



Through the Federal Power Act, National Park Service recommends provisions to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to mitigate and enhance conservation and recreation resources associated with licensing dams.

Housatonic River, Connecticut

Appalachian Trail Area Restoration & Land Protection

The **Housatonic River Relicensing Project** commenced in 1996 with numerous stakeholders, including the National Park Service, who worked with the licensee Northeast Generation Services Company for two years to develop post licensing plans that involved significant mitigation. The combined hydropower capacity of the five licensed facilities is 114.9 megawatts. The resource implications of these facilities were significant: they abut several segments of the Appalachian Trail (AT), including the AT's longest segment along a river, and Candlewood Lake, Connecticut's largest.

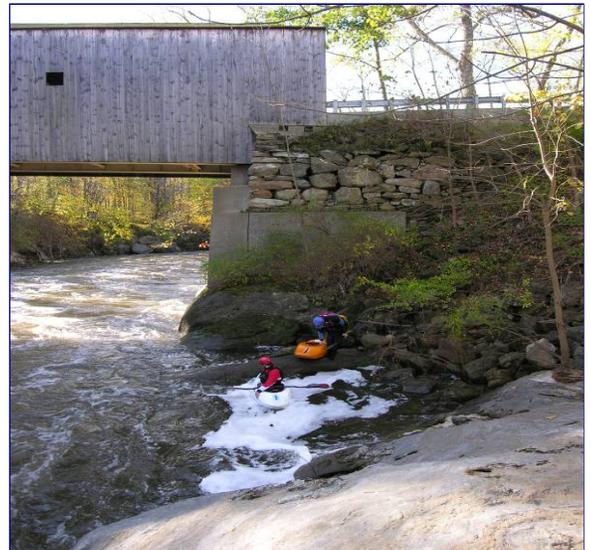
Land Protection and Recreation Enhancements

During 1998, negotiations were completed to allow for the protection of two parcels totaling 57 acres and a scenic easement on two additional parcels of 17 acres, all adjacent to the Housatonic River and the AT. The FERC license order, issued in 2004, initially allowed the licensee to increase an existing parking area adjacent to the AT. However, post licensing efforts by NPS Hydro Assistance Program staff and other stakeholders resulted in the company's decision to remove that parking lot, restore the area and develop a new parking area in an environmentally sound location farther away from the AT. Additional measures included restructuring the release gate at the high falls to allow for aesthetic flows to cover the waterfall, and stringent new controls on vegetation management around Candlewood Lake.

Efforts by stakeholders, affected towns and NPS have resulted in protection of another ecologically significant 750-acre parcel located outside the project boundary. This effort is ongoing and expected to result in a change in Connecticut law that could result in up to 6,000 acres of power company lands being protected statewide.



South from Bulls Bridge towards newly protected NPS lands



Kayakers putting in at Bulls Bridge.

NPS has been invaluable in helping this community see and understand the bigger FERC picture which has been paramount for local decision-making. They have done this through site visits; regular participation in stakeholder meetings and public forums; by directing us to or in many cases handing to us FERC decisions from other projects; and by prompt responses to calls or emails with questions.

Larry Marsicano, Executive Director, Candlewood Lake Authority

National Park Service provides technical assistance on recreation and conservation issues to all participants in Hydropower Licensing Proceedings of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. NPS makes recommendations on recreation access and facilities, instream flows for recreation, and protection for riparian corridors and conservation buffer zones. More information on Hydropower Assistance at <http://www.nps.gov/nccr/programs/hydro/>

For more information about National Park Service project involvement, contact Kevin Mendik, kevin_mendik@nps.gov.