

§640. Public participation

Unless otherwise provided in accordance with regulations promulgated by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, for all existing hydropower projects located in Maine currently licensed under the Federal Power Act, and for all proposed hydropower projects requiring a license to operate under the Federal Power Act, all state agencies that review, comment on and consult in the proposed studies, plans, terms and conditions in the course of licensing or relicensing these projects, including the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, the Governor's Energy Office, the Department of Environmental Protection, the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife and the Department of Marine Resources, shall cooperatively take the following steps to ensure that interested members of the public are informed of, and allowed to participate in, the review and comment process. [PL 2011, c. 655, Pt. MM, §22 (AMD); PL 2011, c. 655, Pt. MM, §26 (AFF); PL 2011, c. 657, Pt. W, §5 (REV).]

1. Publication. At the commencement of the consultation, review and comment process, the state agencies involved shall publish notification of this fact, informing the public of the issues anticipated to be involved in the licensing or relicensing process, the timetable for processing of the license and the opportunities the public has to comment on and participate in the process. The notice shall be designed to reach readership both statewide and in the vicinity of the hydropower project, including all persons that have contacted the agencies with an interest in this matter and all potentially interested persons.

[PL 1989, c. 453, §2 (NEW).]

2. Written notification of status. During the entire consultation process and including the filing of the license application under the Federal Power Act, the state agencies shall inform in writing all members of the public that have indicated an interest in the particular licensing process of the status of that process, including all requirements that the agencies may be placing upon the license applicant. That information shall be provided no less than once every 4 months.

[PL 1989, c. 453, §2 (NEW).]

3. Public comment. State agencies shall provide meaningful opportunities for public comment on the plans, studies, terms and conditions to be recommended by the agencies for inclusion in the license.

[PL 1989, c. 453, §2 (NEW).]

4. Release of public information. All information submitted to the agencies by the applicants for a license under the Federal Power Act constitutes a public record pursuant to Title 1, section 402, unless such information is otherwise exempted from public disclosure by state law. Release of this information to members of the public is governed by Title 1, section 408-A.

[PL 2011, c. 662, §24 (AMD).]

SECTION HISTORY

PL 1989, c. 453, §2 (NEW). PL 2011, c. 655, Pt. MM, §22 (AMD). PL 2011, c. 655, Pt. MM, §26 (AFF). PL 2011, c. 657, Pt. W, §5 (REV). PL 2011, c. 662, §24 (AMD).

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