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VIA ELECTRONIC FILING

March 31, 2016

Honorable Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary Federal Energy Regulatory Commission 888 First Street, N.E. Washington, D.C. 20426

SUBJECT: Bear Swamp Project (FERC Project No. 2669)
First Integrated Licensing Process Quarterly Study Progress Report

Dear Secretary Bose:

Bear Swamp Power Company, LLC (BSPC), a limited liability company jointly owned indirectly by Brookfield Renewable Energy Group and Emera, Inc., is the Licensee, owner, and operator of the 610 megawatt Bear Swamp Project (Project). The Project is located along the Deerfield River in Berkshire and Franklin counties in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The Project consists of the Bear Swamp Pumped Storage Development (PSD) and the Fife Brook Development. On April 28, 1970, the Federal Power Commission (FPC), predecessor to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC or Commission), issued an original license for the Bear Swamp Project in accordance with the FPC's delegated authority under the Federal Power Act. The license expires on March 31, 2020. Accordingly, BSPC is pursuing a new license for the Project from the Commission. In support of preparing an application for a new license, BSPC has elected to use the Integrated Licensing Process (ILP) as defined in 18 C.F.R. Part 5 of the Commission's regulations.

On October 30, 2015, the Commission issued a Study Plan Determination (SPD) for the Project in accordance with 18 C.F.R. § 5.13(c). As proposed in BSPC's September 30, 2015 Revised Study Plan (RSP) and approved in the Commission's SPD, BSPC is hereby filing the First ILP Quarterly Study Progress Report for the Project. This progress report describes the activities performed since the Commission issued the SPD on October 30, 2015, as well as ILP activities generally expected to be conducted in the next quarter. Unless otherwise described, all relicensing studies are being conducted in conformance with the approved RSP and the Commission's SPD.

1. Water Quality Study

- BSPC is continuing ongoing field planning activities, including development of a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) and calibration of multi-parameter water quality data collection equipment and dissolved oxygen/water temperature data loggers.
- A review of available water quality data and the basis for the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection's (MADEP) recent change in the aquatic life use designation for the Upper Deerfield River are also being conducted by BSPC.

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¹ 16 U.S.C. § 791(a), et seq.

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 Activities expected to occur in the next quarter include submittal of the QAPP to the MADEP, deployment of dissolved oxygen/water temperature data loggers, monthly data downloads, discrete multi-parameter water quality sampling, and collection of Lower Reservoir dissolved oxygen and water temperature profiles.

2. Fish Assemblage Assessment

- BSPC is continuing ongoing field planning activities including preparation of an Application for Commercial Scientific Collection Permit and gear selection.
- Desktop reviews of existing fish assemblage data are currently in progress.
- Activities expected to occur in the next quarter include submittal of the completed Application for Commercial Scientific Collection Permit to the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (MADFW) and late spring/early summer field sampling.

3. Aquatic Mesohabitat Assessment and Mapping

- BSPC completed fieldwork associated with the Aquatic Mesohabitat Assessment and Mapping in September 2015. On February 12, 2016, BSPC made mesohabitat maps available to stakeholders. BSPC provided supplemental data including tabular attribute data for each mapped mesohabitat polygon on March 4, 2016.
- BSPC is developing an Aquatic Mesohabitat Assessment and Mapping Study Report based on the study activities completed pursuant to the requirements of the SPD. Report development is expected to continue in the next quarter.

4. Baseline Study of Terrestrial Wildlife and Botanical Resources

- BSPC is currently conducting a landscape analysis using geographical information systems (GIS) data, the Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP) Natural Community data layer, and high-resolution aerial photographs collected in 2015.
- Consistent with the approved study plan, BSPC expects to continue field planning activities and desktop analyses and to initiate natural community and wildlife surveys in the next quarter.

5. Wetland, Riparian, and Littoral Habitat Study

- BSPC is currently conducting a desktop assessment of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's National Wetland Inventory maps, NHESP wetland data, and high-resolution aerial photographs collected in 2015. A baseline map of wetland, riparian and shallow water aquatic habitats within the study area is being developed.
- BSPC anticipates that field verification surveys will be initiated in the next quarter.

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6. Recreation Survey

- BSPC initiated the field inventory of formal and informal recreation facilities at the Project in March 2016.
- BSPC provided a draft visitor use interview/survey instrument as an appendix to the RSP. BSPC is currently revising the interview/survey instrument to incorporate the recommendations provided by Commission staff in the SPD.
- Per the schedule approved in the Commission's SPD, BSPC initiated the deployment of trail cameras in March 2016 in order to capture use trends at Project recreation facilities beginning April 1, 2016.
- Expected activities in the next quarter include photo documentation using trail cameras, coordination of industry and law enforcement interviews, visitor use surveys, and field reconnaissance.

7. State-listed Rare Plants Baseline Data Collection Survey

- BSPC submitted a signed Data Release Agreement to the Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP) to identify specific locations of previously reported state-listed rare plants within the proposed study area. BSPC is currently awaiting the data from the NHESP.
- BSPC is continuing ongoing field planning activities including compiling habitat requirements and life histories of state- and watch-listed plant species with the potential to be located within the Project area.
- Activities expected to occur in the next quarter include submittal of botanists' resumes and a request for approval of the proposed survey protocol to the MADFW.

8. Cultural Resources Survey

- BSPC has initiated a review of existing literature and archival research to identify previously reported archeological and historic resources located in the Project's vicinity.
- Activities expected to occur in the next quarter include consultation with Indian tribes and the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) to document the area of potential effects for the Project. BSPC also expects to continue background and archival research and to review records on file with the MHC.

9. Operations Model

- In accordance with the approved study plan, BSPC convened a Flow Regime Working Group Meeting on February 24, 2016. The Flow Regime Working Group serves as a forum to discuss the Operations Model, model scenario development, findings, and ongoing efforts by BSPC.
- During the February 24, 2016 meeting, BSPC provided the Flow Regime Working Group with an overview of the CHEOPS model, including the model framework, capabilities, input, and output. BSPC also demonstrated the abilities and output of the CHEOPS

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model using example input data, and initiated discussions of scenario runs with the working group.

- Activities expected to occur in the next quarter include continued development of the Operations Model.
- Based on discussions during the February 24, 2016 meeting, the Flow Regime Working Group expressed an interest in reconvening following the complete development of the Operations Model and given consideration of environmental study results. BSPC intends to coordinate with the Flow Regime Working Group in Q2 of 2016 regarding the schedule for the next Flow Regime Working Group Meeting.

10. Instream Flow Assessment

- In accordance with the approved study plan, BSPC identified flow transects based on the results of mesohabitat mapping conducted in 2015. A total of 10 transects were identified. Pursuant to the requirements of the Commission's SPD, BSPC consulted with stakeholders regarding proposed flow survey transects.
 - o By letter dated January 21, 2016, BSPC invited stakeholders to participate in a consultation meeting to discuss the proposed transect locations. BSPC provided stakeholders with mesohabitat maps that identified proposed transect locations on February 12, 2016, and the consultation meeting was held on February 23, 2016.
 - Based on discussions with stakeholders during the consultation meeting, BSPC provided supplemental tabular mesohabitat attribute data and accompanying maps to stakeholders on March 4, 2016 and requested a reply from stakeholders regarding the flow transect locations on or before March 18, 2016. BSPC is currently reviewing responses from stakeholders.
- BSPC may initiate data collection at the flow transects in the next quarter; however, data collection is dependent on river flows and flow coordination. Per the approved study plan, data collection at flow transects is scheduled to occur between June and September 2016 as conditions allow.

11. Fife Brook Flow Attenuation Study

- BSPC is continuing to analyze level logger data collected in 2014 at eight locations downstream from Fife Brook Dam. The level loggers quantified travel times and relative change in water depth at 15-minute intervals at each location over a two-month period spanning August 1, 2014, through September 30, 2014.
- Pursuant to the approved study plan, BSPC is also conducting a public safety assessment.
- BSPC expects that the analysis of level logger data and the public safety assessment will continue into the next quarter.

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12. Entrainment Evaluation

- BSPC is conducting a literature review of turbine entrainment field studies performed at other hydroelectric projects, collecting key physical and operational data for the Project, and reviewing relevant Project design drawings.
- BSPC expects that these data gathering activities will continue into the next quarter.

13. State-listed Odonates Survey

- BSPC submitted a signed Data Release Agreement to the NHESP to identify specific locations of previously reported state-listed odonates within the proposed study area. BSPC is currently awaiting the data from the NHESP.
- BSPC consulted with stakeholders regarding the propose location of nine odonate survey transects, including one in the upstream extend of the Lower Reservoir, and eight survey transects located along the river reach extending from Fife Brook Dam downstream to the Deerfield No. 4 impoundment.
 - O By letter dated January 21, 2016, BSPC invited stakeholders to participate in a consultation meeting to discuss the proposed transect locations. BSPC provided stakeholders with mesohabitat maps that identified proposed transect locations on February 12, 2016, and the consultation meeting was held on February 23, 2016. The MADFW generally concurred with the proposed survey transect locations, pending further review of mesohabitat attribute data.
 - O Based on discussions with stakeholders during the consultation meeting, BSPC provided supplemental tabular mesohabitat attribute data and accompanying maps to stakeholders on March 4, 2016 and requested a reply from stakeholders regarding the odonate transect locations on or before March 18, 2016. BSPC is currently reviewing responses from stakeholders.
- BSPC is continuing ongoing field planning activities including compiling habitat requirements and life histories of state-listed odonates with the potential to be located within the Project area and preparing an Application for Commercial Scientific Collection Permit.
- Activities expected to occur in the next quarter include submittal of resumes of qualified biologists and a completed Application for Commercial Scientific Collection Permit to the MADFW, plotting transects, and initiation of exuviae surveys.

14. Baseline Study of Freshwater Mussel Species

- BSPC consulted with stakeholders regarding the proposed location of 17 mussel survey locations, including one in the upstream extend of the Lower Reservoir, and 16 survey locations along the river reach extending from Fife Brook Dam downstream to the Deerfield No. 4 impoundment.
 - By letter dated January 21, 2016, BSPC invited stakeholders to participate in a consultation meeting to discuss proposed survey locations. BSPC provided stakeholders with mesohabitat maps that identified proposed survey locations on

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February 12, 2016, and the consultation meeting was held on February 23, 2016. The MADFW generally concurred with the proposed survey locations, pending further review of mesohabitat attribute data.

- o Based on discussions with stakeholders during the consultation meeting, BSPC provided supplemental tabular mesohabitat attribute data and accompanying maps to stakeholders on March 4, 2016 and requested a reply from stakeholders regarding the mussel survey locations on or before March 18, 2016. BSPC is currently reviewing responses from stakeholders.
- BSPC is continuing ongoing field planning activities including compiling habitat requirements and life histories for mussels with the potential to be located within the Project area and preparing an Application for Commercial Scientific Collection Permit.
- Activities expected to occur in the next quarter include submittal of a completed Application for Commercial Scientific Collection Permit and qualified biologists' resumes to the MADFW.
- At this time, BSPC anticipates mussel surveys will be conducted during the late summer/early fall; however, pursuant to the approved study plan, mussel surveys may be initiated anytime after June 1, 2016 as conditions allow.

15. Northern Long-eared Bat Acoustic Survey

- BSPC is continuing ongoing field planning activities including the identification of potential detector locations.
- At this time, acoustic surveys are expected to occur in the second quarter of 2016; however, pursuant to the approved study plan, northern long-eared bat acoustic surveys may be conducted anytime between May 15, 2016 and August 15, 2016 as conditions allow.

16. Fife Brook Impoundment Access and Portage Feasibility Study

- BSPC is conducting a review of Lower Reservoir shoreline access, portage, and boat access, public safety concerns associated with shoreline access, portage, and boat access, and performing an assessment of costs.
- In the next quarter, BSPC anticipates coordination with stakeholders regarding a potential site visit to review Lower Reservoir access and portage options and safety concerns.

17. Angler Wading Study

- BSPC initiated consultation with stakeholders to identify common fishing locations and to identify experienced anglers to test wading conditions.
 - o By letter dated January 21, 2016, BSPC invited Trout Unlimited (TU), fishing guides, and other stakeholders to participate in a consultation meeting to discuss the proposed Angler Wading Study. BSPC provided stakeholders with mesohabitat maps that identified common fishing locations along the river reach extending downstream from Fife Brook Dam.

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- During the February 23, 2016 consultation meeting, anglers identified four popular fishing locations to be included in the Angler Wading Study: Carbis Bend, Freight Train Rapids, a pool downstream from Freight Train Rapids, and the Zoar Gap area.
- o Also during the February 23, 2016 consultation meeting, BSPC requested that TU and other stakeholders develop a pool of six or more experienced anglers to participate in the Angler Wading Study. BSPC requested that stakeholders identify potential study participants by March 18, 2016. A reminder email was sent to TU and other angler interest groups that participated in the February 23, 2016 consultation meeting on March 14, 2016. BSPC is continuing to consult with TU and other stakeholders to identify potential study participants.
- o BSPC distributed a draft Angler Wading Study Survey Form to TU and other anglers on March 31, 2016. BSPC requested that TU and other stakeholders provide any comments on the draft survey form on or before April 30, 2016.
- In the next quarter, BSPC expects to coordinate study logistics with anglers participating in the Angler Wading Study and to finalize the survey form in consultation with TU and other stakeholders.
- Fieldwork associated with the Angler Wading Study may be initiated in the next quarter; however, data collection will be concurrent with the Instream Flow Assessment. The Instream Flow Assessment is dependent on river flows and flow coordination and is scheduled to occur between June and September 2016 as conditions allow.

18. Warning System Effectiveness Study

 BSPC is coordinating safety and equipment for this study and identifying access locations for fieldwork. Pursuant to the Commission's SPD, BSPC expects to conduct initial field activities associated with the Warning System Effectiveness Study between June and August 2016.

19. Whitewater Boating Flow Study

- BSPC initiated consultation with stakeholders regarding the specific flows to be assessed
 for the Whitewater Boating Flow Study, study methods, and to identify a panel of
 experienced boaters to participate in the study.
 - O By letter dated January 21, 2016, BSPC invited American Whitewater, New England FLOW, the Appalachian Mountain Club, river outfitters (including whitewater and tubing outfitters), and other stakeholders to participate in a consultation meeting to discuss the proposed Whitewater Boating Flow Study. BSPC provided stakeholders with mesohabitat maps that identified whitewater features at the upstream extent of the Lower Reservoir and downstream from Fife Brook Dam.
 - During the February 23, 2016 consultation meeting, BSPC requested that stakeholders identify approximately 25 experienced boaters to participate in the Whitewater Boating Flow Study. BSPC requested that stakeholders identify

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potential study participants by March 18, 2016. A follow-up email was sent to American Whitewater (AW), New England FLOW (NE FLOW), the Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC), river outfitters, and other whitewater interest groups that participated in the February 23, 2016 consultation meeting on March 14, 2016. BSPC is continuing to consult with AW, NE FLOW, AMC, river outfitters and other stakeholders to identify potential study participants.

- BSPC distributed draft Pre-Run, Post-Run, and Comparative survey forms to AW, NE FLOW, AMC, river outfitters, and other whitewater interest groups on March 31, 2016. BSPC requested that stakeholders provide any comments on the draft survey forms on or before April 30, 2016.
- o Based on consultation with stakeholders and FERC's SPD, BSPC anticipates that flows of 700 cfs, 900 cfs, 1100 cfs, and 1300 cfs will be assessed for this study.
- In the next quarter, BSPC expects to coordinate study logistics with boaters participating in the Whitewater Boating Flow Assessment and to finalize the survey forms in consultation with stakeholders.
- Fieldwork associated with the Whitewater Boating Flow Assessment may be initiated in the next quarter; however, data collection is dependent on river flows and flow coordination and is scheduled to occur between June and September 2016 as conditions allow.

As always, I welcome the opportunity to further discuss the ongoing relicensing process with the Commission. If you have any question regarding this progress report, please feel free to contact me at (315) 598-6130.

Sincerely,

Steven P. Murphy

Manager, Licensing

Brookfield Renewable Energy Group

Cc: Distribution List

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