

SECTION 1

INTRODUCTION

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Loup River Public Power District (Loup Power District or the District) is filing a Notice of Intent (NOI) with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to obtain a new license for the existing 53.4-megawatt (MW) Loup River Hydroelectric Project (FERC Project No. 1256). The Loup River Hydroelectric Project (Project) uses the power of flowing water to generate electricity and is located in Nance and Platte counties, Nebraska. The communities in the vicinity of the Project are Genoa, Monroe, and Columbus, Nebraska. Figure 1-1 shows the location of the Project and identifies the components in the following Project description. The Project begins at the Headworks, where water is diverted from the Loup River into the Settling Basin and the Loup Power Canal. The Upper Power Canal carries the water to the Monroe Powerhouse, and then the Lower Power Canal carries the water from the Monroe Powerhouse into two regulating reservoirs, Lake Babcock and Lake North, which supply water to the Columbus Powerhouse via the Intake Canal. From the Columbus Powerhouse, water discharges to the Tailrace Canal, which in turn discharges Loup River water to the Platte River downstream of the confluence of the Loup and Platte rivers. The portion of the Loup River below the point of diversion is referred to as the Loup River bypass reach. The Project differs somewhat from a typical hydroelectric project in that it has no significant dam, instream reservoir, project spillway, or transmission lines. The District is not proposing to add generation capacity, to implement any substantial modifications to the Project, or to change established Project operations.

The District is seeking a new license using FERC's Integrated Licensing Process (ILP) for hydroelectric projects. Although the current license does not expire until April 15, 2014, the ILP requires that licensees begin the relicensing process 5 to 5.5 years prior to the expiration of their current license. The ILP is designed to improve coordination among FERC, licensees, resource agencies, and the public as well as to streamline the licensing process by integrating the applicant's pre-filing consultation with FERC's scoping process pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). In accordance with the regulations for the ILP (18 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 5.6), the District is simultaneously filing this Pre-Application Document (PAD) with the NOI. The purpose of the PAD is to describe all known existing engineering, operational, economic, and environmental information relevant to relicensing the Project as well as to identify and define issues and potential study needs to be addressed during the relicensing proceeding. Copies of the District's NOI and PAD have been distributed to Federal, state, and local agencies as well as Native American tribes with a potential interest in the proceeding. In addition, other agencies and stakeholders known to have an interest in the proceeding have been notified of the availability of the PAD and NOI on the District's relicensing website at <http://www.loup.com/relicense>.

During preparation of this PAD, the District exercised due diligence by gathering, reviewing, and summarizing relevant existing information from Federal, state, and local agencies as well as other stakeholders. In addition, the District initiated a comprehensive stakeholder outreach program that has included conducting agency orientation meetings, Project tours, and public open houses; developing resource workgroups; and creating a comprehensive relicensing website through the District's website at <http://www.loup.com/relicense>.

The information contained in this PAD will enable resource agencies and other entities interested in the relicensing proceeding to identify potential resource issues and any related information needs during the NEPA scoping process to be conducted by FERC. As set forth in 18 CFR 5.8, FERC will issue Scoping Document 1 (SD1) within 60 days of the District's filing of the NOI and PAD. In addition, FERC will conduct a site visit and a public scoping meeting within 30 days of issuing SD1.

The PAD follows the form and content requirements set forth in 18 CFR 5.6 and is divided into three volumes, as follows:

- Volume 1
 - Section 1 – Introduction
 - Section 2 – Process Plan and Schedule
 - Section 3 – General Description of the River Basin
 - Section 4 – Project Location, Facilities, and Operations
 - Section 5 – Existing Environment and Resource Impacts
 - Section 6 – Preliminary Issues and Studies Lists
 - Section 7 – References
- Volume 2
 - Appendix A – Summary of Contacts and Consultation
 - Appendix B – Current License
 - Appendix C – Flow Duration Curves
 - Appendix D – Specific Gage Rating Curves
 - Appendix E – Water Quality Data
 - Appendix F – Nebraska Tier I and Tier II At-Risk Species
 - Appendix G – North Sand Management Area Adaptive Management Plan
- Volume 3 – Privileged

In Volume 1, figures are located at the end the section in which they are first referenced.

The PAD filed with FERC includes information that is considered privileged¹ or Critical Energy Infrastructure Information² (CEII) that has been withheld from the publicly available PAD. Sections where information has been withheld are duly noted. Privileged or CEII information may be requested directly from FERC by filing a formal Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) or CEII request. Instructions for filing a request are available on FERC’s website at <http://www.ferc.gov/legal/ceii-foia.asp>.

¹ Privileged information is information that is sensitive and not publicly available because, for example, it relates to the specific location of threatened or endangered species or an archaeological resource, disclosure of which may jeopardize the resource.

² CEII is specific engineering, vulnerability, or detailed design information about proposed or existing critical infrastructure (physical or virtual) that relates details about the production, generation, transmission, or distribution of energy; could be useful to a person planning an attack on critical infrastructure; is exempt from mandatory disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act; and gives strategic information beyond the location of the critical infrastructure.

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