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150 FERC ¶ 62,010
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION

Haiwee Ridge Hydro, LLC

Project No. 14286-001

ORDER AMENDING PRELIMINARY PERMIT

(Issued January 8, 2015)

1. On July 2, 2014, and revised on July 14, 2014, Haiwee Ridge Hydro, LLC (Haiwee Ridge) filed an application, pursuant to 18 C.F.R. § 4.82, to amend its preliminary permit for the proposed Haiwee Ridge Pumped Storage Project No. 14286 (Project) to be located on the South Haiwee reservoir, near the town of Olancho, Inyo County, California. The project would be located almost entirely on land managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

2. As a result of preliminary investigations, the permittee now proposes to make the following changes to its project proposal: (1) eliminate the "New Reservoir" Alternative; (2) change the total installed capacity of Alternative B from 500 megawatts (MW) to 250 MW; and (3) adjust the project boundary to incorporate additional lands needed for the proposed project alternatives that remain under consideration.

3. As discussed below, this order approves the requested changes and amends the preliminary permit.

I. Background

4. On March 23, 2012, Commission staff issued a preliminary permit to Haiwee Ridge for its proposed project.¹ As permitted, Haiwee Ridge proposed to consider three project alternatives: alternatives A, B, and New Reservoir. Alternatives A and B would use the existing South Haiwee dam as the lower reservoir. The New Reservoir Alternative would not use the existing South Haiwee dam, but would instead involve constructing a new lower reservoir. Each of these alternatives would consist of four reversible pump-turbines with a total capacity of 500 MW.

¹ *Haiwee Ridge Pumped Storage Project*, 138 FERC ¶ 62,298 (2012).

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5. Alternative A would consist of: (1) an upper reservoir formed by a 160-foot-high by 2,270-foot-long, roller-compacted concrete (RCC) dam, two saddle dams (a 35-foot-high by 680-foot-long RCC dam and a 65-foot-high by 680-foot-long RCC dam) having a total storage capacity of 15,100 acre-feet and a water surface area of 175 acres at full pool elevation of 5,050 feet msl; (2) a lower reservoir formed by the 81-foot-high by 1,555-foot-long potentially rebuilt South Haiwee dam having a total storage capacity of 46,600 acre-feet and a water surface area of 660 acres at full pool elevation of 3,756 feet msl; (3) approximately 13,150 feet of conduit connecting the upper to the lower reservoir in three different sections: a 3,000-foot-long by 18.5-foot-diameter, concrete-lined low-pressure tunnel, a 7,850-foot-long by 18.5-foot-diameter concrete-lined pressure shaft, and a 2,300-foot-long by 22.2-foot diameter tailrace; and (4) an underground powerhouse located roughly 1,500 feet east of South Haiwee reservoir at an elevation of 3,600 feet msl.
6. Alternative B would consist of: (1) an upper reservoir formed by a 210-foot-high by 1,320-foot-long, RCC dam and a 25-foot-high by 800-foot-long RCC saddle dam having a total storage capacity of 14,235 acre-feet and a water surface area of 241 acres at full pool elevation of 5,000 feet msl; (2) a lower reservoir formed by the 91-foot-high by 1,523-foot-long potentially rebuilt South Haiwee dam having a total storage capacity of 46,600 acre-feet and a water surface area of 800 acres at full pool elevation of 3,756 feet msl; (3) approximately 14,700 feet of conduit connecting the upper to the lower reservoir in three different sections: a 5,100-foot-long by 18.9-foot-diameter, concrete-lined low-pressure tunnel, a 5,600-foot-long by 18.9-foot-diameter concrete-lined pressure shaft, and a 4,000-foot-long by 22.7-foot diameter tailrace; and (4) an underground powerhouse located roughly 3,300 feet southeast of South Haiwee reservoir at an elevation of 3,580 feet msl.
7. The "New Reservoir" Alternative would consist of: (1) an upper reservoir formed by a 210-foot-high by 1,320-foot-long, RCC dam having a total storage capacity of 14,235 acre-feet and a water surface area of 241 acres at full pool elevation of 5,000 feet msl; (2) a lower reservoir formed by a 60-foot-high by 10,600-foot-long RCC dam having a total storage capacity of 46,600 acre-feet and a water surface area of 800 acres at full pool elevation of 3,756 feet above msl; (3) approximately 12,500 feet of conduit connecting the upper to the lower reservoir in three different sections: a 3,750-foot-long by 17.5-foot-diameter, concrete-lined low-pressure tunnel, a 6,300-foot-long by 17.5-foot-diameter concrete-lined pressure shaft, and a 2,500-foot-long by 21-foot diameter tailrace; and (4) an underground located roughly 8,500 feet southwest of South Haiwee reservoir at an elevation of 3,400 feet msl.

8. The Commission issued public notice of the amendment application on July 25, 2014. The U. S. Department of the Interior filed a letter with the Commission on September 23, 2014, stating it had no comments.

II. Application to Amend Preliminary Permit

9. As a result of preliminary investigations, the permittee now proposes to make the following changes to the issued permit: (1) eliminate the "New Reservoir" Alternative; (2) change the total installed capacity of Alternative B from 500 MW to 250 MW; and (3) adjust the project boundary to remove the lands associated with the New Reservoir Alternative and include additional federal lands, managed by the BLM and necessary for the proposed project, which were inadvertently omitted from the original application.

III. Discussion

10. No comments were filed in response to the Commission's notice of the application for amendment of preliminary permit.

11. The changes requested by Haiwee Ridge are intended to adjust the project boundary and design to reflect its initial investigations into the proposed project and the project alternatives. The additional lands needed for the proposed project alternatives do not overlap with the project boundary of any other licensed projects or preliminary permits. Therefore, Commission staff has not identified any barriers to modifying the preliminary permit to incorporate these changes.

The Director orders:

(A) Haiwee Ridge Hydro, LLC's application to amend the project boundary (including the removal of the "New Reservoir" alternative), and to change the total installed capacity of Alternative B for the Haiwee Ridge Pumped Storage Project No. 14286, filed on July 2, 2014 as corrected on July 14, 2014, is approved.

(B) This order constitutes final agency action. Parties may file requests for rehearing of this order by the Commission within thirty days of the date of issuance of this order, pursuant to 18 C.F.R. § 385.713 (2014).

Timothy Konnert, Chief
West Branch
Division of Hydropower Licensing

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