United States Department of the Interior
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
New England Field Office
70 Commercial Street, Suite 300
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

November 6, 2001

REF: FERC Nos. 10675, 10676, 10677, 10678
Consolidated Edison Energy Massachusetts, Inc.

Alfred Nash, P.E.
Kleinschmidt Associates
75 Main Street, P.O. Box 576
Pittsfield, ME 04967

Dear Mr. Nash:

This responds to your October 5, 2001 cover letter and accompanying Minimum Flow and Impoundment Fluctuation Monitoring Plan for the Dwight, Red Bridge, Putts Bridge and Indian Orchard Projects, located on the Chicopee River in Massachusetts. The Plan was developed pursuant to revised terms and conditions submitted by this office and the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (MADFW) for the project exemptions. We have reviewed the plans and have the following comments.

Dwight
Impoundment Fluctuation
Please include the impoundment level set points (stop, start and run) that will be programmed into the PLC system for both the boards-in and boards-out condition. Given the fine level of control that will be needed (within 3 inches with boards up and 5 inches with boards out), it is necessary to specify the equipment’s sensitivity (e.g., +/- 0.1 ft.). Final set-points should take this margin of error into account. Also, please specify how frequently pond level is recorded, and how long the recorded readings are kept on file.

Release Mechanism
Please provide calculations that quantify how much flow the two canal sluice gates can discharge in the event of an impoundment drawdown for dam maintenance/repair. This section of the Plan should also describe how downstream flows will be maintained while the pond is being refilled.

General
Field calibration should occur as soon as possible to verify that the release structures are passing the required minimum flows. This information should be provided to both this office and the MADFW.
Red Bridge

Impoundment Fluctuation
Please include the impoundment level set-points (stop, start and run) that will be programmed into the PLC system for the April 1 to June 30, and July 1 to March 30 time periods. The equipment's sensitivity (e.g., +/- 0.1 ft.) should also be stated. Final set-points should take this margin of error into account. Also, please specify how frequently pond level is recorded, and how long the recorded readings are kept on file.

Release Mechanism
The Plan states that the PLC will continuously monitor pond levels. Please indicate how frequently the system takes readings and adjusts the gate (e.g., every 15 minutes).

We request that you provide calculations for the following:
- The depth of flow necessary to pass 237 cfs over the spillway.
- The amount of flow the canal drain gate and/or the drain gates at the units can pass in the event the pond is drawn down for major repairs or emergencies.

This section of the Plan should also describe how downstream flows will be maintained while the pond is being refilled.

General
Field calibration should occur as soon as possible to verify that the release structures are passing the required minimum flows. This information should be provided to both this office and the MADFW.

Putts Bridge
In the first paragraph, the second sentence should read, "...limits drawdown to 1-ft below the top of the flashboards from April 1 to June 30, and a 2-ft draw down below the top of the flashboards from July 1 to March 30..."

In the summary table on page 11, the dam crest elevation is listed as 203.54, but on the minimum flow gate calculation sheet it is listed as 203.58. Please clarify which elevation is correct.

Impoundment Fluctuation
Please include the impoundment level set-points (stop, start and run) that will be programmed into the PLC system for the April 1 to June 30, and July 1 to March 30 time periods. The equipment's sensitivity (e.g., +/- 0.1 ft.) should also be stated. Final set-points should take this margin of error into account. Also, please specify how frequently pond level is recorded, and how long the recorded readings are kept on file.

Release Mechanism
The Plan states that the PLC will continuously monitor pond levels. Please indicate how frequently the system takes readings and adjusts the gate (e.g., every 15 minutes).
Please provide calculations for the following:
- The depth of spill required to pass 25 cfs over the spillway.
- The amount of flow the low level sluice gate can pass.

This section of the Plan should also describe how downstream flows will be maintained while the pond is being refilled.

General
Field calibration should occur as soon as possible to verify that the release structures are passing the required minimum flows. This information should be provided to both this office and the MADFW.

Indian Orchard
Impoundment Fluctuation
This section needs to be updated to reflect the new fluctuation restrictions. As written, the sensor equipment is only programmed for a 1-ft drawdown. It must accommodate both a 0.5-ft and 1.0-ft drawdown for both board conditions. Please revise this section, and include the impoundment level set-points (stop, start and run) that will be programmed into the PLC system. The equipment's sensitivity (e.g., +/- 0.1 ft.) should also be stated. Final set-points should take this margin of error into account.

We are unclear what is meant by hourly strip charts; does this mean once per hour an impoundment elevation is recorded on a strip chart? Please specify how frequently pond level is recorded, and how long the recorded readings are kept on file.

Release Mechanism
The minimum flow release structures proposed are adequate for periods when the pond level is at or above the dam crest. The Plan needs to describe how bypass flows will be maintained during periods of normal operation when boards are out, or when the pond is drawn down below dam crest for repairs/maintenance activity.

Please include calculations indicating that the canal drain gates and/or the drain gates at the units can pass at least 247 cfs, in the event the pond is drawn down for major repairs or emergencies.

This section of the Plan should also describe how downstream flows will be maintained while the pond is being refilled.

General
Field calibration should occur as soon as possible to verify that the release structures are passing the required minimum flows. This information should be provided to both this office and the MADFW.
Thank you for this opportunity to comment. If you have any questions, please contact Melissa Grader of this office at (207) 781-8364, or e-mail at melissa.grader@fws.gov.

Sincerely,

William J. Neidermyer
Assistant Supervisor
Federal Activities
New England Field Office
cc:  Mark Noyes, CEEMI
     111 Broadway, 16th Floor
     New York, NY 10006
     FERC/DHAC
     Caleb Slater, MAFDW
     Reading File
es:  MGrader:dw:11/6/01:(603)223-2541