Hydropower Licensing/Federal Power Act: Organizations/Native American Tribes Propose Amendments

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A number of organizations and Native American Tribes submitted proposed amendments to the Federal Power Act ("FPA") to the United States Congress and White House for their consideration.

The FPA authorizes the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to issue licenses to build, operate, maintain and remove dams.

The organizations and Native American Tribes submitting the proposed amendments to the FPA include:

- American Rivers
- National Hydropower Association
- Skokomish Tribe
- Upper Skagit Indian Tribe
- Midwest Alliance of Sovereign Tribes
- Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Lake Superior Chippewa
- Union of Concerned Scientists
- Hydropower Reform Coalition
- California Outdoors
- Friends of the River
- California Sportfishing Protection Alliance
- American Whitewater
- New England FLOW
- Idaho Rivers United
- Foothill Conservancy
- Gravity Renewables
- Rye Development
- Natel Energy
- Nelson Energy

(Collectively "Organizations")

The Organizations state that they believe the amendments would improve hydropower licensing, relicensing, and the license surrender process. They argue that the amendments to the FPA would:

- Enhance cooperation
- Improve clarity
- Restore autonomy and self-determination for Tribal Nations

- Retain states' decision-making authority

Key components/objectives of the proposed amendments are stated to include:

- Improve cooperation among FERC, Federally Recognized Tribes and resource agencies in the hydropower licensing process
- Expand the authority for Federally Recognized Tribes to protect their lands, waters, other resources and treaty-protected rights
- Promote a culture of "show your work" in hydropower licensing
- Address climate change in the hydropower licensing process
- Provide improved evaluation of projects during the licensing process
- Require improved processes for license surrender and for addressing non-operational facilities
- Provide opportunities for expedited licensing of certain low-impact projects
- Support new technologies

A copy of the Organizations' Summary of Federal Power Act Amendments Package can be downloaded here.