FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION
NEWS

December 15, 2008
Docket No. P-4306-017

NEWS MEDIA CONTACT
Celeste M. Miller
202.502.8680

FERC Approves First Hydrokinetic Device for Existing Hydroelectric Project

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) has approved the first installation of a hydrokinetic device at an existing FERC-licensed hydroelectric project, to be located on the Mississippi River in Hastings, Minn.

Hydrokinetic devices generate electricity from waves or directly from the flow of water in ocean currents, tides or inland waterways. This marks the first time that FERC has approved the installation of a hydrokinetic device at an existing project, where it will generate power into the nation's electricity grid.

"Today's decision is an exciting one for everyone because it combines the use of innovative hydrokinetic technology with a conventional hydropower dam," FERC Chairman Joseph T. Kelliher said. "This is a creative solution to meeting electricity demand using renewable resources, and I congratulate the City of Hastings for moving forward with the idea."

"I am thrilled to support today's historic order that allows for harnessing more power from the Mississippi River," FERC Commissioner Philip Moeller said. "I commend the City of Hastings and the federal agencies that approved this innovative approach toward developing more renewable electricity. I hope this is the first of thousands of similar projects that produce clean and renewable power from in-stream flows at existing dams."

The licensee for the existing project, the City of Hastings, plans to install two 35-kilowatt hydrokinetic units suspended below a floating barge in the tailrace of the dam. The hydrokinetic units would have an average annual generation of 364 megawatt-hours.

FERC staff completed an environmental assessment of the proposal in September. This Commission order adopts some of the recommendations in that environmental assessment, including additional water quality monitoring, a broader approach to evaluating fish entrainment and survival, development of a control plan for zebra mussels and development and implementation of a bird monitoring plan.

In addition, the licensee is required to immediately modify turbine operation or remove the turbine or barge if monitoring results show adverse effects on water quality, fish or diving birds.

-30-

R-08-65