

**Vermont Agency of Natural Resources  
Department of Environmental Conservation**

NOTICE OF DRAFT DECISION AND PUBLIC HEARING  
VERNON HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT  
*February 13, 2025*

Great River Hydro LLC (GRH) has initiated the process to obtain a new license from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to continue to operate the Vernon Hydroelectric Project located on the Connecticut River in the town of Vernon, Vermont. As part of this process, the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (Department) is reviewing an application for a Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification, required pursuant to the provisions of Section 401 of the federal Clean Water Act, 33 USC section 1341.

Great River Hydro proposes to operate the Vernon Hydroelectric Project to maintain a target water level at the dam and, as a result, maintain flow below the Project equal to the approximate inflow as measured or calculated at the dam (inflow equals outflow or IEO) as the predominant mode of operation. In addition to IEO Operation, GRH proposes restricted discretionary flexible operation capability, as well as the ability to respond to emergencies and ISO-NE requirements. The applicant is also proposing additional fish passage measures as stipulated in a fish passage settlement agreement, recreation enhancement at Project related facilities, and the development of a recreation management plan.

The applicant must demonstrate that the project will be in compliance with the Vermont Water Quality Standards by not having an undue impact on the aquatic environment, or the designated and existing uses of the waters of the State. The Department's tentative determination is to grant the certification with conditions to mitigate impacts on water quality.

The Department is welcoming public feedback on this tentative determination, during a no less than 30-day public notice period. All timely feedback will be considered in the formulation of the final decision. Written and voice memo feedback will be accepted at the address or telephone number below, or via e-mail to [Jeff.Crocker@vermont.gov](mailto:Jeff.Crocker@vermont.gov), until **4:30 PM on March 17, 2025**.

**Public Hearing:** A public hearing will be held on **March 5, 2025, at 5:30 PM** at the Holton Hall 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference Room, Winston Prouty Center, 130 Austine Drive, Brattleboro, Vermont 05301. Parties can **join the meeting via phone** (+1 802-828-7667, 301762986#) or **virtually via Microsoft Teams** (Meeting ID: 283 606 244 332 Passcode: h9C4dR79). Persons having an interest in the project and the affected waters are encouraged to attend and provide in person oral testimony, written statements, or data that may bear on the final water quality certification decision. Copies of the draft certification and Water Quality Standards are available by mail or on the Agency website: <https://enb.vermont.gov/>

**For Additional Information Contact**

Jeff Crocker, Supervising River Ecologist  
Vermont Agency of Natural Resources: Department of Environmental Conservation  
1 National Life Drive, Davis 3: Montpelier, VT 05620-3522  
Email: [Jeff.Crocker@vermont.gov](mailto:Jeff.Crocker@vermont.gov); Telephone 802.490.6151

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