



Hydro Green Energy

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December 26, 2008

Editor
The Pioneer Press
345 Cedar Street
St. Paul, MN 55101

Dear Editor:

To better inform the readers of the Pioneer Press, I am writing to comment on the December 25 article entitled "River turbine roils the waters as officials fear for fish." Unfortunately, the comments by Mr. Johnson were ill-informed and misleading.

The entire licensing process for the Hastings hydrokinetic project took nearly two years to complete, hardly a process that "went very quickly," as Mr. Johnson asserts. And, the comprehensive and thorough licensing process, which is documented through hundreds of pages of filings, was open to any and all interested stakeholders, including the National Park Service, the agency responsible for managing the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area. Additionally, multiple public notices were published inviting the public to attend stakeholder meetings conducted at Hastings City Hall.

The NPS provided extensive comments on several occasions and attended public meetings. What's more, in the final operating license for the project, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission included several provisions that addressed issues raised specifically by the NPS. So, despite Mr. Johnson's claim that "there is a law that says federal agencies have to consult with us, but it doesn't say they have to listen to us," FERC, in fact, did listen.

The comment by Mr. Johnson that he "thinks the hydrokinetic turbine's large propellers also could grind up fish that are sucked into it" ignores some very basic facts about Hydro Green Energy's technology. Fish "grinds" can occur in conventional hydroelectric turbines when fish are exposed to narrow gaps between fixed and moving structures, typically between the blades and the unit that house the blades. Knowing this, Hydro Green Energy's turbine was designed so that it has no gaps whatsoever. Therefore, fish grinding is entirely eliminated.

The flowing water downstream from Lock & Dam No. 2 spins the hydrokinetic turbine blades. The speed of the moving water in the hydrokinetic turbine, unlike a conventional hydroelectric turbine, moves at approximately the same speed as the rest of the water in the Mississippi River below the dam. Fish are not "sucked into" the device, and in fact, many fish will never enter the unit, another issue, however, that will be studied at the request of the NPS.

A fish mortality model designed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and utilized by Hydro Green Energy shows an incredibly high survivability rating. And, while Hydro Green Energy has designed the slowest spinning turbine in the hydrokinetic power industry, it is committed to performing what will serve as the most thorough and precise scientific fish mortality study ever conducted on a hydrokinetic device since the Hastings project is the first commercial installation in U.S. history.

Additionally, to obtain the state's approval of the project, comprehensive water quality monitoring will be conducted. Avian studies, which were requested by the National Park Service, will also be performed. As for mussels, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service concurred with FERC's assessment that the hydrokinetic turbines would not adversely impact the endangered Higgins' eye pearl mussel.

Finally, the U.S. Department of the Interior and the U.S. Department of Energy recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding and publicly announced a new program that will help the National Park Service showcase sustainable energy practices. Energy SmartPARKS is designed to ensure the deployment of energy efficient and renewable energy technologies throughout the national park system. This is exactly what is occurring in Hastings.

Through its partnership with the City of Hastings, Hydro Green Energy created 61 jobs in seven states during the development of the Hastings project, and 34 of those green collar jobs stayed in Minnesota. This was accomplished during a time of increasing joblessness and unemployment nationwide. And, I do not think anyone would challenge the notion that the United States needs to deploy as many carbon-free, domestic energy sources as possible, including hydrokinetic power.

The City of Hastings should be applauded for taking an unparalleled leadership role in demonstrating how hydrokinetic power technologies perform in a "real world" setting, and more importantly, for demonstrating how green, environmentally-friendly technologies will help tackle the serious economic and environmental challenges this country faces.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Stover', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mark R. Stover
Vice President
Governmental and External Affairs
Hydro Green Energy