

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's Integrated Licensing Process

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) is the federal agency that regulates private, state, and municipal hydroelectric projects. FERC uses its Integrated Licensing Process to determine whether to approve proposed hydroelectric projects. When evaluating a license application, FERC must consider the power generation and development purposes of the project as well as environmental values, such as fish and wildlife, including habitat and spawning areas, as well as cultural resources.

There are two main phases of the Integrated Licensing Process:

1. **Pre-Filing:** The license applicant gathers the information needed to analyze the proposed project's benefits and impacts. This phase includes a scoping process and studies to obtain the information needed to evaluate the feasibility of the proposed project and its potential impacts.
2. **Post-Filing:** FERC uses the information gathered during the pre-filing phase to determine whether to issue a license and what mitigation measures to include in the license. This phase includes FERC's evaluation of the license application and preparation of environmental documents required under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

Make Your Voice Heard in the Licensing Process

There are several opportunities to participate in the licensing process to voice your views on a proposed project and its potential impacts. Currently, the proposed Nuyakuk River Hydroelectric Project is in the pre-filing phase of the licensing process and the license applicant, Nushagak Electric & Telephone Cooperative (Cooperative), recently completed the first of two planned study seasons. The Cooperative submitted a report describing the results of the first study season and held a public meeting to discuss those results and plans for next year's study season. On December 21, 2023, the Cooperative released a summary of the public meeting and any proposed changes to the required studies moving forward. The Cooperative's submission of the meeting summary initiated a public comment period.

The current comment period is an opportunity to voice your views on the first study season and request changes to the required studies for the next study season. Requests for changes to the required studies may include modifications to ongoing studies or proposals for new studies. FERC recently extended the comment period and the new deadline to submit a comment is **Monday, February 19, 2024**.

Comments can be submitted online or via mail. Comments should identify the project, Nuyakuk River (P-14873-001) Hydroelectric Project.

- **eComment** (<https://ferconline.ferc.gov/QuickComment.aspx>): Submit an eComment request with an active email address and FERC will email you a link to submit a comment. Comments submitted via the eComment portal are limited to 6,000 characters.
- **eFile** (<https://ferconline.ferc.gov/eFiling.aspx>): Create an eRegister account to access the eFile system and search for the project using the docket number, P-14873-001.
- **Mail** comments to:
Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
888 First Street, N.E., Washington, DC 20426

Licensing Schedule: Proposed Nuyakuk River Hydroelectric Project

Pre-Filing Milestone	Date
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>First Study Season</u></p> <p>The license applicant, Nushagak Electric & Telephone Cooperative (Cooperative) conducts required studies.</p>	2023
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Initial Study Report</u></p> <p>The report describes the Cooperative’s progress conducting the required studies, information gathered during the first study season, and any potential changes to the required studies.</p>	December 1, 2023
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Initial Study Report Meeting</u></p> <p>Public meeting to discuss the study results and any proposals to change the required studies for the next study season.</p>	December 5, 2023
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Initial Study Report Meeting Summary</u></p> <p>Summary of the public meeting, including any proposed changes to the required studies.</p>	No later than: December 31, 2023
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Study Report Comment Period</u></p> <p>30-day comment period to submit feedback on the Cooperative’s meeting summary and requests to change the required studies, including modifications to ongoing studies or proposals for new studies.</p>	<u>Comment deadline:</u> February 19, 2024
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Response to Comments</u></p> <p>30-day period to submit responses to the comments and requests for modifications submitted during the Study Report Comment Period.</p>	March 20, 2024
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>FERC Determination on Disagreements and Amendments</u></p> <p>FERC issues a decision on any requested changes to the required studies and any disagreements raised during the comment period.</p>	April 19, 2024
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Second Study Season</u></p> <p>The second study season will have the same milestones and opportunities for engagement as the first study season, including an Updated Study Report and Updated Study Report meeting.</p>	2024
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Preliminary Licensing Proposal</u></p> <p>The preliminary licensing proposal describes the proposed project facilities, proposed project operations, any potential mitigation measures, and draft environmental analysis. Submission of the proposal initiates a 90-day comment period.</p>	FERC staff estimate: May 3, 2025