

Terry L. Turpin
Director Office of Energy Projects
House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy
June 7, 2018

Good morning Chairman Upton, Ranking Member Rush and members of the Committee.

My name is Terry Turpin and I am director of the Office of Energy Projects of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. The office is responsible for taking a lead role in carrying out the Commission's duties in siting infrastructure. This includes nonfederal hydropower projects, interstate natural gas pipelines and storage, and liquefied natural gas terminals.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss hydropower permitting and the Commission's processes for conducting the environmental reviews under the National Environmental Policy Act. As a member of the Commission's staff, the views I express in this testimony are my own and not necessarily those of the Commission or of any individual Commissioner.

The Commission regulates over 1,600 nonfederal hydropower facilities - projects, at over 2,500 dams, which represents about half of the hydropower generating capacity in the U.S. Under the Federal Power Act, the Commission acts as the lead agency for conducting the environmental review for both relicensing actions and for original licenses. To support these activities, FERC has established procedures to give stakeholders the opportunity to participate in collaborative public proceedings where all significant issues are identified and studied.

The Commission must also ensure compliance with many statutes, including the Coastal Zone Management Act, Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, National Historic Preservation Act, Endangered Species Act and the Clean Water Act. These statutory requirements, along with those of the Federal Power Act, give multiple agencies a significant role in the licensing process. The Commission has for many years worked closely with other federal and state agencies to complete reviews of infrastructure projects in an expeditious, coordinated and transparent manner.

Since fiscal year 2010, the Commission has issued 180 hydropower licenses and small hydropower exemptions authorizing approximately 13 GW of generation capacity. Earlier this year Chairman McIntyre entered into the One Federal Decision Memorandum of Understanding with several agencies. This MOU, which calls for a goal of completing action on all governmental decisions within two years, should encourage agencies to redouble their efforts in actively participating in the review process as well as in communicating their analysis needs to each other and to project sponsors so that the review process becomes more predictable, transparent and efficient.

This concludes my remarks, and I'd be happy to answer any questions you have.