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Electronically Filed

May 11, 2023

FERC Project No. P-10855
NATDAM No. MI00175

Ms. Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary
The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
888 First Street NE
Washington, DC 20426

Dear Secretary Bose:

Dead River Hydroelectric Project – Hoist Development

Article 402 – Planned Deviations of License Required Reservoir Elevation and Minimum Elevation

Per Article 402 of the License issued October 4, 2002, and as amended September 1, 2011, Upper Peninsula Power Company (UPPCO) is required to “strive to operate the existing project facilities to achieve the start of month target elevations.” Storage basin elevations may be modified for short periods upon mutual agreement among the licensee, the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE), the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).

On February 27, 2023, the Agencies (MDEQ, MDNR, USFWS) and other interested parties (Dead River Campers Inc. (DRCI)), were notified of current snow water equivalent conditions, predicted weather conditions and UPPCO’s analysis of predicted conditions.

UPPCO requested comments on the following proposed planned deviations at the Dead River Storage Basin (DRSB) / Hoist development:

1. Lower the March and April Minimum Elevation to 1,334.5 ft NGVD.
2. Lower the April Start of Month Target Elevation to 1,335 ft NGVD.

UPPCO received mutual agreement and written support from all three agencies and the DRCI. The documentation of consultation is enclosed.

On March 6, 2023, UPPCO increased Hoist powerhouse outflows to operate towards the new April Start of Month Target Elevation of 1,335 feet and achieved an elevation of 1334.80 feet on March 28th. Flows were reduced throughout the next 7 days to best match inflows.

Starting April 4, 2023, increases in daytime temperatures allowed the start of the spring melt. Between April 4 and April 12, the reservoir rose 0.4’ (from 1334.6’ to 1335 feet). Unseasonably high temperatures the week of April 10th resulted in significant increases to the river system inflows, starting the refill process as inflows far exceeded facility outflows. Between April 9 and April 12, the headwater elevation rose two feet (1335.0’ to 1337.0’) exceeding the April license minimum elevation, ending the planned deviation. Elevations continued to rise and between April 12 and April 20 increased an additional 7.4’ feet (1337.0’ to 1344.4’), with a peak elevation of 1344.85 feet reached on April 24. During the week of April 10th, inflows to the Dead River Storage Basin were estimated at 2,555 cfs.

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The DRSB headwater elevation and Hoist powerhouse outflow data have been provided in the enclosures.

A review of environmental impacts was completed and documentation is attached.

If you have any questions about this deviation, please do not hesitate to contact Mr. Josh Ball at (906) 485-2419.

Sincerely,



Virgil Schlorke
Director - Generation and Environmental Services

JBB/ebr

Enclosures: Agency Consultations
DRSB Operational Data
Environmental Review

cc: Mr. Matt Annala, UPPCO
Mr. Josh Ball, UPPCO
Mr. Doug Bridges, EGLE

Mr. Jim Grundstrom, DRCI
Ms. Elle Gulotty, MDNR
Mr. Scott Hicks, USFWS

Mr. Bill Nelson, UPPCO
Ms. Emily Rushford, UPPCO