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Wisconsin River Power Company to Meet with Agencies to Discuss Potential Operational Modifications

Written public comments will be accepted at a date to be determined.

Necedah, WI – Representatives of Wisconsin River Power Company (WRPCO), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) have scheduled another meeting to discuss potential operational modifications identified in the Adaptive Management Plan of its hydroelectric license for Petenwell and Castle Rock dams on the Wisconsin River. This steering committee was initially formed shortly after the relicensing was approved by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC).

The operational modifications identified during the relicensing process were:

- holding spring water levels high during northern pike spawning
- gradual summer drawdown
- holding fall water levels high
- reducing and/or late winter drawdown, and
- water level manipulation to increase the density of rooted aquatic plants and woody terrestrial vegetation

The steering committee initially selected “holding spring water levels high during northern pike spawning.” At its next meeting, set for late June 2008, the steering committee will review the list and establish a schedule and process for receiving public comments.

“We’re eager to continue this process,” said Shawn Puzen, environmental consultant for WRPCO. “The difficulty will be in assessing the modifications’ effects on overall dam operation, public safety and the environment. For example, one of our highest priorities is in safely operating the dam to minimize the possible effects of flooding due to spring runoff. It will be a challenge to determine a balance in holding spring water levels high and still protect communities during high flows.”