Dams:
(Getting it off his chest. Telling it like it is)
Midland DNR/DEQ retiree shares insight
By Gregory Eagle, August 21, 2020, ourmidland.com

I am a retired DNR and DEQ employee, as well as a Midland resident who but by the grace of God was not affected by the dam failure flooding. I am very disappointed with my former employer on how the dam situation was handled, but have witnessed the broken spirit of a once proud state agency stemming from under staffing, under funding, and a legislature that has done everything but abolish it through legislation leaning toward excessive regulated party influence and watered down laws. The agency you see today, EGLE, is a shell of the regulatory agency it once was, and I think Michigan is at a tipping point where it must decide which wins in the philosophical debate of economy versus the future of a natural and safe Michigan. The past decades have seen a concerted, planned effort to make public health, environmental protection, and wise natural resource management take a backseat to commercial interests.
When I began my work for the DNR in 1978, Michigan was reeling from a similar era of commercial interests running the political show. Hazardous waste dumps were rampant, floodplains filled, open dumps of solid waste were everywhere, wetlands filled regularly, rivers channelized, and other public health horrors plagued our communities. Michigan upgraded its laws and began to enforce those laws more aggressively and the legislature created funding mechanisms to clean up abandoned dumps, underground storage tanks, and took steps to make polluters pay for their damage. Since that time, the lessons of the past were forgotten and we have come close to returning to the pre-Earth Day era. We as a society must no longer accept the status quo on deregulation and acceptance of environmental challenges as unsolvable, especially flooding in Michigan. I have been working with Michigan United Conservation Clubs, Michigan Environmental Council, and other non-profit public interest groups to fight against unprotective legislation and improve the effectiveness of regulations in carrying out the Michigan Constitutional mandate making the environment and natural resources of “paramount concern.”

(If they want to keep the dam, boulders aren’t that expensive! All they have to warn people is a wimpy sign on the right looking upstream)

Death spurs movement to remove White Mill dam in Danville
By John Crane, Aug 20, 2020, godanriver.com

Following Sunday’s canoeing incident at the White Mill dam that led to an Axton man’s drowning, it looks like Danville City Council will revisit the idea of demolishing the structure. Vice Mayor Gary Miller wants the dam removed and Mayor Alonzo Jones has said he would like for council discuss the idea. “I want to have this conversation again,” Jones said Thursday. “Once again, we lost another life at one of the dams.”

Jones was referring to the drowning of 5-year-old Kolton Karnes at the Brantley Steam Plant dam in 2010. He was the fourth person to drown at one of the Dan River's low-head dams since 1965. The dam, which was located downstream of the White Mill dam, was removed in 2011. On Sunday, 76-year-old Axton resident Ronald Edward Reynolds died after the canoe he was in with his grandson capsized twice at the bottom of the White Mill dam. But Steve Adkins, who led a petition drive that opposed removing the dam when council considered the idea about four years ago, said his view has not changed. "The dam is not a hazard to those who use the river responsibly," Adkins, who lives in Ringgold, said Thursday. "When water levels are safe, people are able to walk along the dam and even climb on it to sit or stand to fish. When water levels are high, there is a risk of problems by being in the water."

Sunday's incident occurred when Reynolds and his adult grandson went over the dam in a canoe, got tangled up in debris and the current and overturned, Department of Wildlife spokeswoman Paige Pearson told the Danville Register & Bee on Tuesday. They were able to get the canoe right-side-up and re-enter it, only to capsize again and fall out. The grandson was able to hold on to a rock but Reynolds was not. Neither Reynolds nor his grandson was wearing a life jacket. The elevated water level following rainfall could have played a role in the incident, Pearson said. It was at 8.75 feet, more than 2 feet above the normal 6.5 feet. Instead of getting rid of the dam, the city could place a rip rap below it, Adkins said. Rip rap is loose stone that forms a foundation for a breakwater or other structure below the dam to destroy any dangerous hydraulic effect.

(More on the Klamath River dam removal. Everything is Trump's fault.)

Letter: Salmon Plan Concerns
Voices of the Community, Aug 19, 2020, thechronicleonline.com

The feds’ new salmon Plan Ignores Climate Science and Hot Water caused by the dams.
Washington, Oregon, and the Environmental Protection Agency have said the Snake River becomes too hot for wild salmon in the summer and that dams are the biggest contributor to that problem. The federal agencies ignore this problem in their “new” Snake-Columbia salmon plan. Hot water in the reservoirs behind the dams on the Snake and Columbia rivers during the summer months is killing salmon. You can see detailed graphing of these rising temperatures, which once surpass over 68 degrees Fahrenheit become increasingly deadly to salmon and steelhead, in Save Our Wild Salmon’s annual Hot Water Reports. With climate change steadily warming the waters in the Columbia and Snake Rivers, we need to provide salmon a cooler, faster journey between their home rivers and the sea. Removing the four Lower Snake dams will allow more salmon and steelhead to return to cold, healthy streams and rivers in the Snake basin. Sadly, the Trump Administration’s salmon plan does not call for real river restoration. We need leadership on this issue. We need Congress to step up, bring stakeholders together and develop a solution to this crisis that can restore salmon and meet the needs of the region. Breanne Lee
Pacific City

(Counterpoint. Let the government pay for it.)

Save the Klamath River dams
By Danny Hull, Aug 25, 2020, heraldandnews.com

The Klamath River hydroelectric dams should be saved. The dams are opposed by a coalition of ecoterrorists, fossil fuel advocates, “poor me” prestige seekers, climate change deniers, anti-farming bigots, “we’re only trying to help” Democrats and Republicans, electric power production competitors and economically corrupt fishery scientists. The Klamath River is a multi-use river, and per humanity’s river-dependent survival, it entirely currently belongs to people before any of it belongs to fish. I believe the Department of the Interior should purchase and manage the Klamath River hydroelectric dams, and where necessary, the dams should be improved with fishways and fish screens, so that the dams continue to provide much multi-use — including hydroelectric power production — of the Klamath River, and so that the dams are responsibly managed as public property per the U.S.A. ’s national citizenship. Danny Hull, Klamath Falls

(Never say never)

Snake River: ‘Extinction is forever’
By The Seattle Times, Aug. 27, 2020, seattletimes.com

Re: “US: Snake River dams will not be removed to save salmon” [July 31, Northwest] The federal government’s decision to keep the four dams on the Lower Snake River is profoundly misguided and likely a death knell for salmon, and ultimately orcas, in our region. Extinction is forever, and this decision will ensure their disappearance within my grandchildren’s lifetimes. Targeted investments in wind, solar and energy efficiency can replace the electricity generated by the dams, and transportation alternatives already exist for moving farm products to market. But there are no alternatives to viable salmon habitat and orca food sources. I urge Sens. Patty Murray and Maria Cantwell to lead in enacting legislation to preserve these essential elements of life in the Pacific Northwest. Bill Daugaard, Kirkland

(So do a lot of dams in the country that get no attention until there’s a problem or failure. It’s like putting a stoplight at an intersection after an accident.)

California’s dams need repairs to survive future major flood, says author
By Madeleine Brand, Aug. 26, 2020, kcrwcom

A recent UCLA study says that in the next 40 years, California could likely see a flood massive enough to cause nearly $1 trillion of damage, force millions of people to evacuate, and leave
houses in California’s Central Valley 30 to 40 feet underwater. And the state is ill-prepared when it comes to infrastructure like dams that could prevent flooding.

Hydro:
(More states are going to have to do this. Someone has to pay for a safer world.)

**DAM SAFETY ANNUAL FEE**
June 16, 2020 | ODNR, ohioodnr.gov

All owners of a dam that is classified as a Class I, Class II or Class III dam shall pay an annual fee, based upon the classification, the height of the dam, the linear foot length of the dam, and the volume of water impounded by the dam. **These fees help to offset the cost of required periodic safety inspections.** Costs for these inspections include travel, personnel and supplies. **Discounts to the annual fee are available** if the certain criteria are met. If the condition of the dam is in compliance with the state safety standards, the annual fee can be discounted by 15%. If the dam has an approved Emergency Action Plan (EAP), an additional 10% discount is possible. The Division of Water Resources fees are mailed in May and are based on the information available to the program at that time. **The fee shall be paid to the ODNR** Division of Water Resources on or before the thirtieth day of June of each year. **Failure to pay the annual fee could result in a referral to the Ohio Attorney General’s office for further collection.**

(Reclamation dams demonstrate value of hydropower during recent western U.S. heatwave)

The West experienced an unusual high energy demand this week. In response, Reclamation demonstrated hydropower’s integral role as a crucial part of the interconnected electrical grid in the western United States and provide the unique ability to respond almost immediately to system emergencies and changes in demand.

We are proud to provide this key domestic energy resource while fulfilling our mission to manage, develop, and protect water and related resources in an environmentally and economically sound manner in the interest of the American public. The Bureau of Reclamation this week responded to unusually high energy demands across the western United States, demonstrating hydropower’s integral role as a renewable, reliable, abundant, carbon-free source of electricity that provides great value to the West and protects our nation’s energy security. Examples of Reclamation’s actions this week include:
• Glen Canyon, Morrow Point, Hoover, Davis and Parker dams ramping up power production in response to California’s electrical emergency and to help stabilize the western electrical grid.
• Central Valley Project maximizing generation and reserves to make more energy available during peaks as well as shifting pumping operations to off-peak periods to reduce system load.
• Pacific Northwest federal dams generating enough electricity to meet load requirements for the Columbia River Basin and selling surplus power to California via the Bonneville Power Administration. "Reclamation is the second largest hydropower producer in the Nation. Our multi-purpose dams are once again responding to the needs of the American people," said Dr. Tim Petty, Assistant Secretary for Water and Science for the Department of the Interior. "We are proud to provide this key domestic energy resource while fulfilling our mission to manage, develop, and protect water and related resources in an environmentally and economically sound manner in the interest of the American public."

Hydropower dams are a crucial part of the interconnected electrical grid in the western United States and provide the unique ability to respond almost immediately to system emergencies and changes in demand. An imbalance in the demand for electricity and the amount of power available can cause generation units to shut down, resulting in power outages. Reclamation’s dams are positioned to quickly generate power during sudden or prolonged utility shortfalls, making energy available to balance the load and prevent outages. These shortages include heatwaves and fluctuations in wind and solar output. "The ability of hydroelectric dams to change output rapidly can offset fluctuations under extreme weather conditions and in wind generation or other intermittent resources, such as solar," said Reclamation’s Hydropower Senior Advisor Max Spiker. "Without flexible backup generation, renewables could not match the energy needs of homes and businesses. In addition, hydropower can quickly compensate for other shortages in generation, such as California recently experienced and for which Reclamation provided emergency support and grid stability."

(Finally got ‘er done.)

Red Rock’s Hydroelectric Dam is up and running
By Todd Magel, Aug 21, 2020, kcci.com

PELLA, Iowa — A $400 million hydroelectric plant at the Red Rock Dam near Pella is complete. The Red Rock Hydroelectric project is fairly basic: punch a hole in the Red Rock Dam and use water coming through to power generators to make electricity. But the project took about six years to make it happen. In 2014, KCCI was there when the Missouri River Energy Company broke ground on one of the largest building projects in state history. Over the past few years, we've returned to the Red Rock Dam to check out the progress. It took years to dig down and make room for two giant hydro turbines on the east side of the dam. They also installed an inlet on the west side of the dam and a giant tube, or penstock, that tunnels through the dam. "It's kind of a one of a kind at this magnitude. So yeah, it's been a very rewarding project," said Verne Cochran, the project manager.

Cochran has been involved with the project since day one. He supervised 1,400 workers, and more than a million work hours. Now, he’s testing the system as lake water spills into the generating plant. On Friday, Cochran gave Lt. Gov. Adam Gregg a tour of the plant and the control room. "It's kind of mind boggling when you think about all the work that had to go in here," Gregg said. Ironically the project was shut down for 300 days during construction due to flooding. "We had some of the wettest years in the history of the United States... so that did delay things," Cochran said. The new hydroelectric plant is expected to make full-time electricity later this year. The production of power should continue for the next 100 years.

(That’s a big IF, remember, this is Caif! It’s PS trying to make a go in CA)
Massive Hydroelectric Project In SW Riverside County: Public comments on the Scoping Document for a revised LEAPS project are due Aug. 17.

By Toni McAllister, Patch Staff, Aug 17, 2020, patch.com

LAKE ELSINORE, CA — Monday marks the last day for the public to comment on a federal document tied to a massive hydroelectric project proposed to span across Lake Elsinore, through the Cleveland National Forest, and toward Camp Pendleton. Project applicant Nevada Hydro is seeking a permit to operate the Lake Elsinore Advanced Pumped Storage Project ("LEAPS project") from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. If built, the project would generate electricity onto the state’s electrical grid, but it would require installing 32 miles of 500 kV transmission lines and towers through the Cleveland National Forest, just west of Lake Elsinore, Wildomar, Murrieta and Temecula.

The project would also consist of reservoirs with a set of tunnels running between them: the water in Lake Elsinore would serve as a lower reservoir; an upper reservoir would be constructed in the Cleveland National Forest at Decker Canyon (just south of state Route 74). A pump/powerhouse facility would also be built near the lake, on the west side of Grand Avenue near Lakeland Village. The city of Lake Elsinore and county of Riverside have formally submitted concerns to federal regulators about the project, including issues related to dam safety, wildfire dangers, visual and public safety impacts from transmission lines, traffic and construction impacts, and disturbance of sensitive habitat areas. On June 18, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission issued a Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement and solicited comments from the public on a Scoping Document for a revised LEAPS project (the project has been around for decades). Aug. 17 is the deadline to respond on the Scoping Document. (Find the Scoping Document here: http://www.lake-elsinore.org/home/showdocument?id=26737 which includes instructions on how to comment electronically.)

(They finally found a buyer.)

Boise group to buy Barber Dam from Ada County

Barber Pool Hydro LLC has signed an agreement to buy the dam and hydro facility for a half million dollars.

By KTVB Staff, August 25, 2020, ktvb.com

BOISE, Idaho — A group led by three Boise-area businessmen is buying Barber Dam from Ada County. Commissioners signed an agreement Tuesday to sell the dam to Barber Pool Hydro LLC for $500,000 as-is. "The sale of Barber Dam to a local group that is committed to conservation underscores the Board of County Commissioners' dedication to best serving the taxpayers of Ada County," said Ada County Board Chair Kendra Kenyon. "This sale allows us to get out of managing businesses and operations that are not core to the mission of local government."

Former Micron CEO Mark Durcan, engineer Ted Sorensen and developer Larry Leasure are collaborating for Barber Pool Hydro. Ada County commissioners say Barber Pool Hydro is interested in preserving and enhancing the Barber Pool Conservation Area that's upstream from the dam, and to use hydroelectric power to generate about 12,000 megawatt hours of clean...
energy each year. "I am personally committed to preserving this unique urban wildlife refuge, the Barber Pool Conservation Area, to be secured for future generations and preserving the natural habitat. The Barber Dam is critical in providing this important sanctuary for native wildlife and the Barber Pool Conservation Area," said H. Larry Leasure. Sorenson has a nearly 40-year career specializing in the hydropower industry as an engineer, owner, and operator – including many projects throughout Idaho using existing water infrastructure. His team would be primarily responsible for overseeing the repair and ongoing operations of the hydro facility. "This is a truly unique opportunity," Sorenson said. "We can both positively impact and protect the conservation area while utilizing this existing resource to support clean energy in the future for Ada County. We are excited about exploring this opportunity with Ada County and the community."

(It's been around a while, but it keeps on tickin'.)

**Work on hydroelectric facility**
Aug 20, 2020, pressrepublican.com

BINGHAMTON. NY — NYSEG, a subsidiary of AVANGRID Inc., is performing work on the Mill C Hydroelectric facility in Cadyville along the Saranac River. The Mill C Hydroelectric facility is an important part of the electric generation fleet, providing reliable zero net carbon electricity to the grid and supporting local energy demand for area homes and businesses, a news release said. The company will be replacing the facility’s intake racks to further protect the local fish and wildlife populations and making other facility upgrades. New York State Electric and Gas is committed to protecting our environment, maintaining compliance with all state and federal environmental regulations, while providing reliable energy to our customers and advancing towards a more sustainable energy future, the release said.

It added, "The project at the site of this clean and renewable energy source is part of the company’s broader efforts to make enhancements to our systems across. Upstate New York that improve the reliability of service to every customer." During construction activities, there is a possibility of a temporary increase in local traffic and noise because of the work being performed. The scheduled working hours are weekdays beginning at 7 a.m. through 3:30 p.m., and additional weeknight and weekend hours may be required. The construction period will conclude in mid-November before crews resume work in the spring to complete the necessary upgrades. Residents can access the most up-to-date construction information at NYSEG.com by clicking on the Reliable Services tab or by calling 833-551-4200 and referencing the Mill C Hydro Intake NYSEG project.

(More water storage, more hydroelectric power.)

**Forebay full again — more water storage, more hydroelectric power**
By Dawn Hodson, Aug 21, 2020, mtdemocrat.com

"It looks dam good."— Michael Raffety, El Dorado Irrigation District director After more than two years, another big El Dorado Irrigation District project is complete as renovations and improvements to the El Dorado Forebay Dam and Reservoir are finished and the reservoir refilled. Located in Pollock Pines, the dam and reservoir were originally constructed in 1923 as a part of the El Dorado Hydroelectric Project. A year later a small power plant became operational that completed the project. The water stored in Forebay is diverted out of the South Fork of the American River as well as from Caples, Silver, Echo and Aloha lakes. A portion of the water is then released into EID’s Main Ditch and conveyed about 3 miles to Reservoir 1 where it is treated and distributed to the district’s drinking water system. Water from Forebay is also conveyed via a penstock to the El Dorado Powerhouse and, after flowing through two turbines that can produce up to 21 megawatts of power, returns to the South Fork American River.
Nothing was wrong with Forebay’s dam despite its age. Nonetheless the California Department of Water Resources Division of Safety of Dams and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission required specific actions be taken to improve the dam’s overall stability and strength to withstand an earthquake and meet modern dam safety standards. While those plans to make the dam more earthquake safe were in the works since 2003, it took until 2017 to get needed permits and begin the project. The primary improvement was constructing an earthen stability buttress and raising the dam 10 feet to strengthen it and increase its storage capacity. Over the years it had lost one-third of its original volume due to the deposit of sediment or about 330 acre-feet. Capacity increased to 569 acre-feet with the raising of the dam. One acre-foot equals about 326,000 gallons or enough water to cover an acre of land 1 foot deep. The expanded storage means that in an emergency, EID will have six rather than just one day’s worth of water. The additional volume will also increase the dam’s ability to generate power. According to Engineering Director Brian Mueller, the increased Forebay storage will allow EID to take advantage of the best hourly time of day pricing and that peaking generation component with a larger Forebay will help offset some of the expected overall reduction in annual revenue due to today’s lower power prices.

Under the existing power purchase contract with PG&E, the powerhouse generates an average of $8 million per year in non-rate revenue, according to Mueller. The increased storage at Forebay gives EID the ability to generate an additional $300,000 per year. Other improvements included remediating the emergency spillway structure and stabilizing the unstable slope along the spillway outfall channel to prevent continued erosion; repairing the reservoir inlet to prevent further erosion and improve public safety; relocating the drinking water valve house to accommodate the stability buttress; relocating the dam seepage pump-back station to accommodate the stability buttress; abandoning the two unused penstocks within the dam and installing a control gate on the active penstock within the reservoir; armoring the reservoir side of the dam with riprap to prevent wave-induced erosion; and replacing the drinking water intake structure, installing a new control gate and clearing accumulated sediment in front of the drinking water intake.

In the course of undertaking the project the reservoir was drained. Now with it full again, ducks and geese are once again happily paddling around in it. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife has also stocked the reservoir with trout. EID staff said there’s a 10-pounder in the reservoir for some lucky fisherman. The reservoir is also home to the Western pond turtle. An endangered species, eight of them live in the reservoir. Since they couldn’t stay there while the dam was being renovated, the Oakland Zoo provided them temporary housing. They are expected to be returned to the reservoir in due course. Open to the public daily from dawn until dusk, there’s no swimming or boating in the reservoir. But it remains a popular destination for fishing, picnicking and walking — and the trail near the reservoir has been enhanced. Last Friday EID staff and board member Mike Raffety inspected the finished project. At the conclusion of the tour, Raffety summed it up by saying, “It looks dam good.”

Costing $26 million, the renovations were officially signed off as complete by an official of the Department of Water Resources Division of Safety of Dams July 2. “We’ve been working on it for six years although we’ve actually been working on getting it done since the 1970s,” said Dan Corcoran, EID’s director of operations, as he noted how excited he was that the project is finished.

Alabama Power marks National Hydropower Day
By Jessica Nissenbaum, August 24, 2020, alabamanewscenter.com
(To see many more photos, go here: https://alabamanewscenter.com/2020/08/24/alabama-power-marks-national-hydropower-day/)

Today is National Hydropower Day, and Alabama Power is celebrating the undeniable contributions that falling water provides customers as an important part of the company’s energy portfolio.
For more than a century, Alabama Power customers have benefited from renewable hydroelectric power and its important role in helping provide cost-effective, affordable energy. “Today is important because it gives us all a chance to focus on the world’s first renewable energy resource,” noted Herbie Johnson, Southern Company Services Hydro general manager. “Hydropower has a key role in bolstering the nation’s clean energy infrastructure while providing energy safely and reliably.”

The company’s first hydroelectric facility, Lay Dam, began operation on the Coosa River in 1914. Now Alabama Power owns and operates 14 hydroelectric plants, which typically provide between 5% and 8% of the company’s annual energy mix. Significant rainfall in 2020 has resulted in above-average hydro production for Alabama Power. Meanwhile, the company’s 11 reservoirs provide more than 157,000 acres of water and more than 3,500 miles of shoreline for the public’s use and enjoyment. Alabama Power operates 65 recreational facilities on its reservoirs, including boat ramps, day-use parks, walking trails and fishing areas.

“For more than 100 years, our hydropower dams have provided our customers with clean, safe, reliable and affordable energy,” said Chris Goodman, Martin Dam Hydro manager. “In addition, our dams and lakes have provided a ton of recreational opportunities across our state.” In addition to providing clean, renewable energy and recreational opportunities, Alabama Power’s hydroelectric facilities and reservoirs can help manage water flows during periods of heavy rains. Alabama Power reservoirs are also important sources of drinking water. Nationwide, hydropower was the second largest generator of clean, renewable electricity (just behind wind generation), representing 6.6% of total U.S. electricity generation in 2019 and some 38% of total renewable electricity generation, according to the Energy Information Administration. Learn more about Alabama Power lakes and the company’s hydroelectric operations at www.apcshorelines.com or by following #HydroDay on social media.

(Original dam built by Italian stone masons. It will be interesting to see if FERC agrees with their charges since the Federal Power Act also says FERC will assess charges for the use of the project. Don’t think many people will go through this. Maybe, that’s its main purpose.)

Notice of Intent To Accept Proposals, Select Preliminary Lessee, and Contract for Hydroelectric Power Development on Lake Roosevelt Reservoir, Grand Coulee, Washington

By Lorri J. Gray, Regional Director, A Notice by the Reclamation Bureau on 08/31/2020, federalregister.gov

A written proposal with seven copies and an electronic version of the proposal must be submitted on or before 4 p.m. (Mountain Standard Time) on January 28, 2021. A proposal will be considered timely only if it is received in the office of the Regional Power Manager on or before 4 p.m. on the above-designated date. Interested entities are cautioned that delayed delivery to the Regional Power Manager’s office due to failures or misunderstandings of the entity and/or of mail, overnight, or courier services will not excuse lateness, and accordingly, are advised to provide sufficient time for delivery. Late proposals will not be considered.

Notice of intent to accept proposals, select lessee, and contract for pumped-storage hydroelectric power on Lake Roosevelt.

SUMMARY:
Current Federal policy allows non-Federal entities to develop electrical power resources on Federal water resource projects. This Notice seeks proposals to develop pumped-storage
hydroelectric power utilizing Lake Roosevelt, located in Washington. This Notice provides background information, proposal content guidelines, and information concerning the selection of a non-Federal entity as a preliminary lessee. The Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) is considering such hydroelectric power development under its lease of power privilege (LOPP) process. Interested entities are invited to submit proposals on this project. This Notice of Intent to accept proposals does not obligate Reclamation to select a preliminary lessee; the decision to select a preliminary-lessee will ultimately be made based on the qualifications of submitted proposals.

DATES:
A written proposal with seven copies and an electronic version of the proposal must be submitted on or before 4 p.m. (Mountain Standard Time) on January 28, 2021. A proposal will be considered timely only if it is received in the office of the Regional Power Manager on or before 4 p.m. on the above-designated date. Interested entities are cautioned that delayed delivery to the Regional Power Manager's office due to failures or misunderstandings of the entity and/or of mail, overnight, or courier services will not excuse lateness, and accordingly, are advised to provide Start Printed Page 53847 sufficient time for delivery. Late proposals will not be considered.

ADDRESSES:
Send written proposal with seven copies and an electronic version of the proposal to Mr. Joseph Summers, Regional Power Manager, Bureau of Reclamation, 1150 North Curtis Road, Suite 100, Boise, ID 83706; telephone (208) 378-5290.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:
Direct questions regarding proposal requirements or technical data available for reservoirs included in this project to Mr. Benjamin Miller, Bureau of Reclamation, 1150 North Curtis Road, Suite 100, Boise, ID 83706; telephone (208) 378-5196; email bjmiller@usbr.gov Upon receipt of written request, Mr. Miller will arrange an informational meeting and/or site visit with interested entities as needed. Reclamation reserves the right to schedule a single meeting and/or visit to address the questions of all entities that have submitted questions or requested site visits. Specific information related to operation and maintenance of Reclamation facilities utilizing Banks Lake and/or Lake Roosevelt may also be obtained from Mr. Miller at the above contact information.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:
Ensuring energy and economic security for America through hydropower is a top priority in the Department of the Interior's 2018 Strategic Plan. This priority is achieved in part via new energy generation from hydropower. The Department, acting through Reclamation, will consider proposals for non-Federal development of pumped-storage hydroelectric power utilizing Lake Roosevelt for a pumped-storage project.

This project is subject to the dual jurisdiction of Reclamation and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). Reclamation has jurisdiction over the parts of the project within the boundaries of Lake Roosevelt and will consider these parts of the project under its LOPP process. FERC jurisdiction applies to all elements of a proposed pumped-storage hydroelectric power project at Lake Roosevelt that are outside of Reclamation authorizations. In this case, FERC jurisdiction will include Banks Lake (the upper reservoir), a large part of the penstock connecting the upper reservoir with the lower reservoir (Lake Roosevelt), underground tunnel(s) and powerhouse, and other facilities (such as power transmission lines and access roads that are outside of Reclamation jurisdiction).
General Overview

Congress authorized the Columbia Basin Project, located in Central Washington, in 1943. The Columbia Basin Project includes Grand Coulee Dam and its three powerplants, John Keys Pump Generating Plant, North Dam, Dry Falls Dam, Lake Roosevelt and Banks Lake reservoirs. Grand Coulee Dam is a multiple purpose structure that supports irrigation, power, and flood control. Grand Coulee Dam has the ability to generate 6,809 MW of electrical power. John Keys Pump Generating Plant has six pumps and six pump-generators that combined, are able to produce 314 megawatts of electrical power. Lake Roosevelt Reservoir has a water storage capacity of 9.5 million acre-feet. Banks Lake Reservoir has a water storage capacity of 1.275 million acre-feet.

Reclamation is considering allowing a non-Federal pumped-storage hydropower development utilizing Lake Roosevelt under a LOPP. A congressionally authorized alternative to Federal hydropower power development, a LOPP is an authorization issued to a non-federal entity to utilize a Reclamation asset for electric power generation consistent with Reclamation project purposes. LOPPs have terms not to exceed 40 years.

The general authority for LOPP under Reclamation law includes, among others, the Town Sites and Power Development Act of 1906 (43 U.S.C. 522), the Reclamation Project Act of 1939 (43 U.S.C. 485h(c)) (1939 Act), and the Bureau of Reclamation Small Conduit Hydropower Development and Rural Jobs Act of 2013 (Act of August 9, 2013, 127 Stat. 498). For guidance regarding LOPP refer to Reclamation Manual Directive and Standard, Lease of Power Privilege (LOPP) Processes, Responsibilities, Timelines, and Charges (FAC 04-08) (https://www.usbr.gov/recman/DandS.html). Reclamation and FERC are responsible for ensuring any project selected for consideration pursuant to this Notice of Intent complies with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), Endangered Species Act (ESA), and other related environmental regulations for all elements of the proposed project. Reclamation and FERC will also lead necessary consultation with American Indian Tribal Governments. A LOPP may be denied, or withdrawn if already issued, due to inadequate compliance studies or unsatisfactory environmental impacts. All Reclamation costs associated with project planning and regulatory compliance requirements will be borne by the selected applicant.

Fundamental Considerations and Requirements

As indicated above, Reclamation can only issue an LOPP for the lower reservoir (Lake Roosevelt) in a pumped-storage system and any other area where Reclamation has jurisdiction. Parallel approvals from FERC will be necessary for project elements where FERC has jurisdiction. These elements will include part of the penstock, the upper reservoir and potential appurtenant facilities such as transmission lines, access roads, etc. Reclamation and FERC will determine the appropriate relationship between the two agencies in coordinating the study and decision-making process. Any LOPP utilizing Lake Roosevelt must not interfere with existing contractual commitments related to operation and maintenance of facilities and systems supporting the Columbia Basin Project. The lessee (i.e., successful proposing entity) will be required to enter into a contract with Reclamation. This contract will (1) address requirements related to coordination of operation and maintenance with Columbia Basin Project stakeholders, and (2) stipulate that the LOPP lessee will be responsible for any increase in operation or maintenance costs that are attributable to the hydroelectric power development.

No LOPP facilities will be permitted within the Reclamation zone surrounding Grand Coulee Dam and support structures, including inlet/outlet works, hydropower facilities, access tunnels, and appurtenant facilities. The one exception to this constraint may be power transmission lines. The lessee would be responsible for securing transfer and marketing of the power generated by the proposed project. Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) will have the first opportunity to
purchase and/or market the power that is generated by
this project under a LOPP. In the event BPA elects to not
purchase and/or market the power generated by the
hydropower development or such a decision cannot be
made prior to execution of the LOPP, the lessee will have
the right to market the power generated by the project to
others.

All costs incurred by the United States related to a
proposed LOPP project will be at the expense of the
lessee. Such costs include management and coordination of necessary Reclamation activities, provision of information, conduct or assistance with Start Printed Page 53848 regulatory compliance (including NEPA), consultation during design development related to operation and maintenance under a LOPP, development of the LOPP, necessary contracts with outside consultants, or any other cost for which the government would be reimbursed by an applicant or the general public. Under the LOPP, the lessee will be required to make annual payments to the United States for the use of a government facility in the amount of at least 2-3 mills per kilowatt-hour of gross energy produced by the facility, measured at the generator(s). Provisions will be included for the mill rate to increase each year commensurate with inflation. Such annual payments shall be deposited in the Reclamation fund as a credit to the project and are applied against the total outstanding reimbursable repayment obligation for reimbursable project construction costs of the Federal project on which the LOPP is issued pursuant to the existing construction cost allocation.

The proposed LOPP must not impair efficiency of Reclamation-generated power or water deliveries, jeopardize public safety, nor negatively affect any other Reclamation project purpose. Proposal Content Guidelines Interested parties should submit proposals specifically addressing the following qualifications, capabilities, and approach factors. Proposals submitted will be evaluated and ranked directly based on these factors. Additional information may be provided at the discretion of those submitting proposals.

**Qualifications of Proposing Entity:**
Provide relevant information describing/documenting the qualifications of the proposing entity to plan, design, and implement such a project, including, but not limited to:
(1) Type of organization;
(2) Business history, including length of time in business, experience in funding, and design and construction of similar projects;
(3) Industry rating(s) that indicate financial soundness and/or technical and managerial capability;
(4) Experience of key management personnel;
(5) History of any reorganizations or mergers with other companies (if applicable);
(6) Information pertaining to qualification as a preference entity (as applied to a LOPP, the term "preference entity" means an entity qualifying for preference under Section 9(c) of the 1939 Reclamation Project Act as a municipality, public corporation or agency, or cooperative or other nonprofit organization financed in whole or in part by loans made pursuant to the Rural Electrification Act of 1936, as amended). If proposing as a group of entities or as a subdivision of an entity, explain whether and why the group or subdivision qualifies as preference entities; and
(7) Any other information not already requested above or in the following evaluation categories that demonstrates the interested entity's organizational, technical, and financial ability to perform all aspects of the work.

**Proposed Project Plan:**
Describe and provide mapping and drawings of proposed facilities and equipment comprising the LOPP project. Include locations and descriptions of all structures, pumps/turbines, penstocks, upper and lower reservoirs, transmission lines, access roads, and other appurtenant facilities. Describe proposed capacities and general operation of the pumped-storage hydroelectric project(s). Include generation capacity, power source, and power consumption; configuration,
turbine generating capacity, distribution transmission line size, and route; and other relevant aspects of the project. Describe the ability of generation to provide ancillary services, such as regulation, spinning reserves, and volt-ampere reactive support; and information on the reliability of the generation, potential maintenance outage schedule, and duration. Also describe diurnal, seasonal and/or annual patterns (as relevant) of energy generation and consumption. Include descriptions and estimates of any influence on power generation capacity and/or consumption attributable to type of water year (i.e., each month of average, dry, or wet water years, as relevant). If capacity and energy can be delivered to another location, either by the proposing entity or by potential wheeling agents, specify where capacity and energy can be delivered. Include concepts for power sales and contractual arrangements, involved parties, and the proposed approach to wheeling, as relevant.

Proposed Approach to Acquisition of Necessary Property Rights:
Specify plans for acquiring title to or the right to occupy and use all lands necessary for the proposed development, including such additional lands as may be required during construction. Address lands necessary for electrical distribution lines, access roads, and all aspects of project development and operation and maintenance. Proposed Plan for Acquisition/Perfection of Water Rights: Necessary water rights or purchases must be arranged by the project proponent(s). Quantify water necessary for operation of the proposed development(s). Identify the source of water rights acquired or to be acquired to meet these water needs, including the current holder of such rights, and how these rights would be used, acquired, or perfected. Impact on Columbia Basin Project Water Rights and Operations: Describe any potential changes in seasonal or annual fulfillment of existing water rights or storage contracts that may occur as a result of the proposed pumped-storage hydroelectric power project. Also provide full hydrologic analysis and related studies exploring potential impact of the project on current operations and projected operations of Grand Coulee Dam, John Keys Pump Generating Plant, Lake Roosevelt Reservoir, Banks Lake Reservoir, and/or the Columbia Basin Project as a whole. This analysis should include estimates of daily fluctuations in reservoir elevation attributable to proposed project operations, including schedule (nighttime filling, daytime generation) and other details pertinent to reservoir fluctuations.

Long-Term Operation and Maintenance:
Provide a description (with relevant references) of the project proponent's experience in operation and maintenance of hydroelectric or similar facilities once they are operational and over the long-term (i.e., the 40-year lease contemplated for the proposed project). Identify the organizational structure and plan for the long-term operation and maintenance of the proposed project. Define how the proposed project would operate in harmony with Lake Roosevelt and Banks Lake reservoirs, and the Columbia Basin Project as a whole, specifically related to existing contracts for operation and maintenance of Columbia Basin Project features.

Contractual Arrangements:
Describe any anticipated contractual arrangements with project stakeholders of the Columbia Basin Project, including contractual arrangements to utilize Lake Roosevelt and Banks Lake water rights. Define how the LOPP project would operate in harmony with the Reclamation project and existing applicable contracts.

Management Plan:
Provide a management plan to accomplish such activities as planning; NEPA, NHPA, ESA compliance, and other necessary studies; LOPP project development, design, construction, safety plan, facility testing, start-up of hydropower production; and preparation of an Start Printed Page 53849Emergency Action Plan. Prepare schedules of these activities as applicable. Describe what studies are necessary to accomplish the hydroelectric power development and how the studies would be implemented.
Environmental Impact:
Discuss potentially significant adverse impacts from the proposed project on biophysical or sociocultural resource parameters on the Columbia Basin Project as a whole. Of concern are potential impacts on land use adjacent to proposed facilities, recreation at the surrounding areas, cultural resources, and Indian Trust assets, and impacts on any protected aquatic or terrestrial wildlife species or associated protected habitat. Discuss potential adverse impacts based on available information. Provide information on the types and severity of expected impacts and proposed methods of resolving or mitigating these impacts. Describe also any potentially beneficial environmental effects that may be expected from the proposed project, including such perspectives as energy conservation or using available water resources in the public interest. As necessary, describe studies required to adequately define the extent, potential severity, and potential approaches to mitigation of impacts that may be associated with the proposed development.

Other Study and/or Permit Requirements:
Describe planned response to other applicable regulatory requirements, including the NHPA, Clean Water Act, ESA, and state and local laws and licensing requirements. Also describe any known potential for impact on lands or resources of American Indian tribes, including trust resources.

Project Development Costs and Economic Analysis:
Estimate the costs of development, including the cost of studies to determine feasibility, environmental compliance, project design, construction, financing, and the amortized annual cost of the investment. Estimate annual operation and maintenance, replacement expenses, annual payments to the United States, and those potentially associated with the Columbia Basin Project. Estimate costs associated with any anticipated additional transmission or wheeling services. Identify proposed methods of financing the project. The anticipated return on investment should be estimated and an economic analysis should be presented that compares the present worth of all benefits and the costs of the project.

Performance Guarantee and Assumption of Liability:
Describe plans for (1) providing the government with performance bonds or irrevocable letter of credit covering completion of the proposed project; (2) assuming liability for damage to the structural integrity of North Dam or any other Reclamation asset physically altered as part of proposed project; (3) assuming liability for damage to the operational integrity of John Keys Pump Generating Plant, Grand Coulee Dam, Lake Roosevelt and Banks Lake reservoirs, or other aspects of the Columbia Basin Project caused by construction, operation and/or maintenance of the hydropower development; and (4) obtaining general liability insurance. Other Information: This final paragraph is provided for the applicant to include additional information considered relevant to Reclamation’s selection process in this matter.

Selection of Lessee
Reclamation will evaluate proposals received in response to this published Notice. Proposals will be ranked according to response to the factors described in Fundamental Requirements and Considerations and Proposal Content Guidelines sections provided in this Notice. In general, Reclamation will give more favorable consideration to proposals that (1) are well adapted to developing, conserving, and utilizing the water resource and protecting natural resources; (2) clearly demonstrate that the offeror is qualified to develop the hydropower facility and provide for long-term operation and maintenance; and (3) best share the economic benefits of the hydropower development among parties to the LOPP. A proposal will be deemed unacceptable if it is inconsistent with Columbia Basin Project purposes, as determined by Reclamation.
Reclamation will give preference to those entities that qualify as preference entities, as defined under Proposal Content Guidelines of this Notice, provided that the preference entity is well qualified and their proposal is at least as well adapted to developing, conserving, and utilizing the water and natural resources as other submitted proposals. Preference entities will be allowed 30 days from notification to improve their proposals, if necessary, to be made at least equal to a proposal(s) that may have been submitted by a non-preference entity. The Notice of Intent to accept proposals does not obligate Reclamation to ultimately select a lessee.

Notice and Time Period To Enter Into LOPP
Reclamation will notify, in writing, all entities submitting proposals of Reclamation's decision regarding selection of the potential lessee. Time period requirements to sign the preliminary lease, sign the LOPP contract, design completion, and construction will be administered in accordance with Reclamation Manual Directive and Standard, Lease of Power Privilege (LOPP) Processes, Responsibilities, Timelines, and Charges (FAC 04-08).

(More hydro is always a good thing.)

Project adds capacity to Alaska lake’s hydro power facility
The Bradley Lake Dam halts water at Alaska's largest hydroelectric plant, near Kachemak Bay.(KTUU)
By Marlise Irb, Aug. 29, 2020, ktuu.com

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (KTUU) - A $47 million Alaska water diversion project is expected to increase flow to a lake and eventually help generate low-cost power for utility customers. The Alaska Journal of Commerce reported the Alaska Energy Authority began flowing water through its West Fork Upper Battle Creek Diversion Project on Aug. 25. The project will raise the amount of water in nearby Bradley Lake. That will increase the practical power production capacity of the Bradley Lake Hydro Project by about 10%. Bradley Lake is the state's largest hydro plant and annually produces about 380,000 megawatt-hours of power for six electric utilities.

Water:
(At the rate they're going with this, it won't get done in time.)

Groups working on extension of Columbia Basin fish accords
But some are cautious about extending deal, since Salmon Workgroup will soon issue its policy recommendations
By Eric Barker Of the Tribune, Aug 28, 2020, lmtribune.com

Federal, state and tribal officials are negotiating an extension of the Columbia Basin fish accords, but some entities are urging Idaho Gov. Brad Little to not sign anything that could undercut his Salmon Workgroup. The diverse group of stakeholders is entering the home stretch of its more than one year of meetings, brainstorming and collaboration aimed at delivering a set of salmon recovery policy recommendations to the governor. The accords, first signed in 2008, are agreements among individual states and tribes and the so-called action agencies — the Army Corps of Engineers,
Bureau of Reclamation and the Bonneville Power Administration. In part, the states and tribes agreed to publicly support the federal government’s plans to blend dam operation with the needs of the fish, and to settle any differences out of court. In exchange, the states and tribes received billions of dollars of funding for salmon recovery projects.

The Nez Perce Tribe and the state of Oregon opted not to sign the accords, but were still able to access federal salmon recovery funding mandated by the Northwest Power Act and crucial to the federal government being able to comply with the Endangered Species Act. The accords were extended in 2018, but are set to expire next month when the federal government issues its final plan, known as a record of decision, to operate Snake and Columbia river dams in a way that doesn't put the fish at further risk of extinction. Little’s Salmon Workgroup is scheduled to deliver a set of policy recommendations in about four months that are expected to aim considerably higher — at actions that could lead to recovery of Idaho’s wild anadromous fish runs to healthy and harvestable numbers. Some in the group worry extending the accords could make it more difficult for the governor to push for some of the eventual recommendations. Justin Hayes, executive director of the Idaho Conservation League, said at the work group’s virtual meeting Thursday that he doesn’t want the state to sign a “bad accord” that might forbid Idaho from advocating for more aggressive fish recovery measures.

For example, he said the group could recommend that the federal government spill more water than is called for in the preferred alternative of its recent Columbia River Systems Operation environmental impact statement. That is the document expected to be finalized late next month. "A bad accord is one that binds the hands of the state and limits its sovereignty,” Hayes said. He likened language that prevents accord parties from criticizing the federal government’s fish and dams plan to a gag order. Federal officials objected to that language. Tim Dykstra, senior fish program manager for the Army Corps at Portland, said the accords help foster smooth communication and decision making. "It’s primarily about relationships and using those relationships to accomplish important work for fish out on the ground,” he said. “The accords really helped establish relationships that were the fertile ground that allowed a lot of good work to happen for the last decade-plus.

Dykstra also said the accords led to talks that ultimately produced the flexible spill agreement, that allows water to be spilled at Snake and Columbia river dams for about 18 hours a day but allows BPA and the Corps to divert water through hydroelectric turbines when prices for power are higher. That agreement is carried forward in the government’s soon-to-be completed salmon and dams plan. Hayes noted, however, that the flexible spill agreement was born out of litigation and negotiated by Oregon and the Nez Perce Tribe. “It seems to me like people who don’t have accords were in a better position to push you frankly,” he said. “It strikes me that not having an accord is better for fish than not having an accord." Joseph Oatman, deputy program manager and harvest manager for the tribe’s Department of Fisheries Resources Management, said tribes, states and the federal government can work together even without the accords.

“I would challenge the notion that accords are prerequisite for having a relationship and working together,” he said. But Daniel Stone, a policy analyst for the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, said the accords and their guaranteed multi-year funding have allowed the tribes’ fisheries program to undertake bigger, longer-term projects while retaining flexibility that would not be available under other funding mechanisms. For example, he said the Sho-Ban tribes are completing a restoration of the Yankee Fork of the Salmon River that has heavily altered by dredge mining in the early 1900s. "The fish accords have provided that vehicle for us to work collaboratively as salmon managers and craft solutions on a larger scale," he said. He noted that during the development of the government’s latest salmon and dams plan, the tribes were able to make their opinions
known. Mike Edmondson, acting director of the Idaho Office of Species Conservation, said the
extension being negotiated would cover just two years and it would serve as a bridge to a longer-
term agreement in which policy recommendations coming out of Little’s Salmon Workgroup could
be considered. He noted it will be at least four months before the group produces its
recommendations, at which point the extension would already be 18 months from expiring.
"It would take at least that long to work out how (any recommendations Little adopts) would be
implemented on the ground. It makes sense to continue and let this process play out in four
months.

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