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Chugach Electric pursues hydroelectric projects **Goal is to reduce reliance on natural gas, pursue clean energy supply**

As part of its ongoing efforts to reduce the dependency on natural gas and achieve board-directed decarbonization goals, Chugach Electric Association, Inc. is moving forward on the investigation of potential hydroelectric sites around Southcentral Alaska.

Chugach has filed preliminary permit applications with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) and water right applications with the Alaska Department of Natural Resources (ADNR) to study the feasibility of four projects that include:

- Canyon Creek (run of river – expected capacity 6 MW)
- Godwin Creek (storage – expected capacity 16 MW)
- Boulder Creek (storage – expected capacity 12 MW)
- Caribou Creek (storage – expected capacity 18 MW)

The preliminary steps do not authorize construction or any land-disturbing activities but give Chugach site priority, enabling the utility to perform engineering due diligence while reaching out to groups who are potentially impacted by development of the sites.

Chugach's initial hydro site investigation began over two years ago with a survey of 158 potential locations. In order to select a handful of sites for more detailed investigation, Chugach developed an initial list of site selection criteria. These criteria are highlighted by the exclusion of any projects with dams or diversions on anadromous reaches.

Prior to filing the preliminary permit applications and water right applications, Chugach spent the past six months meeting with various regulatory agencies, tribes, landowners, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) discussing the guiding principles and soliciting input on the site selection criteria for potential future hydroelectric projects. Chugach revised the site selection criteria and selected the sites listed above based on that stakeholder input. Having narrowed the focus to certain projects, Chugach will now be able to identify all affected groups and fully develop its outreach program for a robust conversation with Alaskans.

“As we are all focused on the energy future of Alaska, we know hydro is dependable, is the lowest cost long-term energy source for ratepayers, allows us to reduce the need for fossil fuels,

and helps us meet our decarbonation goals,” said Chugach CEO Arthur Miller. “Our early outreach to potentially impacted stakeholders and partners has received a very positive response as Alaskans understand the need for future energy diversification and low-cost power.”

Miller added storage hydropower projects are dependable and can support wind and solar development as a critical source of power regulation. Additionally, timing is important as hydro projects take years to study and construct and are eligible for significant Investment Tax Credits if they begin construction by December 31, 2033.

“The runway is long and we need to move forward on the investigation of possible hydro projects. That’s why we started months ago engaging with stakeholders,” Miller said. “With the preliminary permits filed, we can continue to investigate how to minimize and mitigate impacts from potential projects, look for fatal flaws, and only move forward on projects that are economical, and benefit thousands of Alaskans.”

Chugach’s decarbonation goals are to reduce its carbon intensity by at least 35% by 2030 and by at least 50% by 2040, starting from the baseline year of 2012, without having a material negative impact on rates or reliability. Utilizing additional hydropower is key to reaching those goals, and the topic has been part of the discussion with agencies and other stakeholders in recent months.

The preliminary permit applications were filed with FERC, and the water right applications were filed with ADNRC on February 6, 2026. The next step is an open public comment period for each application. Look for details along with an email connected to the hydro effort in our March monthly newsletter.

For the remainder of 2026, Chugach will conduct site visits and feasibility studies, continue to meet with and solicit input from all stakeholders, launch a public website, and conduct other activities associated with investigating potential projects.

The goal for this year is to identify any fatal flaws with the selected sites and eliminate those projects early. The remaining projects will be advanced through the FERC licensing process (for FERC jurisdictional projects) or through the state permitting process (for non-FERC jurisdictional projects). Chugach is committed to working closely with all stakeholders throughout project investigation and development.

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