Pajepscot fishway prescriptions

Upstream

Betsy Barber dam ran by DMR for the Sabattus watershed

- upstream passage needed to be 95% if the assumption was that the Sabattus watershed was the only usable habitat for alewives\

- also 95% if the assumption is alewives will be utilizing the little Androscoggin

Downstream

NMFS prescription - Assertive that a downstream guide boom is not going to do anything for – juv or adult alosines, adult river herring or eels – but they do not really feel like they have good leverage to advocate hard for this.

USFWS is also discrediting the use of the guide boom – screening of the francis units, closing them off to fish, no angled structure

There is a 2015 report from Lockwood which shows that the guide boom was not effective at directing fish out of the turbines

Immediate survival vs overall survival or lifecycle survival – we want to compare apples to apples, there are some filings where NMFS Jeff has been correcting these terms with Brookfields findings

NMFS is still making a decision on which angled racks – they will prescribe them but are talking about spacing.

Migration windows

Juv shad July 15 – Nov 30

Adult DS shad June 1 – July 3

DS blueback herring

Eels

Upstream June 1 – Oct 31 <- this is based on the penob but this is later than the eastern part of the state

DS August 15 – Nov 15

Timing

Prescription language “1 lift per hour” – we should be careful with this so that it can be adjusted – we don’t want to be bound to this and then if there is a big charge of fish the frequency can be adjusted.

Overnight operations – at Milford they were not getting any ATS at night but they were lifting eels that they could not really enumerate and sea lamprey. So nighttime operations should be considered – the time of day could be left ambiguous – but everyone agrees it should extend past 5 pm, we know we get pulses of fish in the evenings and early mornings.

NMFS Performance standards and request for new passage

Upon license issuance they have 2 years to design and build the entrance gate

Year 2 they begin testing new operations plus the entrance gate

If they meet performance standards on year 1 – they can be done or adaptive consultation to make the passage better

3 years of Testing – ASH, river herring, ATS – they would all have performance standards, ATS too low of abundance to test currently.

Upon a modification of the fishway the applicant can test for 3 years

Implementation of any new fishway would be year 7

USFWS

2 years of a temp eel ramp deployments to test where the eels are going and congregating and trying to pass. There should be language about deploying more temp eelways in case the testing does not uncover any.

then the prescribe potentially multiple permanent eelways

There is specific language that says they do not want implementation of the eelways at Pajep to be tied to Brunswick.

Stranding

Stranding pool statement is very vague – they say they will remediate stranding if it occurs- their own study identified multiple stranding pools – shouldn’t we recommend that they fill them in? A better action would be to create egress out of those pools – or operational changes so that this cannot occur.

We should be careful with thin plan because MDEP will find it hard to actually permit putting fill in the resource just for the purpose of filling some pools – there would be have to be major justification by the fish agencies for us to do this, likely documentation of several instances in order to do this– depending on how much fill there is this could trigger in Lieu fee which is a big cost for the applicant. it could be done but might be better to find a different way to address the stranding.

Fishway prescription and the WQC

Kathy asked to NMFS – “the operations and maintenance plan will be submitted annually? As needed? in consultation and coordination with the resource agencies” if this language can be included in the WQC related to the operations and maintenance document – this sort of bounds the licensee to reconsult with the agencies on fisheries operations and maintenance – it allows flexibility to the fishway prescription and makes it less of a one and done type thing.

Proposing hourly avg ds flow and hourly avg pond elevation? They use the certification