

Meeting Notes

Brainerd Dam – Proposed Study Plan Meeting

September 11, 2018

10:00 am – 11:00 am

Attendees: Shanna Braun (Barr), Adèle Braun (Barr), Scott Magnuson (BPU), Bonnie Finnerty (MPCA), Jay Summers (FERC), Patrick Ely (FERC), Tyrone Williams (FERC), Shana Wiseman (FERC), Laura Washington (FERC), Janet Hutzler (FERC), Jen Tyler (EPA Region 5 Chicago), Sarah Beimers (Mn SHPO), Bill Latady (Bois Forte Band of Chippewa Indians).

Agenda Topic

- Introductions
- Proposed Study Plan (PSP) meeting goals and objectives
- Proposed studies included in the PSP
- Studies not proposed in the PSP
- New information in the FERC Scoping Document 2
- Open Discussion

Proposed studies included in the PSP

1. Dissolved Oxygen and Temperature Study
 - The study in the PSP was described
 - A request was made to include the type and brand of equipment planned for use during the study along with the calibration method be included in the revised study plan.
 - A question was asked if the data will become publically available after it is collected. An answer to this question is not known at this time but will be considered.
2. Cultural Resources Study
 - The study in the PSP was described
 - It was noted that the APE should include areas inside and outside of the project areas. Consultation on the APE should start now before the revised study plan is developed. Consultation should include FERC, SHPO, and tribes.
 - It was noted that it is critical to get a good definition the undertaking (i.e. what is the federal project, in this case, license renewal). A determination needs to be done to assess the validity of previous cultural studies that have been performed, which pre-dates changes to amendments to Section 106 in 1992. Section 106 discussion needs to start now.
 - The importance of including tribes in this process was noted as tribes were likely not included during the previous relicensing evaluation.
 - It was noted that it is better to include more tribes than less; however, no specific additional tribes were identified for addition to the distribution list. If additional tribes should be added to the consultation list, a contact individual should be provided to Laura Washington (Laura.Washington@ferc.gov) and Adèle Braun (abraun@barr.com).
3. Desktop Fish Entrainment and Impingement Study
 - The study in the PSP was described

- It was noted that recent MNDNR fish sampling data from above the dam could be used to narrow down the species evaluated in the study.
- It was noted that in their comments on the PAD, the MNDNR questioned looking at a one-inch trash rack. As part of this study, a comparison can be done considering the existing site and the potential for a one-inch trash rack. Examples can be provided on previous studies. This would help with later analysis. If this study does occur, the cost of installing a one-inch trash rack would be needed.

4. Recreation Use and Inventory Planning Study

- The study in the PSP was described
- It was noted that it would be helpful to distribute the survey instrument/form to the distribution list while the PSP is under review so that this form could be evaluated in conjunction with the study.

Studies not proposed in the PSP

1. Botanical Resources Study

- The requested study and reasons for not proposing the study in the PSP was described.
- It was noted that the PAD did not present sufficient information to understand the botanical resources in the area and there may be incorrect information noted in the PSP. The purpose for requesting this study was to determine how operations will impact resources. For that reason, land cover maps were requested along with identification and quantification of the botanical resources to allow the reader of the EA to develop a mental picture of the resources in the project boundary. It was noted that the more information the better so that if a threatened or endangered species is becomes listed during the relicensing process, a determination of effect to this species can quickly be made pertaining based on habitat characteristics of the area.

2. Impoundment, Bathymetric Study, and Sediment Accumulation and Containment Study

- The requested study and reasons for not proposing the study in the PSP was described. There was no additional discussion on this item.

Additional Discussion

1. Climate Resiliency

- There was a question if climate resiliency of the project's infrastructure will be addressed in the EA to determine if any measures or plans are needed
- It was noted that an analysis on climate resiliency of the project's infrastructure will not be included in the EA, but a discussion was included in Scoping Document 2 (SD2) to that effect. The reason climate resiliency of the project's infrastructure is not considered is that a robust dam safety program is already developed for FERC dams which account for this.