

# Federal Energy Regulatory Commission



## Scoping Meetings for the River Falls Hydroelectric Project (P-10489)

November 15 & 16, 2018

# Housekeeping Items

- Sign-up sheets
- Court Reporter (independent party)
  - Transcripts
    - Will be available and made part of public record.
  - Speakers
    - Please state name and affiliation, spell out name and acronyms.
    - Everyone who wishes to speak will have an opportunity to do so.
    - Please speak clearly and one at a time.

# Agenda

1. About FERC?
2. Integrated Licensing Process (ILP) overview
3. Purposes of scoping
4. Request for information and studies
5. Project Description- *City of River Falls*
6. Resource issues identified in scoping document (SD1)
7. Important dates
8. How to stay informed
9. Final comments/questions

# About FERC



- Independent federal agency that regulates the interstate transmission of natural gas, oil, and electricity.
- FERC is supported by a staff of about 1,500 employees.



# FERC

- Small Agency (1,500)
- Office of Energy Projects (304)
- Division of Hydropower  
Licensing





# Hydropower Jurisdiction

- Authority comes from the Federal Power Act
- Commission authorization is required for non-federal hydropower projects that:

are located on navigable waters



are located on public lands of the United States



Effect interstate or foreign commerce



use surplus water from a federal dam



# The Integrated Licensing Process (ILP)

- Default licensing process
- Founded on three fundamental principles:
  - 1) Early identification and resolution of studies
  - 2) Integrate agency and tribal permitting process needs, including NEPA, the applicant's pre-filing consultation, and federal and state permitting needs (e.g., section 401 CWA, ESA)
  - 3) Established timeframes to complete process steps



# Integrated Licensing Process

*Data Collection, Studies and Agency/Public/Tribal Input*



*Data Analysis, Mitigation, and Decision*



# Prefiling

Prefiling



- Brings together all existing, relevant, and reasonably available information
- Provides basis for identifying issues, data gaps, and study needs
- Forms the foundation of future documents
- Sets the schedule for the ILP



# Scoping Meetings



- Scoping is the first step in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process
  - Solicit public input and comments on the scoping document (SD1). Did we get it right?
  - Identify the issues associated with the proposed project.
  - Discuss existing conditions or any potential effects of the project on resources.
  - Cumulative effects, adequate geographic scope, and proposed alternatives



# Study Plan Development

Prefiling



**Comments on the PAD and study requests must be submitted to FERC by May 26, 2017**

- Study requests provide a framework for collecting pertinent information on the resources potentially effected by the continued operation of the project.
- They ultimately provide the information we need to complete our environmental analysis and recommendations.



# Conduct Studies & Prepare Application

Prefiling

**Initial Proposal & Information Document**

**Scoping Meetings & Public Comment**

**Study Plan Development**

**Conduct Studies & Prepare Application**



# Request for Information and Studies

- Information that may help define the geographic and temporal scope of the analysis and identify substantial environmental issues.
- Any data that would help to describe the existing environment and effects of the project and other developmental activities on environmental and socioeconomic resources.

# Request for Information and Studies (cont.)

- Identification of any federal, state, or local resource plans and any future project proposals in the affected resource area.
- Documentation showing why any resources or identified issues should be excluded from further study or consideration
- Study requests that would help provide a framework for collecting pertinent information on the resources potentially affected by the project.

# Project Description

## City of River Falls Municipal Utilities



RIVER FALLS  
MUNICIPAL UTILITIES



# Project Description

Two hydroelectric developments on  
Kinnickinnic River, City of River Falls,  
Pierce County, WI

- Junction Falls
- Powell Falls

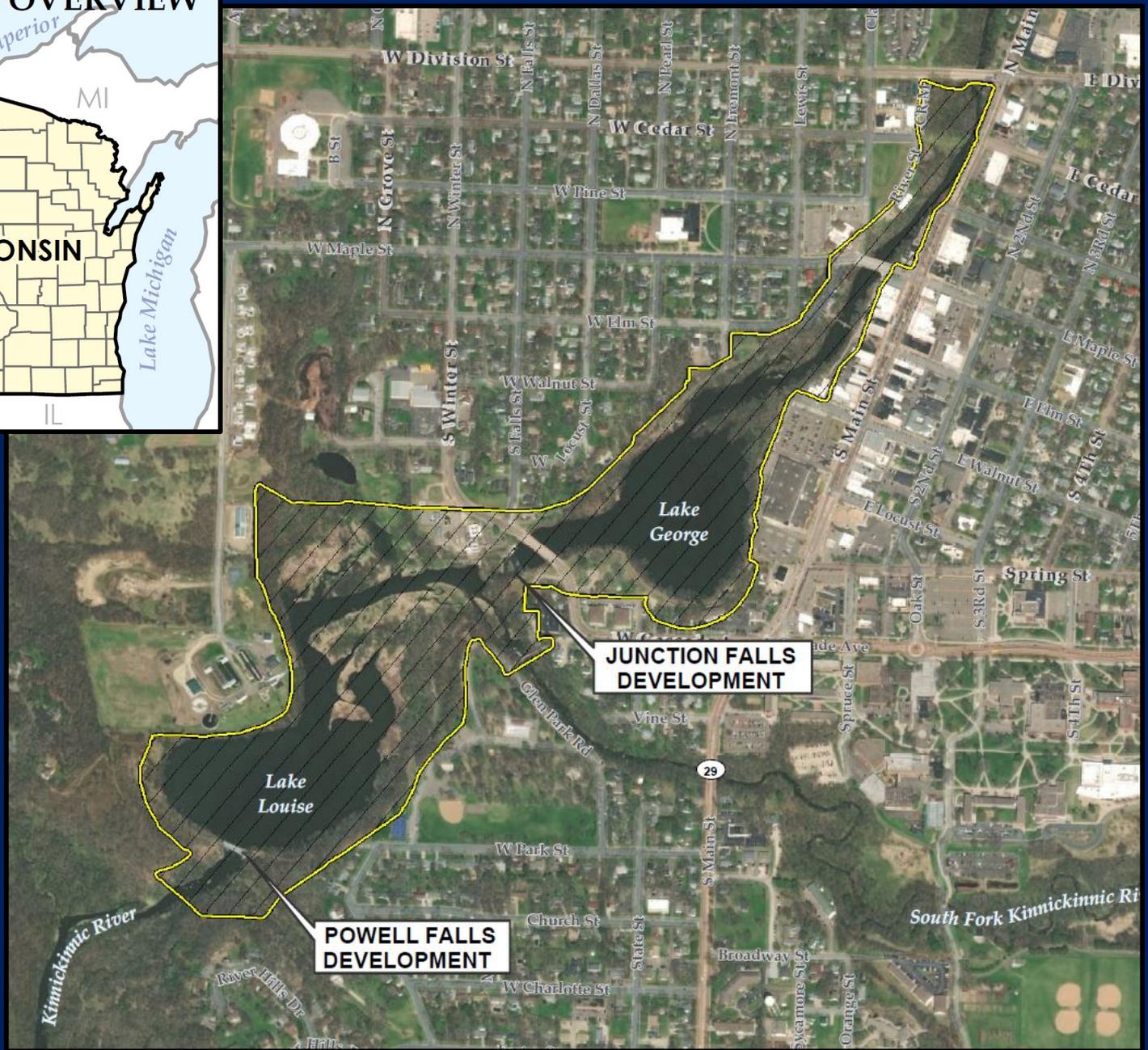
**Owner/operator:**

- City of River Falls Municipal Utilities



**RIVER FALLS**  
MUNICIPAL UTILITIES

# WISCONSIN OVERVIEW



# Junction Falls Development

- Run-of-river
- Concrete gravity dam, 140 ft long, 32 ft high
- Lake George (Impoundment): 15.5 acres
- Dependable capacity: 153 kW

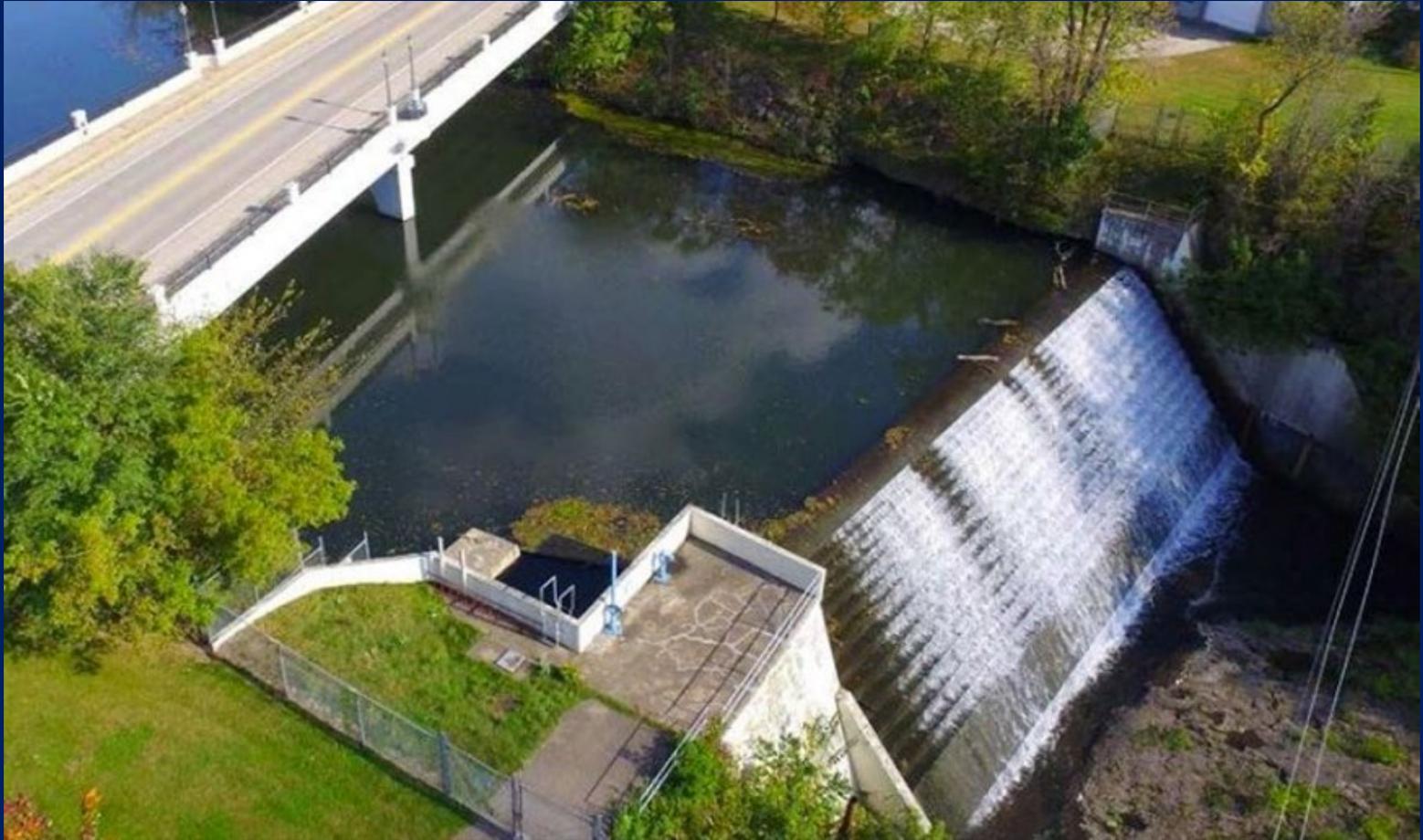
# Junction Falls Development



# Junction Falls Development



# Junction Falls Development



# Junction Falls Development



# Powell Falls Development

- Run-of-river
- Concrete gravity dam, 110 ft long, 16.5 ft high
- Lake Louise (Impoundment): 15.4 acres
- Dependable capacity: 76 kW

# Powell Falls Development



# Powell Falls Development



# Powell Falls Development



# Powell Falls Development



# FERC Process Background

- Received a 30-year FERC license in 1988
- Initiated relicensing process in 2013
- Requested and received a 5 year FERC license extension (FERC license expiration August 31, 2023)
- NOI & PAD filed August 30, 2018

# FERC Relicensing Process – Notice of Intent (NOI)

- Relicensing using Integrated Licensing Process (ILP)
- Proposed Action
  - Relicense the Junction Falls development
  - Decommission the Powell Falls development with dam removal

# FERC Relicensing Process – Pre-Application Document (PAD)

- Content:
  - Project facilities and operation
  - Existing environment and resource impacts
  - List of issues and studies proposed to fill information gaps
  - Process plan and schedule
  - Consultation summary

# Studies Proposed by Licensee

- **Wetlands:** Assessment of area to be affected by the removal of the Powell Fall dam.
- **Rare, Threatened and Endangered Species (RTE):** Survey of Project lands for RTE species that may be affected by the removal of the Powell Falls dam.

# Studies Proposed by Licensee

- **Recreation Resources:** Recreation site and use survey at the Junction Falls and Powell Falls developments.
- **Cultural Resources:** Delineate the location and extent of the Foster Cemetery.

# Resource Issues Identified for Scoping

- Aquatic Resources
- Terrestrial Resources
- Threatened and Endangered Species Resources
- Recreation and Land Use Resources
- Cultural Resources

# Junction Falls

# Geologic and Soils Resources



- Effects of continued project operation on sediment transport within and downstream of the project.

# Aquatic Resources



- Effects of continued project operation on water quality within and downstream of the project.
- Effects of continued project operation on aquatic species and habitat in the impoundment and downstream of the project.

# Terrestrial Resources



- Effects of continued project operation on riparian, littoral, and wetland habitat and associated wildlife.

# Threatened and Endangered Species



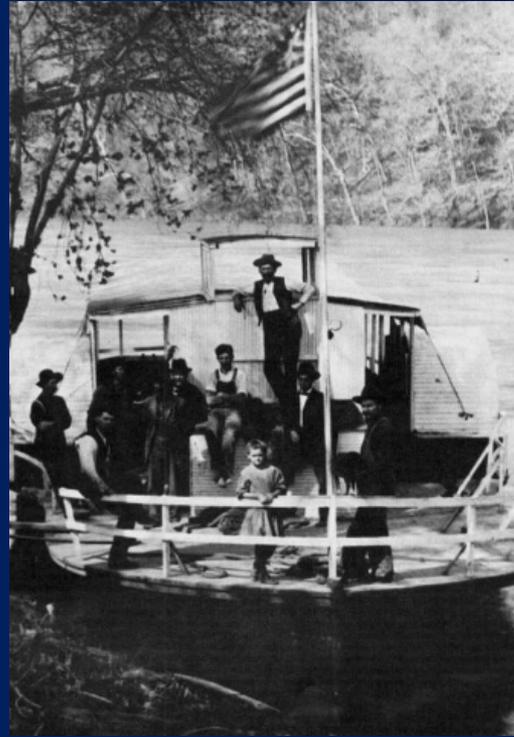
- Effects of continued project operation and maintenance on the following federally listed threatened and endangered species: (1) northern long-eared bat; (2) prairie bush-clover; and (3) the Higgins eye, snuffbox, and spectaclecase mussels.

# Recreation and Land Use



- Effects of the continued operation and maintenance on public access and recreational opportunities at the project.
- Adequacy of existing and proposed public access and recreational facilities at the project to meet current and future recreational demand.

# Cultural Resources



- Effects of continued project operation on properties that are included in or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

# Developmental Resources



- Effects of the proposed environmental measures costs on project's economics.

# Powell Falls

# Geologic and Soils Resources



- Effects of removing the Powell Falls dam on shoreline and streambank erosion in the project.
- Effects of removing the Powell Falls dam on sediment and contaminant mobilization within and downstream of the project area.

# Aquatic Resources



- Effects of removing the Powell Falls dam on water quality within the project area and downstream of the development.
- Effects of removing Powell Falls dam on aquatic species and habitat in the impoundment and downstream of the development.

# Terrestrial Resources



- Effects of removing the Powell Falls dam on local plant communities.
- Effects of removing the Powell Falls dam on adjacent wetlands and associated wildlife.

# Threatened and Endangered Species



- Effects of removing the Powell Falls dam on the following federally listed threatened and endangered species: (1) northern long-eared bat; (2) prairie bush-clover; and (3) the Higgins eye, snuffbox, and spectaclecase mussels.

# Recreation and Land Use



- Effects of removing the Powell Falls dam on public access to existing recreational opportunities at the project.

# Cultural Resources



- Effects of removing the Powell Falls dam on properties that are included in or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

# Developmental Resources



- Effects the Powell Falls dam removal cost on project's economics.



# Study Plan Development

- Request for information or studies that will help determine how a project may effect environmental and socioeconomic resources:
  - Determining geographic and temporal scope
  - Understanding the existing environment
  - Resources issues that should be excluded from further study

## 7 Criteria for Study Requests (SD1 Appendix A)

- Describe goals and objectives of the proposed study
- Explain relevant resource management goals
- Explain relevant public interest considerations
- Describe existing information and need for more info
- Explain *nexus* to project operations and effects and how study results would inform license requirements
- Describe study methodology and how it's consistent with accepted practice
- Describe consideration of level of effort and cost of study and why alternative study is needed

# Request for Information and Studies

- Comments on SD1 and study requests are due on 12/28/2018

- Clearly identify the following on the first page:

*River Falls Hydroelectric Project No. 10489*

- Can be filed electronically via the internet or by mail

- Address all communications to:

Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary  
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission  
888 First Street, N.E., Room 1A  
Washington, DC 20426



# Important ILP Dates

PAD/SD1 Comments Due: **12/28/2018**

File Proposed Study Plan: **02/11/2019**

Study Plan Meeting: **03/13/2019**

Study Plan Comments Due: **05/12/2019**

File Revised Study Plan: **06/11/2019**

Study Plan Determination: **07/11/2019**



- See Appendix B of SD1 for the full process plan and schedule (handouts available)

# How to Stay Informed

- Get added to the mailing list
- E-library at [www.ferc.gov](http://www.ferc.gov) (please use project docket no. P-10489)
- E-subscription at [www.ferc.gov](http://www.ferc.gov)
- Contact me:
  - Shana Wiseman
  - Email: [shana.wiseman@ferc.gov](mailto:shana.wiseman@ferc.gov)
  - Phone: 202-502-8736



# Questions?

## CONTACT

Shana Wiseman

202-502-8736

[Shana.wiseman@ferc.gov](mailto:Shana.wiseman@ferc.gov)