LIHI News

JUNE 2024

What's Happening with Pumped Storage at LIHI?

The Pumped Storage Advisory Group has been hard at work. For the last four months, the group has met virtually to discuss the identified impact categories and develop a comprehensive definition of low impact pumped storage, including aquatic ecology, cultural resources, water quality, terrestrial ecology, and socioeconomic and environmental justice.

We've identified the following goals and objectives of the groups as follows:

- Determine the environmental, social, cultural, and tribal resources potentially impacted by the construction and operation of new and existing pumped storage projects in the US;

Championing Responsible Practices and Policies

LIHI is actively providing information in public proceedings that address clean energy and hydropower, sharing with policymakers our experience with hydropower operations that put people and the environment first.

In alignment with our education and outreach efforts, we contributed the following:

- Comments to ***Massachusetts Legislature Joint Committee on Telecommunication, Utilities and Energy on H. 3188*** — An Act Relative to Hydro.
- Testimony to ***Vermont Legislature Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Energy on H. 289*** — An Act Relating to the Renewable Energy Standard.
- Comments to the ***Connecticut Legislature Energy and Technology Committee*** on the Taskforce Report on Connecticut's Hydropower Assets pursuant to Special Act

- Identify stringent but achievable goals that would lead to the least impactful outcomes for each area;
- Define science- and knowledge-based standards for demonstrating that the goals have been met at a project and
- If an acceptable definition can be developed, publish this definition such that it can be used to evaluate the impacts and inform the design of projects looking to be low impact;
- Share progress and findings along the way in the form of op-eds, blog posts, and briefs.

The group will continue to meet in the upcoming months, providing the LIHI Governing Board with essential insights. Their role is pivotal in determining whether LIHI will implement a Pumped Storage Certification program, underscoring the significance of their contributions.

To support this two-year effort, the **William and Flora Hewlett Foundation** has awarded LIHI a grant to aid research, information gathering, and analysis.

For more information, visit lowimpacthydro.org.

A huge thank you to the foundation and participating advisory members for supporting, participating, and investing time and resources to ensure an outcome-oriented, science—and knowledge-based process.

WILLIAM + FLORA Hewlett Foundation

No. 23-8 of 2023 and bills SB. 382/SB. 385 concerning solicitation of run-of-river hydropower.

- Comments to the ***U.S. Green Building Council on LEED v5.***
- Letter to ***FEMA regarding the decision by the Department of Homeland Security*** to divert $364 Million allocated for the National Dam Safety Program under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.
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Meet LIHI's New Fellow, Luiza Lacena

Luiza Lucena is a natural resources scientist and a PhD candidate in Natural Resources. Science and Management at the University of Minnesota – Twin Cities. With eight years of experience, she has been actively involved in advancing sustainability across global value chains while empowering forest communities' livelihoods. Luiza's interdisciplinary approach is instrumental in her investigation of voluntary sustainability standards, aiming to catalyze natural resource conservation and uplift community livelihood.

This summer, Luiza will work as a social and governance analyst fellow. Her focus is on analyzing social and governance criteria used around the globe. Through meta-analyses, gap assessments, and engagement with key stakeholders, Luiza is dedicated to exploring mechanisms for hydropower projects to uphold ethical governance standards and support local communities.

Certified Facility Spotlight: *Pownal Project, Vermont*

The Pownal Dam in Vermont (#149) has come a long way. Less than ten years ago, the dam was nonfunctioning. Though the facility had been an energy source since the early 1800s, first serving as a grist, woolen, and cotton mill, then finally a commercial tannery, operations closed in 1988. In the years since PCB, sediments had flowed down several miles away from an upstream industrial source, leaving the site contaminated.

In 2016, the Town of Pownal and Hoosic River Hydro, the new facility owner, revitalized the project with support from the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources (VANR), the US Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Vermont State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO).

The site enrolled in the EPA Superfund

Celebrating National Rivers Month

National Rivers Month is a time to celebrate the vital waterways that sustain our ecosystems, provide recreation, and support communities across the nation.

This month, we recognize the importance of protecting and preserving our rivers for future generations. From organizing river cleanups and participating in conservation projects to enjoying activities like kayaking and fishing, there are numerous ways to connect with and honor these lifelines of nature.

Program, which focused on land-based contamination, and the EPA Brownfields Program, which focused on wetlands-based contamination at the Project.

With the help of federal funding and renewed developer interests, the public-private partnership completed rehabilitation in 2017.

This groundbreaking project has revitalized the dam and promises a more sustainable future. It has led to cleaner waterways and the production of green energy, significantly aiding the region in its journey towards renewable energy goals.

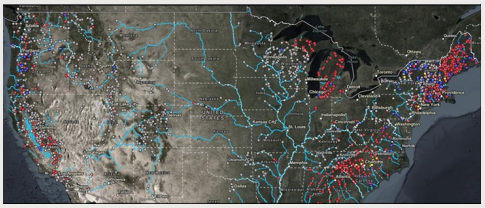
Today, with increased capacity, its operations generate 3.5 million kilowatts per year, providing power to Southern Vermont College and Southwestern Vermont Medical Center in Bennington and throughout the small town of Pownal. The project has created more jobs, reduced energy costs, and increased tax revenue, ushering in new cutting-edge techniques for improving river pollution removal and flow.

Join in the festivities by exploring local rivers, learning about their history and significance, and advocating for policies that ensure their health and vitality.

Here a few activities to check out!

- Organize Your own River cleanup with American Rivers
- Join an Oregon Wild-led Hike
- Sign up for Rivers Days of Action
- Take a Kayak Tour of the Ohio River

Help Improve the National Fish Passage Database



Scientists at Oak Ridge National Laboratory are working with partners at the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the Low Impact Hydropower Institute to create the first **national-scale database of fish passage capabilities at US hydropower projects.**

This database will contain information on fish passage facility **infrastructure, cost, capabilities, and operational schedules** and will be available at no cost to all members of the hydropower community. Users can view, interact with, and download fish passage data using our interactive web map of fish passage at hydropower facilities.

Participation is Simple!

Tell us about the fish passage at your hydropower project. You can provide information in three ways:

- FPD interactive webmap – navigate to and select the feature(s) of interest and provide information via links at the bottom of the pop-up

These benefits are not only an immediate win for the community but will continue to be a resource for future generations.

window
- Stakeholder questionnaire – complete the relevant sections of the stakeholder questionnaire using mobile or desktop devices (~10-45 min)
- Email project team members – contact project members directly to provide database information

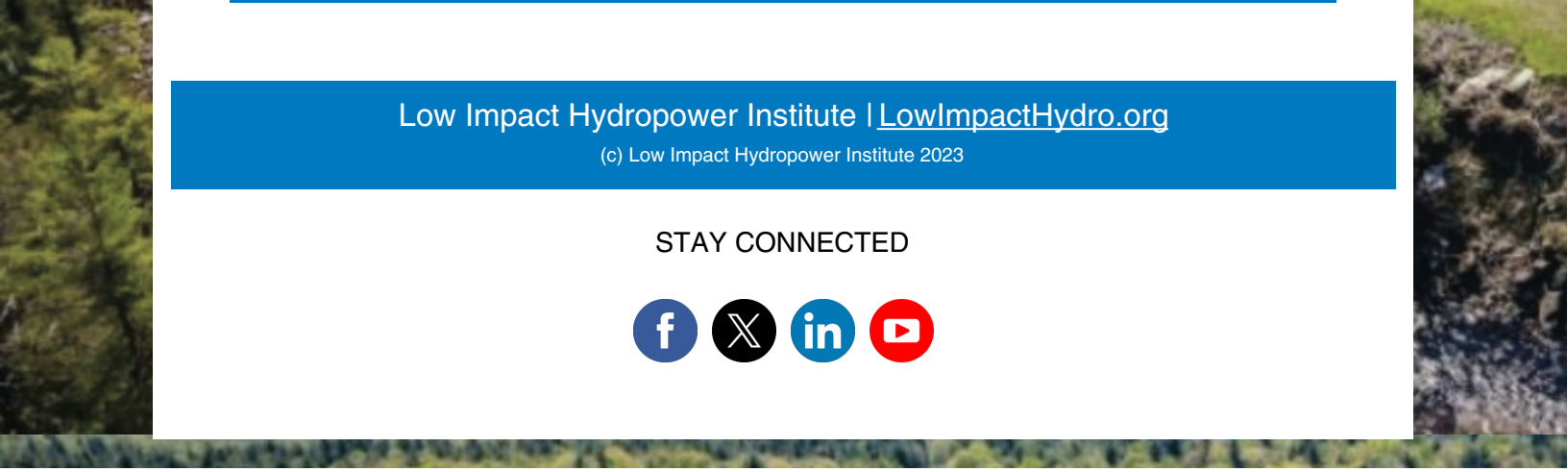
LIHI At a Glance

Green Energy Buyers Build Connections with Low Impact Hydropower

Learn how LIHI, Gravity Renewables, and The Gordon School collaborated to connect energy, education, and the environment through the Pawtucket Hydroelectric Project located in Rhode Island. This is an excellent example of how LIHI provides value and confidence for buyers of green energy.

20 Years of LIHI

We want to share this video to commemorate over two decades of LIHI Certification. After twenty years, we remain dedicated to encouraging the reduction of impacts from hydropower generation through recognition of hydropower that meets our eight criteria and opportunities to earn additional revenue through that recognition. We also remain committed to sharing information on hydropower and its benefits and impacts with consumers. We hope you enjoy and share the video.



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