



Soule River Hydropower Project

Issue

Alaska Power & Telephone Company (AP&T) is proposing to construct a 77MW hydropower project on the Soule River northeast of Ketchikan, in an area designated for Remote Recreation by the 2008 Tongass Land and Resource Management Plan and within Inventoried Roadless Area #530. Project construction would include the removal of timber and the construction of 3.1 miles of road within the roadless area. In addition, development plans appear to be inconsistent with current Forest Plan direction.

Key Points

- AP&T has submitted a Preliminary Draft EA and Draft License Application to the Federal Regulatory Energy Authority (FERC). Comments on the documents and the Forest Service's preliminary 4(e) terms and conditions are due to FERC on May 2, 2011.
- Under the Federal Power Act (FPA), the sole authority to grant or amend licenses for hydro-power projects located on National Forest System (NFS) lands resides with FERC. Under Section 4(e) of the FPA, the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Forest Service, has the authority to submit mandatory license terms and conditions necessary to mitigate effects to NFS lands and resources that are directly attributable to hydroelectric project operations and maintenance.
- The project, as proposed by APT, is not fully consistent with the 2008 Tongass Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) management prescriptions for the Remote Recreation Land Use Designation (LUD). The applicant has asked the Forest Service to adjust the Forest Plan to accommodate the project. There are no plans to amend the Forest Plan at this time. The Tongass National Forest plans to submit 4(e) terms and conditions based on current Forest Plan direction.
- The proposed project would include the removal of timber and the construction of 3.1 miles of road within Inventoried Roadless Area #530.
- Project features would include an asphalt core dam 265 feet in height, a 1,072 acre reservoir, a 16-foot diameter, 11,400-foot-long power tunnel; 3.1 miles of road with 3 bridge crossings, powerhouse, marine access facilities including barge basin and dock, and 9.7 miles of submarine cable transmission line connecting to Canada.
- AP&T plans to transmit the power through Canada to the lower 48 states and/or market the power in British Columbia. There are no power sales agreements in effect and marketing plans are indefinite at this time. None of the power will be sold within Alaska.

More Information:

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