

**FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION**  
Washington, D. C. 20426

OFFICE OF ENERGY PROJECTS

Project No. 2476-027—Wisconsin  
Jersey Hydroelectric Project  
Wisconsin Public Service Corporation

March 15, 2016

Gil E. Snyder, Manager  
Wisconsin Public Service Corporation  
700 North Adams Street  
Green Bay, WI 54307-9001

Subject: 2014 Six-Year Purple Loosestrife Control Report and Letter Order  
Accepting Request to Modify Monitoring Frequency Pursuant to Ordering  
Paragraph (B) of Order Amending Purple Loosestrife Monitoring Plan

Dear Mr. Snyder:

The purposes of this letter are to acknowledge your 2014 six-year purple loosestrife control report, and to accept your proposed revision to future filing requirements filed together on December 11, 2014, for the Jersey Hydroelectric Project.<sup>1</sup> The six-year purple loosestrife control report and your proposed revision were filed pursuant to ordering paragraph (B) of the Order Amending Purple Loosestrife Monitoring Plan (2008 order).<sup>2</sup> The Jersey Project is located on the Tomahawk River near the town of Tomahawk, in Lincoln County, Wisconsin.

**Background**

Ordering paragraph (B) of the 2008 order requires the licensee to file annual purple loosestrife monitoring results and the results of implementation of the *Galerucella* sp. beetle control efforts with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (Wisconsin DNR) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) by October 31 each year, starting in 2009. The licensee is required to file the annual results, including agency

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<sup>1</sup> *Wisconsin Public Service Corporation*, 76 FERC ¶ 61,058 (1996).

<sup>2</sup> *Wisconsin Public Service Corporation*, 125 FERC ¶ 62,084 (2008). The 2008 order amends the Order Approving Purple Loosestrife Monitoring Plan, 80 FERC ¶ 62,028 (1997).

comments with the Commission by December 15 each year, starting in 2009, allowing the resource agencies 30 days to comment on each report. After collecting six years of control data (from 2009 – 2014), the licensee is required to file a summary of all the data and its recommendation, after consulting with the resource agencies, on the schedule for conducting and reporting future purple loosestrife surveys with the Commission. After review of the sixth report filed with the Commission on December 15, 2014, the Commission will determine the licensee's schedule for conducting and filing future purple loosestrife monitoring and control reports.

### **Six-Year Control Report**

According to your report, during the sixth survey (2014) a total of 12 purple loosestrife colonies were found, with beetle feeding noted on 10 of the 12 colonies. The beetle feeding was considered heavy on 9 of the 10 colonies. Your report also summarizes the six years of purple loosestrife surveys and beetle releases from 2009 through 2014. In summary, the overall number of purple loosestrife colonies has decreased from a total of 28 colonies in 2009 to 12 colonies in 2014. The number of medium sized colonies has decreased from a total of 9 colonies to 7 over that same time-frame. The number of large colonies has also decreased from 5 colonies in 2009 to 1 colony in 2014. Therefore, your report indicates that using *Galerucella* sp. beetles as a biocontrol measure at the Jersey Project has been beneficial and effective at reducing the overall number of purple loosestrife colonies for the past six years.

### **Proposed Changes to the Purple Loosestrife Monitoring Plan**

Based on the six years of data showing a decrease in purple loosestrife populations, you propose to decrease the monitoring frequency at the reservoir from annually to once every three years. You propose that if the next survey, which you would therefore conduct in the summer of 2018, shows that there is a decrease in purple loosestrife populations, then you would continue the new schedule of monitoring every three years. However, if the 2018 survey does not show a decrease in purple loosestrife populations, you would return to conducting annual monitoring and beetle releases, pursuant to the 2008 order.

As required in the 2008 order, you consulted with the Wisconsin DNR and FWS by providing them a copy of your six-year report and your proposed schedule change for their review and comments. By email dated October 29, 2014, the Wisconsin DNR recommended resuming your annual beetle release and monitoring schedule if there is not a continued decrease in purple loosestrife after three years. As indicated above, you

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incorporated this agency recommendation into your proposal before filing it with the Commission. The FWS provided no written comments on the report and proposal.

### **Conclusions**

Your six-year report and your proposal meet the requirements of your 2008 order and have the support of the Wisconsin DNR. Commission staff has completed its review of the proposed change and based on the data and agency comments, we find the conditional change in the frequency of monitoring acceptable.

Your next noxious plant survey is to be conducted in the summer of 2018. Your next noxious plant monitoring report is due to the Wisconsin DNR and FWS by October 31, 2018, and you must allow the agencies 30 days to provide comments before filing the report with the Secretary of the Commission. Your next noxious plant monitoring report is due to the Commission by December 31, 2018, including comments from the resource agencies. Commission staff finds it acceptable that if purple loosestrife populations have decreased based on the data in the December 31, 2018 report, then subsequent monitoring, control efforts, and reporting will occur every three years (2021, 2024, 2027, etc.). However, if purple loosestrife populations do not decrease based on data in the 2018 report, then you must continue to monitor and report annually in accordance with the 2008 order. The Commission reserves the right to require changes to the purple loosestrife monitoring plan based on new information filed with the Commission.

Thank you for your report. If you have any questions concerning this matter, please contact CarLisa Linton at (202) 502-8416 or by email at carlisa.linton-peters@ferc.gov.

Sincerely,

for Steve Hocking, Chief  
Environmental and Project Review Branch  
Division of Hydropower Administration  
and Compliance

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