

Susitna-Watana Hydro Requests Schedule Change, Maintains Forward Momentum

In an effort to prioritize licensing efforts and provide additional opportunity for stakeholder involvement, the Alaska Energy Authority today filed a letter with the Federal Energy Regulatory Authority, requesting a 120-day extension in the Susitna-Watana Hydro licensing process. The letter and proposed revised schedule is attached.

Ten million dollars was included in the proposed Capital Budget in December. Approximately \$110 million is needed to advance the project to license application.

“AEA and the Cook Inlet Region Working Group remain committed to advancing land access negotiations. However, demonstrable progress has been needed and this is reflected in the Capital Budget,” said Sara Fisher-Goad, AEA executive director.

“There is value in taking the time to engage stakeholders in the process and to prioritize future efforts that will lead to a successful license application. Susitna-Watana Hydro has the potential to provide clean, reliable and affordable power to generations of Alaskans.” added Fisher-Goad.

Susitna-Watana Hydro is in the midst of a multi-year FERC licensing effort. This past year, the Susitna-Watana Hydro project team began implementing the 58 FERC-approved environmental studies. The Initial Study Report, which serves as a project progress report, was to be filed with FERC on February 3, 2014 and include plans for second-year studies. AEA proposes filing the Initial Study Report as a draft on February 3 and will continue workgroup meetings. Under the requested time extension, the final Initial Study Report would be filed on June 3, 2014 with the intent of filing the final license application in 2016.

“A tremendous amount of information was gathered in 2013 as part of the Susitna-Watana Hydro environmental study plan,” said Wayne Dyok, project manager.

“We have heard from stakeholders that they need more time to provide feedback on the Initial Study Report. This requested timeline extension allows the project team to clearly communicate this information and engage stakeholders in the prioritization of future study efforts.”

Susitna-Watana Hydro would be located at river mile 184 on the Susitna River, above Devils Canyon, and would provide long-term, stable electric rates for 100+ years. It is estimated to provide approximately half of the Railbelt’s electrical demand, with an average 50-year estimated cost of power less than 7 cents per kilowatt hour. The Alaska Energy Authority is a public corporation of the state whose mission is to reduce the cost of energy in Alaska. More information about Susitna-Watana Hydro can be found at Susitna-WatanaHydro.org.