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Connecticut River
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Hydro Update: Comment Periods are OPEN for Draft 401 Water Quality Certificates.

NH Draft 401 WQC Published!



On March 21st, the [New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services \(NHDES\)](#) published the draft 401 Water Quality Certifications (WQC) for [Wilder](#), [Bellows Falls](#), and [Vernon](#) dams as part of the hydropower relicensing process. This is your opportunity to read what the state will require of Great River Hydro for the next 30-50 years, and submit your comment! Changes will not be made without community input. **The comment period is open until 4:00pm on April 11th.**

Based on what we highlighted as concerns in our previous [comments](#) to NHDES on Great River Hydro's 401 certificate application, **CRC is pretty disappointed!** We encourage you to [read the draft documents](#) and provide detailed comments before the deadline.

Wilder:

[Read Draft 401 WQC Decision](#)

Bellows Falls:

[Read Draft 401 WQC Decision](#)

Vernon:

[Read Draft 401 WQC Decision](#)

401 WQC: A Guide for New Hampshire Residents

Instructions for Submitting Comments:

Comments will be accepted until **4pm on Friday April 11th, 2025.**

Only written comments will be accepted. Comments may be sent by postal mail, or email (email is preferred). Please include the project name, certification number, your name, organization, mailing address, email address, and telephone number with your submittal.

By Mail:

Water Quality Certification Program (Attention: Daniel Demers)
NHDES Watershed Management Bureau
P.O. Box 95
Concord, NH 03301-0095

By email (preferred):

Send to wqc@des.nh.gov

**If you have questions about the draft certification or have difficulties accessing the files, please contact Daniel Demers, Supervisor of the NHDES Water Quality Certification program at (603) 271-0699 or by email at daniel.j.demers@des.nh.gov.*

Learn About NHDES 401 WQC Process

CRC Comments Submitted to VT DEC



The [VT Department of Environmental Conservation \(VT DEC\)](#) released the draft 401 Water Quality Certifications for **Wilder Dam on December 23rd**, **Bellows Falls Dam on January 21st**, and **Vernon Dam on February 13th**.

Wilder:

[Read Draft 401 WQC Decision](#)

Public Comment deadline was 4:30pm on Feb. 6th

[Read CRC's comments here](#)

Bellows Falls:

[Read Draft 401 WQC Decision](#)

Public Comment deadline was 4:30pm on Feb. 26th

[Read CRC's comments here](#)

Vernon:

[Read Draft 401 WQC Decision](#)

Public Comment Deadline was 4:30pm on March 17th

[Read CRC's Comments here](#)

[More Info Here](#)

CRC Comments Submitted to MassDEP



On February 24th, CRC submitted comments to the [Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection \(MassDEP\)](#) on their [draft 401 Water Quality Certificate \(WQC\)](#) for the two FirstLight Hydroelectric Projects on the CT River mainstem. This certificate is a part of the federal Clean Water Act and helps ensure that our waters are meeting state-level water quality standards.

CRC is disappointed with MassDEP's draft WQC and urge them to incorporate our comments as they finalize the certificate or decide not to grant it for the Turners Falls Dam (P-1889) and the Northfield Mountain Pumped Storage Station (P-2485) as part of the hydropower relicensing process.

[Read CRC's Comments to MassDEP Here](#)

[Read CRC's FERC Comments](#)



If you have not had a chance to read CRC's comments on the FERC (Federal Energy Regulatory Commission) final license applications, you can find them in the FERC docket or [here](#), linked on our website.

As always, if you have questions about the process going forward, CRC's concerns and advocacy, or how to get involved, please get in touch with your local River Steward.

CRC Comments to FERC



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The Connecticut River Conservancy (CRC) restores and advocates for clean water, healthy habitats, and resilient communities to support a diverse and thriving watershed. CRC has been a steward of the Connecticut River and tributary streams since 1952. Through collaborative partnerships in New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, and Connecticut, CRC leads and supports science-based efforts for natural and life-filled rivers from source to sea. Learn more at ctriver.org.