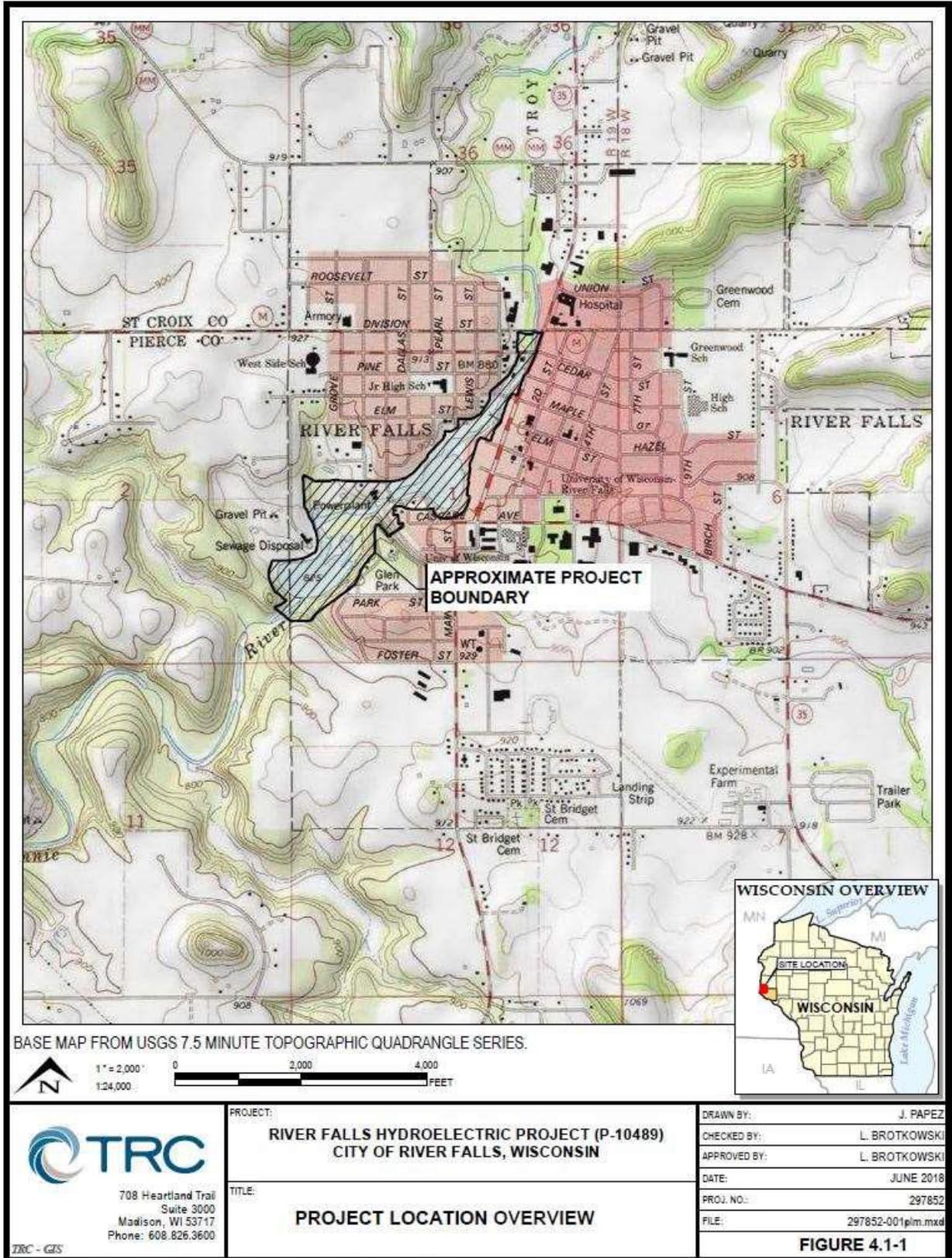


Figure 1. Project location map (Source: City of River Falls, 2018).

2.0 SCOPING

This Scoping Document 1 (SD1) is intended to advise all participants as to the proposed scope of the EA and to seek additional information pertinent to this analysis. This document contains: (1) a description of the scoping process and schedule for the development of the EA; (2) a description of the applicant's proposed action and alternatives; (3) a preliminary identification of environmental issues and proposed studies; (4) a request for comments and information; (5) a proposed EA outline; and (6) a preliminary list of comprehensive plans that are applicable to the project.

2.1 PURPOSES OF SCOPING

Scoping is the process used to identify issues, concerns, and opportunities for enhancement or mitigation associated with a proposed action. According to NEPA, the scoping process should be conducted during the early planning stages of a project. The purposes of the scoping process are as follows:

- invite participation of federal, state, and local resource agencies; Indian tribes; non-governmental organizations (NGOs); and the public to identify significant environmental and socioeconomic issues related to the proposed project;
- determine the resource issues, depth of analysis, and significance of issues to be addressed in the EA;
- identify how the project would or would not contribute to cumulative effects in the project area;
- identify reasonable alternatives to the proposed action that should be evaluated in the EA;
- solicit from participants available information on the resources at issue, including existing information and study needs; and
- determine the resource areas and potential issues that do not require detailed analysis during review of the project.

2.2 COMMENTS, SCOPING MEETINGS, AND ENVIRONMENTAL SITE REVIEW

During preparation of the EA, there will be several opportunities for the resource agencies, Indian tribes, NGOs, and public to provide input. These opportunities occur:

- during the public scoping process and study plan meetings, when we solicit oral and written comments regarding the scope of the issues and analysis for the EA;
- in response to the Commission's notice that the project is ready for environmental analysis; and
- after issuance of the EA, when we solicit written comments on the EA.

In addition to written comments solicited by this SD1, we will hold two public scoping meetings and an environmental site review in the vicinity of the project. A daytime meeting will focus on concerns of resource agencies, NGOs, and Indian tribes, while an evening meeting will focus on receiving input from the public. We invite all interested agencies, Indian tribes, NGOs, and individuals to attend one or both of the meetings to assist us in identifying the scope of environmental issues that should be analyzed in the EA. All interested parties are also invited to participate in the environmental site review. The times and location of the meetings and environmental site review are as follows:

Evening Scoping Meeting

Date and Time: Thursday, November 15, 2018 at 6:30 p.m.
 Location: River Falls City Hall Training Room
 222 Lewis Street
 River Falls, WI 54022
 Phone Number: (715) 425-0900

Environmental Site Review

Date and Time: Thursday, November 15, 2018 at 1:00 p.m.
 Location: River Falls Hydroelectric Project. Participants should meet at the Old Power Plant at Junction Falls dam, located at 401 S. Winter Street, River Falls, WI, 54022.

Daytime Scoping Meeting

Date and Time: Friday, November 16, 2018 at 9:00 a.m.
 Location: River Falls City Council Chambers
 222 Lewis Street
 River Falls, WI 54022
 Phone Number: (715) 425-0900

If you plan to attend the environmental site review, please email Kevin Westhuis, Utility Director of the City of River Falls Municipal Utilities, at kwesthuis@rfcity.org (preferred contact) or (715) 426-3442 by Friday November 9, 2018, and indicate how many participants will be attending with you. The City of River Falls' safety policies require that all environmental site review participants wear sturdy footwear; no open toe, sandals, high heels, etc.

The scoping meetings will be recorded by a court reporter, and all statements (verbal and written) will become part of the Commission's public record for the project. These meetings are posted on the Commission's calendar located on the internet at <http://www.ferc.gov/EventCalendar/EventsList.aspx?View=monthview>. Before each meeting, all individuals who attend, especially those who intend to make statements, will

be asked to sign in and clearly identify themselves for the record. Interested parties who choose not to speak or who are unable to attend the scoping meetings may provide written comments and information to the Commission as described in section 6.0, *Request for Information and Studies*.

Meeting participants should come prepared to discuss their issues and/or concerns as they pertain to the relicensing of the upper Junction Falls development and the decommissioning of the lower Powell Falls development of the River Falls Project. It is advised that participants review the PAD in preparation for the scoping meetings. Copies of the PAD are available for review at the Commission in the Public Reference Room or may be viewed on the Commission's website (www.ferc.gov), using the "eLibrary" link. Enter the docket number, P-10489, to access the documents. For assistance, contact FERC Online Support at FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov or toll free at 1-866-208-3676, or for TTY, (202) 502-8659. A copy of the PAD is also available for inspection and reproduction at the following address: City of River Falls, 222 Lewis Street, River Falls, WI 54022. Lastly, a copy of the PAD can also be obtained from City of River Falls' relicensing website (<http://www.rfmu.org/582/Hydroelectric-Relicensing>).

Following the scoping meetings and comment period, all issues raised will be reviewed and decisions made on the level of analysis needed. If preliminary analysis indicates that any issues presented in this scoping document have little potential for causing significant effects, the issue(s) will be identified and the reasons for not providing a more detailed analysis will be given in the EA.

If we receive no substantive comments on SD1, we will not prepare a Scoping Document 2 (SD2). Otherwise, we will issue SD2 to address any substantive comments received. The SD2 will be issued for informational use only; no response will be required. The EA will address recommendations and input received during the scoping process.

3.0 PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

In accordance with NEPA, the environmental analysis will consider the following alternatives, at a minimum: (1) the no-action alternative, (2) the applicant's proposed action, and (3) alternatives to the proposed action.

3.1 NO-ACTION ALTERNATIVE

Under the no-action alternative, the River Falls Project would continue to operate both the Junction Falls development and the Powell Falls development as required by the current project license (*i.e.*, there would be no change to the existing environment). No new environmental protection, mitigation, or enhancement (PM&E) measures would be implemented. We use this alternative to establish baseline environmental conditions for comparison with other alternatives.

3.1.1 Existing Project Facilities

The River Falls project boundary is shown in figure 2.

The River Falls Project's two developments consist of the following facilities:

Junction Falls development: (1) a 140-foot-long, 32-foot-high concrete dam; (2) an impoundment with a surface area of 15.5 acres; (3) a 200-foot-long, 6-foot-diameter penstock; (4) a powerhouse containing one generating unit rated at 250 kW; (5) a 50-foot-long transmission line; and (6) appurtenant facilities.

Powell Falls development: (1) a 110-foot-long, 16.5-foot-high concrete dam; (2) an impoundment with a surface area of 15.4 acres; (3) a powerhouse containing one generating unit rated at 125 kW; (4) a 2,500-foot-long transmission line; and (5) appurtenant facilities.

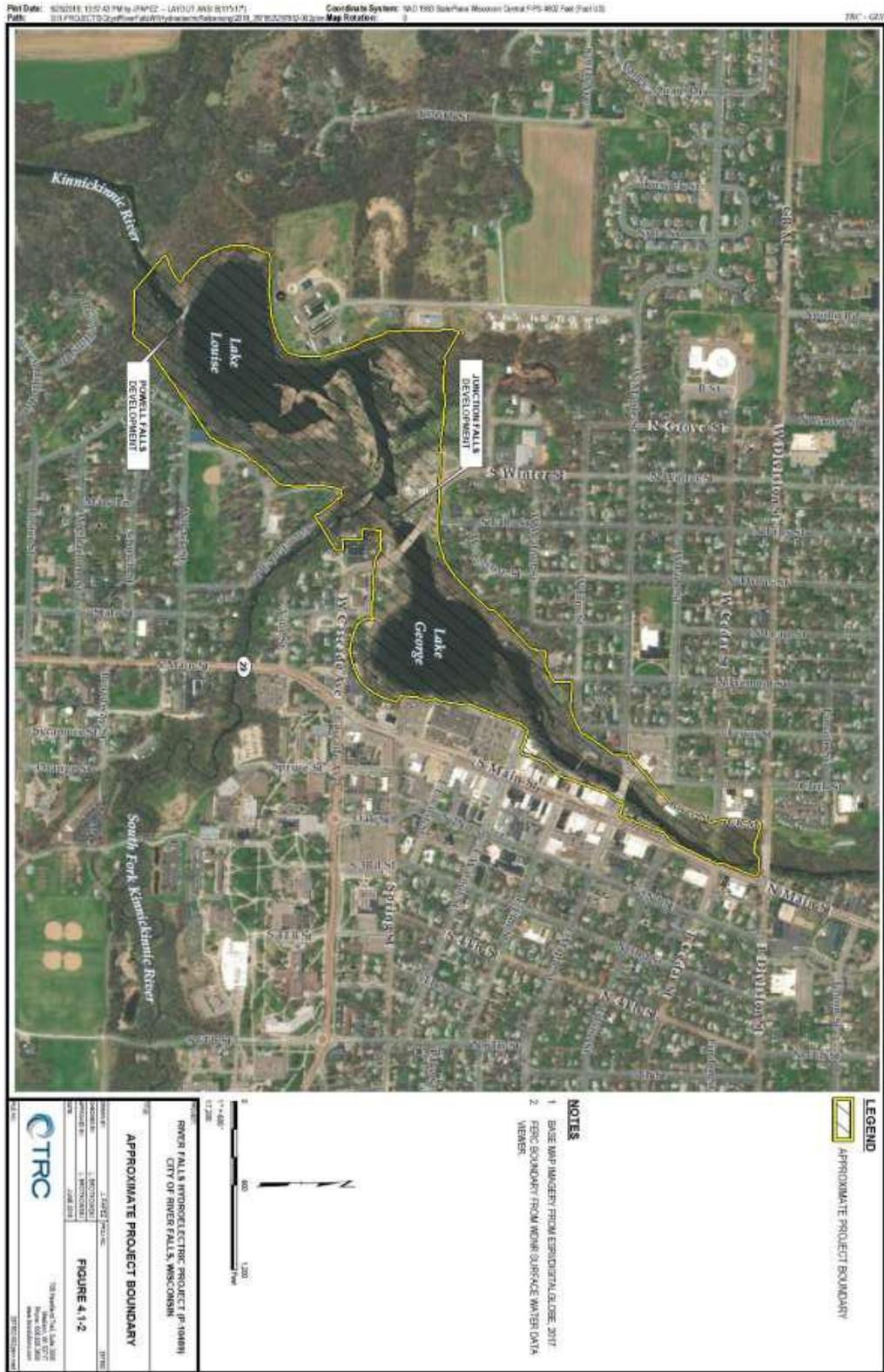


Figure 2. Project boundary for the River Falls Project (Source: City of River Falls, 2018).

3.1.2 Existing Project Operation

The River Falls Project is operated as a run-of-river project at both developments.

3.2 APPLICANT'S PROPOSAL

3.2.1 Proposed Project Facilities and Operations

The City of River Falls proposes to continue to operate the Junction Falls development in a run-of-river mode. No new or upgraded facilities, structural changes, or operational changes are proposed for this development during the term of the new license.

The City of River Falls additionally proposes to decommission the Powell Falls development and remove the dam by 2026. The City of River Falls proposes to submit a decommissioning plan with the final license application.

3.2.2 Proposed Environmental Measures

The City of River Falls is not proposing any new protection, mitigation, or enhancement measures (PM&E measures) for the Junction Falls development. The City of River Falls would continue to operate the Junction Falls development in run-of-river mode and provide access to the project's recreation facilities.

The City of River Falls proposes to decommission the Powell Falls development and remove the Powell Falls dam by 2026. As such, the City of River Falls proposes to develop a decommissioning plan that will include measures to avoid or mitigate effects on soils and sediment, water quality, fish and aquatic habitat, wildlife, special-status species, terrestrial, recreation, and cultural resources associated with removing the dam. The potential need for additional PM&E measures for both developments will be evaluated during the relicensing process.

3.3 DAM SAFETY

It is important to note that dam safety constraints may exist and should be taken into consideration in the development of proposals and alternatives considered in the pending proceeding. For example, proposed modifications to the dam structure, such as the addition of flashboards or fish passage facilities, could impact the integrity of the dam structure. As the proposal and alternatives are developed, the applicant must evaluate the effects and ensure that the project would meet the Commission's dam safety criteria found in Part 12 of the Commission's regulations and the Engineering Guidelines (<http://www.ferc.gov/industries/hydropower/safety/guidelines/eng-guide.asp>).

3.4 ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED ACTION

Commission staff will consider and assess all alternative recommendations for operational or facility modifications, as well as environmental measures identified by staff, federal and state agencies, Indian tribes, NGOs, and the public.

3.5 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT ELIMINATED FROM DETAILED STUDY

At present, we propose to eliminate the following alternatives from detailed study in the EA.

3.5.1 Federal Government Takeover

In accordance with 18 C.F.R. § 16.14 of the Commission's regulations, a federal department or agency may file a recommendation that the United States exercise its right to take over a hydroelectric power project with a license that is subject to sections 14 and 15 of the FPA.⁵ We do not consider federal takeover to be a reasonable alternative. Federal takeover of the project would require congressional approval. While that fact alone would not preclude further consideration of this alternative, there is currently no evidence showing that federal takeover should be recommended to Congress. No party has suggested that federal takeover would be appropriate, and no federal agency has expressed interest in operating the project.

3.5.2 Non-Power License

A non-power license is a temporary license the Commission would terminate whenever it determines that another governmental agency is authorized and willing to assume regulatory authority and supervision over the lands and facilities covered by the non-power license. At this time, no governmental agency has suggested a willingness or ability to take over the project. No party has sought a non-power license, and we have no basis for concluding that the River Falls Project should no longer be used to produce power. Thus, we do not consider a non-power license a reasonable alternative to relicensing the project.

3.5.3 Project Decommissioning

Decommissioning of the upper Junction Falls development could be accomplished with or without removal of some, or all, project facilities. Either alternative would require denying the relicense application for the Junction Falls development and surrender or termination of the existing license with appropriate conditions. There would be significant costs involved with decommissioning the development and/or removing

⁵ 16 U.S.C. §§ 791(a)-825(r).

any project facilities. The development provides a viable, safe, and clean renewable source of power to the region. With decommissioning, the development would no longer be authorized to generate power.

No party has suggested project decommissioning for the Junction Falls development would be appropriate in this case, and we have no basis for recommending it. Thus, we do not consider project decommissioning for the Junction Falls development a reasonable alternative to relicensing the project with appropriate environmental measures.

4.0 SCOPE OF CUMULATIVE EFFECTS ANALYSIS AND RESOURCE ISSUES

4.1 CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

According to the Council on Environmental Quality's regulations for implementing NEPA (40 C.F.R. § 1508.7), a cumulative effect is the effect on the environment that results from the incremental effect of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions, regardless of what agency (federal or non-federal) or person undertakes such other actions. Cumulative effects can result from individually minor, but collectively significant, actions taking place over a period of time, including hydropower and other land and water development activities.

4.1.1 Resources That Could Be Cumulatively Affected

Based on information in the PAD for the River Falls Project, and preliminary staff analysis, we have identified soils and sediment, water quality, and aquatic species and habitat as resources that could be cumulatively affected by the continued operation and maintenance of the Junction Falls development in combination with the decommissioning of the Powell Falls development and other activities in the Kinnickinnic and St Croix rivers.

4.1.2 Geographic Scope

Our geographic scope of analysis for cumulatively affected resources is defined by the physical limits or boundaries of: (1) the proposed action's effect on the resources, and (2) contributing effects from other hydropower and non-hydropower activities within the St. Croix River Basin. We have identified the geographic scope for soils and sediment, water quality, and aquatic species and habitat to include the Kinnickinnic River from the upstream end of the project boundary to the confluence of the St Croix and Mississippi rivers approximately 16 miles downstream of the project. We chose this geographic scope because the continued operation of the Junction Falls development in combination with the decommissioning of the Powell Falls development and other activities in and along the Kinnickinnic and St Croix rivers may effect soils and sediment, water quality, and aquatic species and habitat in the identified area.

4.1.3 Temporal Scope

The temporal scope of our cumulative effects analysis in the EA will include a discussion of the past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions and their effects on each resource that could be cumulatively affected. Based on the potential term of a new license, the temporal scope will look 30 to 50 years into the future, concentrating on the effect on the resources from reasonably foreseeable future actions. The historical discussion will, by necessity, be limited to the amount of available information for each

resource. The quality and quantity of information, however, diminishes as we analyze resources further away in time from the present.

4.2 RESOURCE ISSUES

In this section, we present a preliminary list of environmental issues to be addressed in the EA. We identified these issues, which are listed by resource area, by reviewing the PAD and the Commission's record for the River Falls Project. This list is not intended to be exhaustive or final, but contains those issues raised to date that could have substantial effects. After the scoping process is complete, we will review the list and determine the appropriate level of analysis needed to address each issue in the EA. Those issues identified by an asterisk (*) will be analyzed for both cumulative and site-specific effects.

Junction Falls

4.2.1 Geologic and Soils Resources*

- Effects of continued project operation on sediment transport within and downstream of the project.

4.2.2 Aquatic Resources*

- Effects of continued project operation on water quality within and downstream of the project.
- Effects of continued project operation on aquatic species and habitat in the impoundment and downstream of the project.

4.2.3 Terrestrial Resources

- Effects of continued project operation on riparian, littoral, and wetland habitat and associated wildlife.

4.2.4 Threatened and Endangered Species

- Effects of continued project operation and maintenance on the following federally listed threatened and endangered species: (1) northern long-eared bat; (2) prairie bush-clover; and (3) the Higgins eye, snuffbox, and spectaclecase mussels.

4.2.5 Recreation

- Effects of the continued project operation and maintenance on public access and recreational opportunities at the project.

- Adequacy of existing and proposed public access and recreational facilities at the project to meet current and future recreational demand.

4.2.6 Cultural Resources

- Effects of continued project operation on properties that are included in or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

4.2.7 Developmental Resources

- Effect of the proposed environmental measures costs on project's economics.

Powell Falls

4.2.8 Geologic and Soils Resources*

- Effects of removing the Powell Falls dam on shoreline and streambank erosion in the project.
- Effects of removing the Powell Falls dam on sediment and contaminant mobilization within and downstream of the project area.

4.2.9 Aquatic Resources*

- Effects of the removing the Powell Falls dam on water quality within the project area and downstream of the development.
- Effects of removing the Powell Falls dam on aquatic species and habitat in the impoundment and downstream of the development.

4.2.10 Terrestrial Resources

- Effects of removing the Powell Falls dam on local plant communities.
- Effects of removing the Powell Falls dam on adjacent wetlands and associated wildlife.

4.2.11 Threatened and Endangered Species

- Effects of removing the Powell Falls dam on the following federally listed threatened and endangered species: (1) northern long-eared bat; (2) prairie bush-clover; and (3) the Higgins eye, snuffbox, and spectaclecase mussels.

4.2.12 Recreation

- Effects of removing the Powell Falls dam on public access to existing recreational opportunities at the project.

- Effects of removing the Powell Falls dam on the quality and availability of reservoir-based recreation opportunities.

4.2.13 Cultural Resources

- Effects of removing the Powell Falls dam on properties that are included in or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

4.2.14 Developmental Resources

- Effect of the Powell Falls dam removal cost on project's economics.

5.0 PROPOSED STUDIES

The City of River Falls' initial study proposal is identified by resource area in Table 1. Detailed information on the City of River Falls' initial study proposals can be found in the PAD. Additional studies may be added to this list based on comments provided by Commission staff, federal and state resource agencies, Indian tribes, and other interested participants during this scoping process.

The City of River Falls has not identified any issues relating to the following resources: geology and soils, aquatic, and socioeconomic resources. Therefore, no studies are proposed for these resource areas.

Table 1. City of River Falls' initial study proposals for the River Falls Project (Source: City of River Falls, 2018).

Resource Area and Study Name	Proposed Study/Information Need
Terrestrial Resources	
Wetlands	City of River Falls proposes to conduct a habitat assessment of the project area to be affected by the removal of the Powell Fall dam, which would include a description of exiting wetland community types and a map of approximate wetland areas around Lake Louise and the Powell Falls development.
Rare, Threatened and Endangered Species (RTE)	City of River Falls proposes to conduct a survey of project lands and habitat assessment for RTE species that may be affected by the removal of the Powell Falls dam. If potential RTE habitat is observed, a presence/absence survey for RTE botanical species would be conducted.
Recreation Resources	
Recreation Resources	City of River Falls proposes to conduct a recreation site and use survey at the Junction Falls and Powell Falls developments. The survey would document existing public recreation sites, facilities, access points, and amenities and would estimate project recreation use bases on existing information and limited use counts.

Resource Area and Study Name	Proposed Study/Information Need
Cultural Resources	
Cultural Resources	City of River Falls proposes to delineate the location and extent of the Foster Cemetery.

6.0 REQUEST FOR INFORMATION AND STUDIES

We are asking federal, state, and local resource agencies, Indian tribes, NGOs, and the public to forward to the Commission any information that may assist us in conducting an accurate and thorough analysis of the project-specific and cumulative effects associated with relicensing the River Falls Project. The types of information requested include, but are not limited to:

- information, quantitative data, or professional opinions that may help define the geographic and temporal scope of the analysis (both project-specific and cumulative effects), and that help identify significant environmental issues;
- identification of, and information from, any other EA, EIS, or similar environmental study (previous, on-going, or planned) relevant to the proposed relicensing of the River Falls Project;
- existing information and any data that would help to describe the past and present actions and effects of the project and other developmental activities on environmental and socioeconomic resources;
- information that would help characterize the existing environmental conditions and habitats;
- identification of any federal, state, or local resource plans, and any future project proposals in the affected resource area (*e.g.*, proposals to construct or operate water treatment facilities, recreation areas, water diversions, timber harvest activities, or fish management programs), along with any implementation schedules;
- documentation that the proposed project would or would not contribute to cumulative adverse or beneficial effects on any resources. Documentation can include, but need not be limited to, how the project would interact with other projects in the area and other developmental activities; study results; resource management policies; and reports from federal and state agencies, local agencies, Indian tribes, NGOs, and the public;
- documentation showing why any resources should be excluded from further study or consideration; and
- study requests by federal and state agencies, local agencies, Indian tribes, NGOs, and the public that would help provide a framework for collecting pertinent information on the resource areas under consideration necessary for the Commission to prepare the EA for the project.

All requests for studies filed with the Commission must meet the criteria found in Appendix A, *Study Plan Criteria*.

The requested information, comments, and study requests should be submitted to the Commission no later than **December 28, 2018**. All filings must clearly identify the project name and docket number on the first page: River Falls Project (P-10489-016).

Scoping comments may be filed electronically via the Internet. *See* 18 C.F.R. 385.2001(a)(1)(iii) and the instructions on the Commission's website at <http://www.ferc.gov/docs-filing/efiling.asp>. Commenters can submit brief comments up to 6,000 characters, without prior registration, using the eComment system at <http://www.ferc.gov/docs-filing/ecomment.asp>. You must include your name and contact information at the end of your comments. For assistance, please contact FERC Online Support at FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov, or toll free at 1-866-208-3676, or for TTY, (202) 502-8659. Although the Commission strongly encourages electronic filing, documents may also be paper-filed. To paper file, mail an original to: Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20426.

Register online at <http://www.ferc.gov/esubscription.asp> to be notified via email of new filings and issuances related to this or other pending projects. For assistance, please contact FERC Online Support at FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov.

Questions concerning the scoping process, preparation of the EA, or how to file written comments with the Commission should be directed to Shana Wiseman at (202) 502-8736, or shana.wiseman@ferc.gov. Additional information about the Commission's licensing process and the River Falls Project may be obtained from the Commission's website, <http://www.ferc.gov>.

7.0 EA PREPARATION SCHEDULE

At this time, we anticipate preparing a draft and final EA. The EA will be sent to all persons and entities on the Commission's service and mailing lists for the River Falls Project. The EA will include our recommendations for operating procedures, as well as PM&E measures that should be part of any license issued by the Commission. All recipients will then have 30 days to review the EA and file written comments with the Commission.

The major milestones, with pre-filing target dates are as follows:

<u>Major Milestone</u>	<u>Target Date</u>
Scoping Meetings	November 2018
License Application Filed	August 2021
Ready for Environmental Analysis Notice Issued	
Deadline for Filing Comments, Recommendations, and Agency Terms and Conditions/Prescriptions	
Draft EA Issued	
Comments on EA Due	

Post-filing milestones will be established following the City of River Falls' filing of the final license application. A copy of the process plan and schedule, which has a complete list of pre-filing milestones for the River Falls Project, including those for developing the license application, is attached as Appendix B to this SD1.

8.0 PROPOSED EA OUTLINE

The preliminary outline for the River Falls Project EA is as follows:

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APPENDICES

A—Draft License Conditions Recommended by Staff

9.0 COMPREHENSIVE PLANS

Section 10(a)(2)(A) of the FPA⁶ requires the Commission to consider the extent to which a project is consistent with federal or state comprehensive plans for improving, developing, or conserving a waterway or waterways affected by the project. Commission staff has preliminarily identified and reviewed the plans listed below that may be applicable to the River Falls Project. Agencies are requested to review this list and inform staff of any changes. If there are other comprehensive plans that should be considered for this list that are not on file with the Commission, or if there are more recent versions of the plans already listed, they can be filed for consideration with the Commission according to 18 C.F.R. 2.19 of the Commission's regulations. Please follow the instructions for filing a plan at <http://www.ferc.gov/industries/hydropower/gen-info/licensing/complan.pdf>.

The following is a list of comprehensive plans currently on file with the Commission that may be relevant to the River Falls Project:

National Park Service. Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. 1975. Final master plan for the Lower St. Croix National Scenic Riverway. Omaha, Nebraska. February 1975.

National Park Service. 1984. Land protection plan, St. Croix National Scenic Riverway. Department of the Interior, St. Croix Falls, Wisconsin. September 10, 1984.

National Park Service. 1984. Land protection plan, Lower St. Croix National Scenic Riverway. Department of the Interior, St. Croix Falls, Wisconsin. May 1, 1984.

National Park Service. 1986. Statement for management, St. Croix and Lower St. Croix National Scenic Riverways. Department of the Interior, St. Croix Falls, Wisconsin. November 1986.

National Park Service. The Nationwide Rivers Inventory. Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 1993.

Upper Mississippi River Basin Commission. 1981. Comprehensive master plan for the management of the Upper Mississippi River system - environmental report. Minneapolis, Minnesota. September 1981.

⁶ 16 U.S.C. § 803(a)(2)(A) (2012).

- Upper Mississippi River Basin Commission. 1982. Comprehensive master plan for the management of the Upper Mississippi River system. Minneapolis, Minnesota. January 1, 1982.
- Upper St. Croix Management Commission. 1993. Upper St. Croix management policy resolution. Madison, Wisconsin. November 1, 1993.
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 1983. Higgins Eye (*Lampsilis higginsii*) mussel Recovery Plan. Prepared by the Higgins Eye Mussel Recovery Team. Twin Cities, Minnesota. July 29, 1983.
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Canadian Wildlife Service. 1986. North American waterfowl management plan. Department of the Interior. Environment Canada. May 1986.
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 1993. Upper Mississippi River & Great Lakes Region joint venture implementation plan: A component of the North American waterfowl management plan. March 1993.
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. n.d. Fisheries USA: the recreational fisheries policy of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Washington, D.C.
- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. 1980. St. Croix River Basin area wide water quality management plan. Madison, Wisconsin. October 1980.
- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. 1992. Wisconsin water quality assessment report to Congress. Madison, Wisconsin. April 1992.
- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. Wisconsin Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP): 1991-96. Madison, Wisconsin. October 1991.
- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. 1995. Wisconsin's biodiversity as a management issue. Madison, Wisconsin. May 1995.
- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. 1987. Wisconsin Peregrine Falcon recovery plan. Madison, Wisconsin. January 1987.
- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. 1988. Wisconsin Red-necked Grebe recovery plan. Madison, Wisconsin. June 1988.
- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. 1988. Wisconsin Common Tern recovery plan. Madison, Wisconsin. June 1988.

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. 1988. Wisconsin Forster's Tern recovery plan. Madison, Wisconsin. June 1988.

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. 1995. Wisconsin's forestry best management practices for water quality. Madison, Wisconsin. March 1995.

10.0 MAILING LIST

The list below is the Commission's official mailing list for the River Falls Project (FERC No. 10489). If you want to receive future mailings for this proceeding and are not included in the list below, please send your request by email to FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov, or by mail to: Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street, N.E., Room 1A, Washington, D.C. 20426. All written and emailed requests to be added to the mailing list must clearly identify the following on the first page: **River Falls Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 10489-016)**. You may use the same method if requesting removal from the mailing list below.

Register online at <http://www.ferc.gov/docs-filing/esubscription.asp> to be notified via email of new filings and issuances related to this project or other pending projects. For assistance, please contact FERC Online Support at FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov, or toll free at 1-866-208-3676, or for TTY, (202) 502-8659.

Official Mailing List for the River Falls Project FERC Project No. 10489

Clinton Parish, Chairman Bay Mills Indian Community of Michigan 12140 W Lakeshore Drive Brimley, MI 49715-9319	Bureau of Wildlife Management PO Box 7921 Madison, WI 53707-7921
Brian Hatch, Meter Tech City of River Fall Municipal Utilities 950 Benson Street River Falls, WI 54022	Kevin Westhuis, Utility Director City of River Falls Municipal Utilities 222 Lewis Street River Falls, WI 54022
Karen R Diver, Chairwoman Fond du Lac Reservation Bus. Committee RBC Building 1720 Big Lake Rd Cloquet, MN 55720-9702	Chris McGeshick, Chairman Forest County Potawatomi Community of Wisconsin 3051 Sand Lake Rd Crandon, WI 54520-9801
Michael Page Friends of Kinni 315 N Fremont St River Falls, WI 54022	Geological & Natural History Survey University of Wisconsin Extension 3817 Mineral Point Rd Madison, WI 53705-5121
Norman DesChampe, Chairman Grand Portage Reservation Business Committee PO Box 428 Grand Portage, MN 55605-0428	Ho Chunk Nation of Wisconsin President PO Box 667 Black River Falls, WI 546015-0667

City of Hudson 502 3 rd Street Hudson, WI 54016-1603	Mic Isham, Chairman Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Chippewa Indians 13394 W Trepania Rd Bldg NO1 Hayward, WI 54843-2186
Henry St. Germaine, Chairperson Lac Du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa PO Box 67 Lac Du Flambeau, WI 54538-0067	Tribal History Preservation Officer Menominee Indian Tribe PO Box 910 Keshena, WI 54135-0910
Tribal Hist. Preservation Officer PO Box 910 Keshena, WI 54135-0910	Chris McGeshick Chairman Mole Lake Band of Chippewa Indians 3051 Sand Lake Rd Crandon, WI 54520-9801
Northwest Regional Planning Comm. 1400 S River St Spooner, WI 54801-8692	Tribal Chairperson Oneida Tribe of Wisconsin PO Box 365 Oneida, WI 54155-0365
Pierce County Board of Supervisors 414 W. Main Street Ellsworth, WI 54216	Bryan Bainbridge, Chairperson Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa 88385 Pike Road, Hwy 13 Bayfield, WI 54520
Chris McGeshick, Chairman Sokaogon Chippewa Community 3051 Sand Lake Rd Crandon, WI 54520-9801	Lewis Taylor, President St Croix Band of Lake Superior Chippewa 24663 Angeline Ave Webster, WI 54893-9246
Tribal Chairperson Stockbridge Munsee Tribe of Mohican Indians N8476 Mo He Con Nuck Road Bowler, WI 54416	Sherry White THPO Stockbridge Munsee Tribe of Mohican Indians PO Box 70 Bowler, WI 54416-0070
FERC Coordinator U.S. Army Corps of Engineers St. Paul District 180 5th St East, Ste 700 Saint Paul, MN 55101-1638	U.S Bureau of Indian Affairs Midwest Regional Office Norman Pointe II Bldg 5600 West American Blvd, Ste 500 Bloomington, MN 55437

Review Officer U.S. Environmental Protection Agency REGION V 77 W Jackson Blvd Chicago, IL 60604-3511	U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Field Supervisor Green Bay Field Office 2661 Scott Tower Drive New Franken, WI 54229-9565
Angela Marian Tornes Midwest Hydropower Coordinator U.S. National Park Service 626 E. Wisconsin Ave Suite 100 Milwaukee, WI 53202	Leader Wisconsin COOP Fishery Research Unit U.S.D.I., College of Natural Resources University of Wisconsin Stevens Point, WI 54481
Kathleen Angel Wisconsin Dept. of Administration Wisconsin Coastal Management Program 101 East Wilson Street, 10th Floor Madison, WI 53703	Cheryl Laatsch, FERC Coordinator Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources WDNR Horicon Service Center N7725 Highway 28 Horicon, WI 53032-9782
Wisconsin Office of Attorney General ATTY.GENERAL 114 East, State Capitol Madison, WI 537020001	Wisconsin State Historical Society Compliance & Archaeology Section 816 State Street Madison, WI 53706-1417
David M Coon, Supervisor Wisconsin Valley Improvement Company 2301 3rd St Wausau, WI 54403-3202	

APPENDIX A: STUDY PLAN CRITERIA

18 CFR § 5.9(b)

Any information or study request must contain the following:

1. Describe the goals and objectives of each study proposal and the information to be obtained;
2. If applicable, explain the relevant resource management goals of the agencies or Indian tribes with jurisdiction over the resource to be studied;
3. If the requester is not a resource agency, explain any relevant public interest considerations in regard to the proposed study;
4. Describe existing information concerning the subject of the study proposal, and the need for additional information;
5. Explain any nexus between project operation and effects (direct, indirect, and/or cumulative) on the resource to be studied, and how the study results would inform the development of license requirements;
6. Explain how any proposed study methodology (including any preferred data collection and analysis techniques, or objectively quantified information, and a schedule including appropriate filed season(s) and the duration) is consistent with generally accepted practice in the scientific community or, as appropriate, considers relevant tribal values and knowledge; and
7. Describe considerations of level of effort and cost, as applicable, and why proposed alternative studies would not be sufficient to meet the stated information needs.

APPENDIX B: RIVER FALLS PROJECT PROCESS PLAN AND SCHEDULE

This process plan establishes the deadlines for the pre-filing process. If the due date falls on a weekend or holiday, the due date is the following business day. Early filings or issuances will not result in changes to these deadlines. Shaded milestones are unnecessary if there are no study disputes.

Responsible Party	Pre-Filing Milestone	Date	FERC Regulation
City of River Falls	Issue Public Notice for NOI/PAD	8/30/18	5.3(d)(2)
City of River Falls	File NOI/PAD with FERC	8/30/18	5.5, 5.6
FERC	Tribal Meetings	9/29/18	5.7
FERC	Issue Notice of Commencement of Proceeding; Issue Scoping Document 1	10/29/18	5.8
FERC	River Falls Project Environmental Site Review and Scoping Meetings	11/15 and 11/16/18	5.8(b)(viii)
All stakeholders	PAD/SD1 Comments and Study Requests Due	12/28/18	5.9
FERC	Issue Scoping Document 2	2/11/19	5.10
City of River Falls	File Proposed Study Plan (PSP)	2/11/19	5.11(a)
All stakeholders	Proposed Study Plan Meeting	3/13/19	5.11(e)
All stakeholders	Proposed Study Plan Comments Due	5/12/19	5.12
AEP Generation Resources	File Revised Study Plan	6/11/19	5.13(a)
All stakeholders	Revised Study Plan Comments Due	6/26/19	5.13(b)
FERC	Director's Study Plan Determination	7/11/19	5.13(c)
Mandatory Conditioning Agencies	Any Study Disputes Due	7/31/19	5.14(a)
Dispute Panel	Third Dispute Panel Member Selected	8/15/19	5.14(d)
Dispute Panel	Dispute Resolution Panel Convenes	8/20/19	5.14(d)(3)
City of River Falls	Applicant Comments on Study Disputes Due	8/25/19	5.14(j)
Dispute Panel	Dispute Resolution Panel Technical Conference	8/30/19	5.14(j)
Dispute Panel	Dispute Resolution Panel Findings Issued	9/19/19	5.14(k)
FERC	Director's Study Dispute Determination	10/9/19	5.14(l)
City of River Falls	First Study Season	2019-2020	5.15(a)
City of River Falls	Initial Study Report	7/10/20	5.15(c)(1)

Responsible Party	Pre-Filing Milestone	Date	FERC Regulation
All stakeholders	Initial Study Report Meeting	7/25/20	5.15(c)(2)
City of River Falls	Initial Study Report Meeting Summary	8/09/20	5.15(c)(3)
All stakeholders	Any Disputes/Requests to Amend Study Plan Due	9/08/20	5.15(c)(4)
All stakeholders	Responses to Disputes/Amendment Requests Due	10/08/20	5.15(c)(5)
FERC	Director's Determination on Disputes/Amendments	11/07/20	5.15(c)(6)
City of River Falls	Second Study Season	2020-2021	5.15(a)
City of River Falls	Updated Study Report due	7/10/21	5.15(f)
All stakeholders	Updated Study Report Meeting	7/25/21	5.15(f)
City of River Falls	Updated Study Report Meeting Summary	8/09/21	5.15(f)
All stakeholders	Any Disputes/Requests to Amend Study Plan Due	9/08/21	5.15(f)
All stakeholders	Responses to Disputes/Amendment Requests Due	10/08/21	5.15(f)
FERC	Director's Determination on Disputes/Amendments	11/07/21	5.15(f)
City of River Falls	File Preliminary Licensing Proposal	4/03/21	5.16(a)
All stakeholders	Preliminary Licensing Proposal Comments Due	7/02/21	5.16(e)
City of River Falls	File Final License Application	08/31/21	5.17
City of River Falls	Issue Public Notice of License Application Filing	9/14/21	5.17(d)(2)

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