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**PPL MONTANA, LLC**

PPLM-2301-1904

Magalie R. Salas  
Secretary  
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission  
888 First Street  
Washington, DC 20426

RE: Response to Forest Service comments on PPL Montana's Final Mystic Lake Project Study Plan

March 18, 2005

Dear Secretary Salas:

PPL Montana herein provides a response to March 11, 2005 Forest Service comments on PPL Montana's Final Mystic Lake Project Study Plan (Mystic FSP) filed with the Commission on March 1, 2005. In response to Forest comments on Mystic FSP Study 8, PPL Montana agrees to model flows from the existing 20-year data set to estimate the average daily flow as though the Project were not in place and to provide documentation of the methods for doing this and of the raw data used at each step. In response to Forest comments on Mystic FSP Studies 9 and 10, PPLM will take color-infrared aerial photos of the Mystic Project from the head of Mystic Lake downstream to the Section 23 Bridge as described in the Mystic FSP. PPLM agrees to geo-reference and digitize aerial photos taken within the Forest boundary within a 150 foot bandwidth around the Mystic Lake shoreline high water mark (erosion features along Mystic Lake shoreline will be quantified by type and spatial extent) and within the floodplain of West Rosebud Creek (riparian vegetation type polygons will be delineated and digitized to summarize the amount of riparian vegetation, by vegetation type) downstream to the Forest boundary. PPLM agrees with the Forest that these aerial data will provide valuable information to assist in the design of ground survey efforts during the 2005 field season and that ground survey results will also provide feedback to validate photo interpretation of vegetation and erosion types assigned to individual polygons. This quantitative summary will also provide baseline information necessary for comparison with future photo flights, if it is determined that trends on Forest lands need to be assessed.

PPLM does not propose it necessary, nor have other agencies or stakeholders requested that PPLM digitize aerial photos downstream of the Forest boundary. Other methods will be used to delineate habitats from downstream aerial photos. In addition, private lands downstream of the Forest boundary are off National Forest lands and are outside of the FERC Mystic Project boundary.

PPL Montana has consulted with the Custer Forest, and the Custer Forest concurs (via phone and email confirmation from Jeff Gildehaus on 3/18/05) with this PPL Montana Commission filing letter and with the proposed PPL Montana additions to Mystic FSP Studies 8, 9 and 10 as described above.

We respectfully ask the Commission to include this consultation and these study additions into their Mystic FSP Determination on April 1, 2005. If you have any questions about this letter or PPL Montana's Mystic Lake Project ILP, please contact Jon Jourdonnais at 406-533-3443.

Sincerely,



Peter J Simonich  
Manager Hydro Generation

PJS/JHJ

Cc: This letter will be emailed to all Mystic Project stakeholders and posted to the Mystic Lake Project ILP website at [www.mysticlakeproject.com](http://www.mysticlakeproject.com).