

November 15, 2002

Salas, Magalie R.
Secretary
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
888 First Avenue NE
Washington, DC 20426

**Re: Cooper Lake Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2170):
Stage 1 Consultation Response; Supplemental Information Packet;
and Draft Study Plans**

Dear Cooper Lake Project Relicensing Participants:

Enclosed in this mailing are several documents, with three main components:

- A document titled **“Response to Stage 1 Comments and Study Requests for Relicensing of the Cooper Lake Project (FERC No. 2170)”** (hereafter, the **“Stage 1 Response Document”**). This document provides a comprehensive overview of Chugach’s actions to address the study/information requests that were received in response to the Initial Consultation Package (ICP). In addition to summary descriptions of supplemental information and draft study plans that have been developed, the Stage 1 Response Document includes explanations and supporting rationale for Chugach’s responses.
- **Supplemental Information Packet.** This document has been developed to address information requests received in response to the ICP, and is considered a supplement to the ICP. Included in this packet are: additional information to describe Project lands and facilities, including a 12-sheet Project boundary map; expanded descriptions of Project operations; and additional information on Chugach’s environmental risk management practices.
- **Draft study plans** for 2003 environmental studies, which have been prepared for Chugach by HDR Alaska, Inc. Throughout the study planning process this summer and fall, HDR study leads have continued to consult with agency representatives regarding recommended methodologies and other technical details for the relicensing studies, and the agency guidance is reflected in the draft study plans. The draft study plans included in this mailing are:
 - ◇ Cooper Creek Fish Resources Study
 - ◇ Stream Flow and Water Quality Study
 - ◇ Cooper Lake Fish Resources Study
 - ◇ Cooper Lake Macroinvertebrates Study
 - ◇ Porcupine Creek Fish Resources Study
 - ◇ Cooper Lake and Cooper Creek Water Birds Study
 - ◇ Terrestrial Wildlife Study
 - ◇ Recreation and Visual Resources Study
 - ◇ Cultural Resources Study

Chugach Electric Association, Inc.

Other draft study plans are nearing completion and are targeted for distribution before the workshop scheduled for December 3 in Cooper Landing. These additional draft study plans for near-term issuance are:

- ◇ Cooper Creek Fish Habitat Survey
- ◇ Preliminary Evaluation of Entrainment in Cooper Lake
- ◇ Evaluation of Effects of Project Discharge on Kenai River Fish Habitat
- ◇ Terrestrial Vegetation Study
- ◇ Sensitive and Exotic Plant Survey
- ◇ Cooper Creek Recreational Whitewater Potential, Preliminary Evaluation

A few other draft study plans are in the initial development stage (e.g., those that require additional consultation) and will be distributed by early January. These pending study plans are:

- ◇ Hydrology Study
- ◇ Cooper Creek Instream Flow Study
- ◇ Road and Access Route Condition Survey

The draft study plans are being issued for review by relicensing participants. As noted in previous communications, draft study plans will be discussed at the December 3 workshop. However, December 3 is not the closing date for comments on any of the draft study plans; there will be a full 30-day review period for each study plan, in accordance with the communications protocol. For draft study plans included in this mailing, Chugach requests comments back by December 20.

An additional item to note is the document issuance number on each document in this mailing (shown on the cover page of each document). The relicensing document numbering system is being instituted with this mailing, but is retroactive to the beginning of the formal relicensing process (i.e., CLPP Relicensing Document Issuance #1 is the Notice of Intent to relicense the Project, filed with FERC in February 2002; #2 is the ICP; and #3 is the Study Concepts and Data Collection Methods document issued in August). Each major relicensing document from this point forward will be numbered to facilitate tracking and organization of information throughout the process. A list of the major relicensing documents by issuance number will be maintained and posted on Chugach's relicensing Web site for reference.

Thank you in advance for taking the time to review the Stage 1 Response Document, Supplemental Information Packet, and draft study plans, and for your ongoing efforts to participate in the consultation for relicensing of the Cooper Lake Project. We look forward to discussing 2003 studies with you at the December 3 workshop.

Sincerely,

CHUGACH ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION, INC.



Burke Wick, PE
Plant O&M Supervisor
Cooper Lake Relicensing Project Manager