

FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON, DC 20426

OFFICE OF ENERGY PROJECTS

To the Agency or Individual Addressed:

**Reference: Final Environmental Impact Statement**

Attached is the final environmental impact statement (FEIS) for the Post Falls Hydroelectric Project No. 12606, located on the Spokane River in Kootenai and Benewah Counties, Idaho, and the Spokane River Developments No. 2545, located on the Spokane River in Spokane, Lincoln, and Stevens Counties, Washington.

This FEIS documents the views of governmental agencies, nongovernmental organizations, affected Indian tribes, the public, the license applicant, and Commission staff. It contains staff evaluations on the applicant's proposal and the alternatives for relicensing the Post Falls and Spokane River Projects.

Before the Commission makes a licensing decision, it will take into account all concerns relevant to the public interest. The FEIS will be part of the record from which the Commission will make its decision. The FEIS was sent to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and made available to the public in July 2007.

A copy of the FEIS is available for review in the Commission's Public Reference Branch, Room 2A, located at 888 First Street, N.E., Washington, DC, 20426. The FEIS also may be viewed on the Commission's web site at <http://www.ferc.gov> under the eLibrary link. Enter the docket number excluding the last three digits in the docket number field to access the document. For assistance, contact FERC Online Support at [FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov](mailto:FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov) or toll-free at 1-866-208-3676, or for TTY, (202) 502-8659.



## COVER SHEET

- a. Title: Final Environmental Impact Statement for Hydropower Relicensing, Spokane River and Post Falls Hydroelectric Projects, States of Washington and Idaho, FERC Project Nos. 2545 and 12606
- b. Subject: Final Environmental Impact Statement
- c. Lead Agency: Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
- d. Abstract: Avista Corporation (Avista) filed two applications for new licenses for the existing 14.75-megawatt (MW) Post Falls Hydroelectric Project (Post Falls Project) and the 122.9-MW Spokane River Developments located on the Spokane River in Kootenai and Benewah Counties, Idaho and Spokane, Lincoln, and Stevens Counties, Washington. The nearest city is Spokane, Washington, and the Upper Falls and Monroe Street Developments are located within Spokane city limits. The Projects occupy about 44,556 acres of land, of which approximately 7,044 acres are within the Coeur d'Alene Indian Reservation; 54 acres are submerged lands administered by the U.S. Forest Service; and 308 acres are submerged lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management.
- The power generated at the 137.65-MW Projects provides approximately 6 percent of the current generating resources used to meet loads by Avista's 325,000 electrical customers in the region.
- Native fish species in the Spokane River and Coeur d'Alene Lake include westslope cutthroat trout, rainbow trout, mountain whitefish, and bull trout. Additionally, six federally listed species occur in the Project vicinity.
- Key issues associated with relicensing this Project are erosion and sedimentation control; water quality and quantity; fish resource and habitat protection and enhancement; wetland and riparian area protection and enhancement; local recreational opportunities enhancement; land use and socioeconomics; aesthetic resources; and cultural resource protection.
- The staff's recommendation is to relicense the Project as proposed, with additional measures recommended by agencies and the staff to protect and enhance environmental resources.

- e. Contact:           **Environmental Staff**  
John Blair  
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission  
Office of Energy Projects  
888 First Street, N.E.  
Washington, DC 20426  
(202) 502-6092
- f. Transmittal:       This final environmental impact statement prepared by the Commission's staff on the hydroelectric license application filed by Avista Corporation, Spokane, Washington, for the existing Post Falls Hydroelectric Project (No. 12606) and Spokane River Developments (No. 2545) is being made available to the public in July 2007, as required by the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, amended (Pub. L. 91-190. 42 U.S.C. 4321-4347, January 1, 1970, as amended by Pub. L. 94-52, July 3, 1975, Pub. L. 94-83, August 9, 1975, and Pub. L. 97-258, §4(b), September 13, 1982).

## FOREWORD

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (Commission), pursuant to the Federal Power Act (FPA)<sup>2</sup> and the U.S. Department of Energy Organization Act<sup>3</sup> is authorized to issue licenses for up to 50 years for the construction and operation of non-federal hydroelectric developments subject to its jurisdiction, on the necessary conditions:

That the project adopted...shall be such as in the judgment of the Commission will be best adapted to a comprehensive plan for improving or developing a waterway or waterways for the use or benefit of interstate or foreign commerce, for the improvement and utilization of water-power development, for the adequate protection and enhancement of fish and wildlife (including related spawning grounds and habitat), and for other beneficial public uses, including irrigation, flood control, water supply, and recreational and other purposes referred to in Section 4(e)...<sup>4</sup>

The Commission may require such other conditions not inconsistent with the FPA as may be found necessary to provide for the various public interests to be served by the project.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> 16 U.S.C. §791(a)-825r, as amended by the Electric Consumers Protection Act of 1986, Public Law 99-495 (1986) and the Energy Policy Act of 1992, Public Law 102-486 (1992).

<sup>3</sup> Public Law 95-91, 91 Stat. 556 (1977).

<sup>4</sup> 16 U.S.C. §803(a).

<sup>5</sup> 16 U.S.C. §803(g).

