

July 6, 2026

Debbie-Anne A. Reese, Secretary
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
888 First Street, N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20426

Electronically Filed

**RE: Ripogenus Project (FERC P-2572-141) and Penobscot Mills Project (P-2458-273)
Caribou and Chesuncook Lake Camp Association (CCLCA) Response to
GLHA June 2, 2026 Comment Letter**

Dear Secretary Reese:

The Caribou and Chesuncook Lake Camp Associations (CCLCA) hereby files with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) the following responses to comments provided by Great Lakes Hydro America, LLC on June 2, 2026 for the Ripogenus Hydroelectric Project (P-2572) and the Penobscot Mills Hydroelectric Project (P-2458), collectively the “Projects”.

The GLHA June 2, 2026 filing responds to requests made by the CCLCA during the iterative CHEOPS modeling process (which ended in 2025) and to CCLCA comments provided in 2025 on the *Draft Low Inflow Protocol* and the *Draft Operations and Compliance Monitoring Plan*. The GLHA filing specifically responds to CCLCA’s submissions to FERC dated March 20, 2025 (14 months ago), June 24, 2025 (11 months ago), June 26, 2025 (11 months ago), and September 3, 2025 (9 months ago).

Our June 24, 2025 letter in particular asked multiple questions about the CHEOPS model during the process. Having these questions finally answered is certainly helpful; submitting the answers and requested data 11 months after our request, and many months after the iterative process ended, reflects a lack of cooperation and transparency.

Accordingly, our Conceptual Site Model (CSM) developed at the project commencement, and presented in part in this letter, relies on historical data and does not rely on simulated data from the CHEOPS model.

We thank FERC for facilitating the CHEOPS modeling process and workshops. They were educational, informative and illustrative of how GLHA operates the connected Ripogenus/Penobscot Mills hydroelectric systems.

Please note for this submittal that use of the word “Ripogenus”, “RIP” and “RIP Impoundment” refers to the entirety of the interconnected lakes: Ripogenus, Chesuncook and Caribou Lakes.

1.0 THE SETTING

The RIP Impoundment is the 3rd largest lake in Maine.

Usable Storage Capacity:	Upstream Ponds	269,170 acre-feet (20% of system)
	Ripogenus	688,705 acre-feet (51% of system)
	North Twin	<u>389,725</u> acre-feet (29% of system)

TOTAL 1,347,600 acre-feet

The Upstream Ponds (FERC No. 2634) flow into the Ripogenus Impoundment controlled by RIP Dam. Below Rip Dam, McKay Station discharges into the West Branch Penobscot River. The West Branch flows several miles before reaching the North Twin Impoundment controlled by North Twin Dam. Based on watershed size and usable storage capacity we roughly estimate that releases from RIP comprise approximately 2/3 of the flow into the much smaller North Twin impoundment.

2.0 THE ISSUE

The RIP Impoundment has experienced increased lake drawdowns since GLHA became the Licensee.

	<u>GNP 1970-85</u>	<u>GLHA 2011-22</u>
Ice-out Drawdown (May 1 – May 31):	1.0 feet	3.4 feet
Growing Season Drawdown (May 1 – Oct. 1)	3.45 feet	10.56 feet
Winter Drawdown:	16.5 feet	>20 feet

The GNP 1970-1985 data are representative of operations before recreation flow requirements were implemented. The 1996 license recreation flow requirements were managed by GNP without increasing RIP impoundment summer drawdown levels. GNP met the recreation flow requirements by maintaining sufficient storage in RIP until mid-June. The above data are from GLHA’s ISR Report (20230424-5265). The data show that RIP Impoundment drawdown during

the growing season has increased 300% under GLHA's operation, from an average of 3.45 feet to 10.56 feet.

There have been two major project changes during the 1996 -2026 licensing period. First, the license was transferred in 2002 from GNP to GLHA. Second, the two paper mills closed in 2008 and 2014: power and process water were no longer required to run the mill.

GLHA now sells power to the electric grid. GNP's former operation of stable water levels to provide the mill has been replaced by GLHA's peaking/ramping operations and increased lake drawdowns. Recreation season drawdowns during average and wet years of 10.56 feet were not consistent with GNP's operation. That would have jeopardized mill operations.

GLHA purchased a license with no elevation restrictions and can lower the RIP Impoundment essentially at will. Storage depletion is now a regular occurrence during wet, average **and** drought years, as documented later in this letter. The peaking/ramping flows associated with the increased drawdown have had significant detrimental environmental effects.

The recent report prepared by Trout Unlimited and titled *West Branch Penobscot River: Angler Survey and Economic Assessment 2025* (20260127-5253) documents how the hydropower operations have directly negatively impacted the cold water fishery and calculates the associated economic impacts. The *Angler Survey* data indicate that, although the catch per unit effort (CPUE) has increased, only 7% of fish caught met legal size criteria. The primary recommendation of this report was to refine hydropower operations relating to peaking and flow variability.

The CCLCA has presented a reasoned approach to managing the RIP Impoundment that is based upon GNP's 1991 Water Use Plan, 1996 Water Use Model, and mill operations until 2008. The CCLCA proposal does not propose lake drawdown **limits**; it presents a lake drawdown **schedule**.

GLHA has stated in the FLA as a Proposed PM&E Measure that they will:

“Continue to operate the Ripogenus Project for generation and seasonal storage and maintain Ripogenus impoundment elevations pursuant to the existing system-wide rule curve for the west Branch system.”

Other than the Rule Curve **graph**, GLHA has submitted **no tables or elevation numbers** that illustrate a monthly schedule for the 3 component impoundments (RIP, N. Twin, Upstream Ponds) that define the actual rule curve graph. We understand the Licensees desire to have a qualitative license for RIP with no elevation schedule. We note the current license does not seem to **require** compliance with the system-wide rule curve although GNP generally adhered to

it, as it was in their best business interest. GLHA's business interest is different (see Rule #2 below).

For the RIP Impoundment, the issue is defining license conditions that ensure compliance with the existing System-Wide Rule Curve while maintaining stable water levels across both Projects.

3.0 CCLCA's CONCEPTUAL SITE MODEL (CSM)

The CCLCA began development a conceptual site model (CSM) early in the relicensing process and prior to the January 2024 *Operation Model Technical Workshop*. The purpose was to develop a technical understanding of the projects hydro system operating plan in order to provide meaningful input during the FERC relicensing process. We compiled and reviewed available historic flow and elevation data, including the GNP's 1991 Water Use Plan, the 1996 FERC FEIS and GNP's 1996 Water Use Model. Based on that, we had a framework for submitting our request for operation model runs.

We relied on GLHA and GNP historical data in our model request and in preparation of all our filings to FERC. We have not relied on simulated data from the CHEOPS model, but found it very informative and a worthwhile exercise. We have only used historical data from GNP and GLHA to provide evidence that it is possible to maintain safe and reasonable lake levels.

Operations Model Technical Workshop. The January 2024 *Operations Model Technical Workshop* began with the information that GLHA has not and is not intending to use the CHEOPS model as part of their operations. The model was being used solely for the relicensing process and for the Technical Workshop.

The model was presented as an opportunity to submit model run(s) requests to establish upper and lower flow benchmarks and evaluate parameter sensitivity. So, the operations model served essentially as an educational workshop, mediation tool and parameter sensitivity analysis, and not as an exact, predictive, operations model to run GLHA's system.

Discussion of the System-Wide Rule Curve throughout the 2-day workshop was quite interesting. The licensee claimed at various times, and depending on who you asked, that there was no rule curve, they operated by their own rule curve, they consulted the existing System-Wide Rule Curve, or there is a rule curve but no requirement to comply with it. Fortunately, that issue has been resolved. GLHA has committed to operate "*pursuant to the existing System-Wide Rule Curve*".

Over the course of the 2-day workshop we learned of two general operating rules that apply to hydropower operations at the RIP Impoundment. Rule #1 applies to all hydropower sites. Rule #2 applies only to the RIP Impoundment because the current license has no elevation restrictions.

RULE #1: GLHA makes Money by Releasing Water, not by Storing it.

RULE #2: Release, Drain, and then Pray for Rain.

Modeling experience has taught me to believe **historical** recorded data (in this case, lake elevations and flows) and be skeptical of **simulated** data unless it is calibrated and validated. Regulatory decisions of the magnitude involved in this relicensing should, wherever possible, not be based on simulated data or simulated projections when accurate historical data is available.

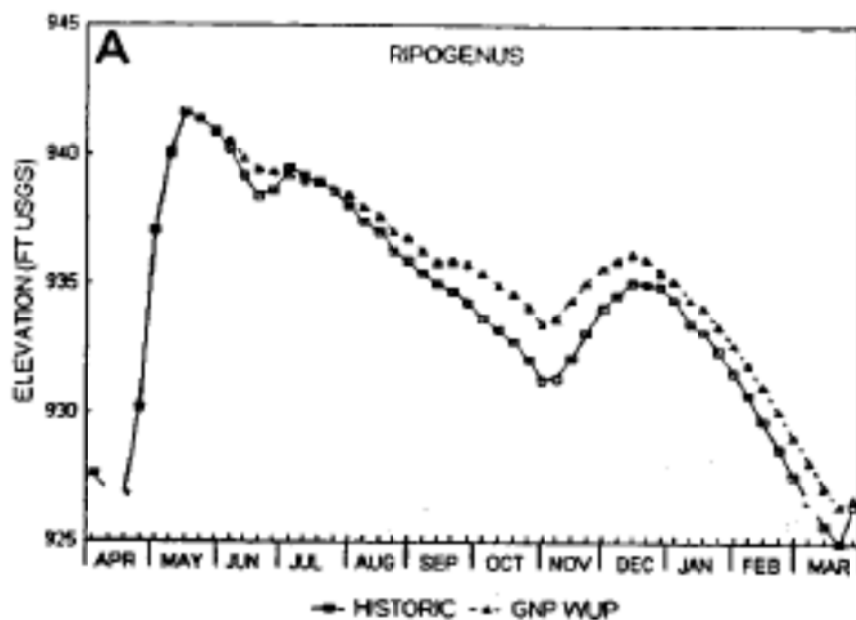
For this exercise, reviewing input data files for the “proprietary” CHEOPS excel spreadsheet model was not allowed. Requests for copies of the basic geographic data basic input files (storage volumes, area capacity volumes, etc.) were denied during the workshop, and during subsequent email requests. Some of our requested data was finally provided in GLHA’s June 2, 2026 filing. GLHA has provided no quantitative error analysis or uncertainty analysis of the model, further limiting CCLCA’s review.

In regards to model calibration, verification and validation: we cannot render an opinion on model validation because the HDR model is “proprietary”. We were not allowed to review the input data files or output data files in tabular format. The calibration run graphs appear to reasonably simulate the overall baseline and historical data for the 2001 – 2022 period of record according to the elevation graphs provided for some scenarios.

RIP Historical Impoundment Elevations. Several graphs are presented below which illustrate historical observed Ripogenus elevations for three average or average-wet years: 1982, 2009 and 2014.

The first graph of historical elevations is from GNP’s 1996 Water Use Model. The graph is a portion of Figure D-7 and shows weekly average RIP Impoundment elevations for the year 1982, an “average” hydrologic year. The graph shows both historic and simulated elevations. Maximum impoundment elevation was 941.6 msl in late May; the elevation in mid-September was approximately 937 msl (4.6 feet drawdown). Historic and simulated elevations were very close over the growing/recreation season. The winter drawdown level was approximately elevation 925 msl in mid-March. This historical graph closely resembles the CCLCA proposal. This graph represents operations before recreation flow requirements.

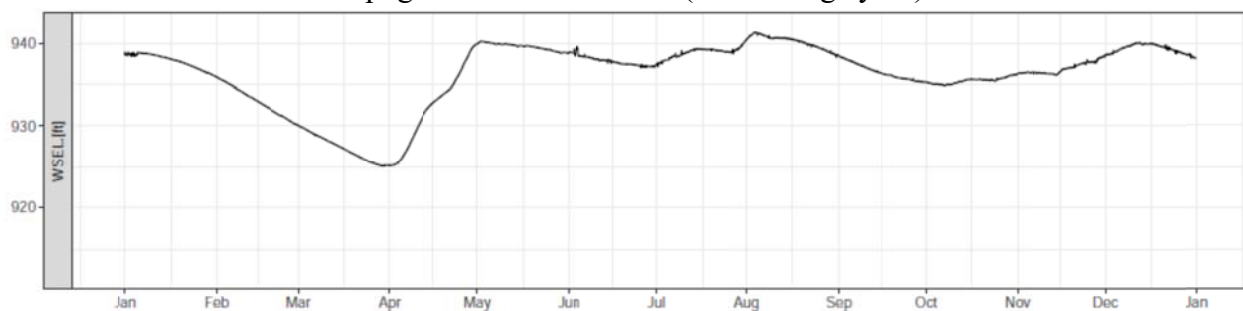
Ripogenus Elevation 1982 (average hydrologic year)



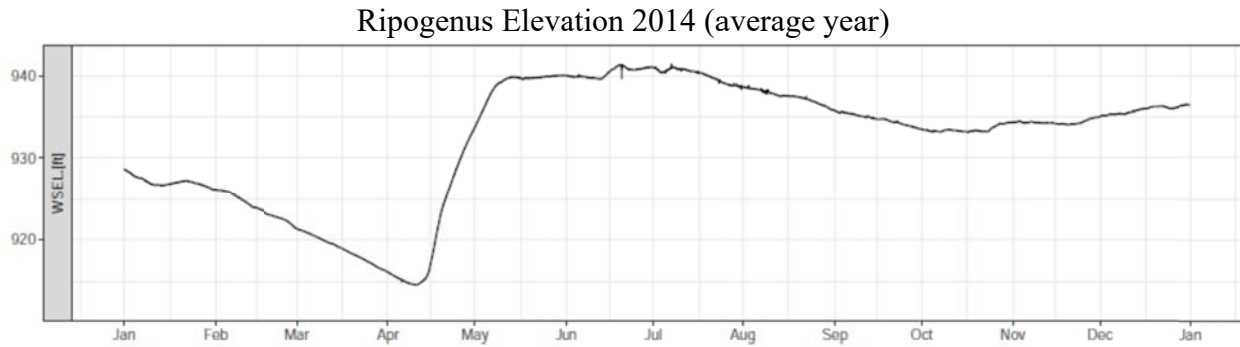
The two graphs below are from the 2024 ISR report and illustrate historical observed Ripogenus elevations for the years **2009 (wet-average year)** and **2014 (average year)**. These two graphs represent GLHA operations with recreation flows 8.5 hours daily (the proposed license reduces recreation flows to 6.5 hours daily).

In 2009, elevation 940.1 was reached in early May and RIP was maintained above elevation 935.0 until early October. The winter drawdown reached elevation 925.0 in late March.

Ripogenus Elevation 2009 (wet-average year)



In 2014, as shown below, elevation 940.1 was reached in late May and RIP was maintained above elevation 935.0 until mid-September. The winter drawdown reached elevation 925.0 in mid-February and lowered to approximately elevation 915.0 in mid-April. The 2009 and 2014 historical graphs support the CCLCA proposal.



Minimum Outflow from RIP at McKay Station. Our CSM initially evaluated 2,000 cfs as a minimum outflow from McKay Station to establish an upper benchmark for average and wet years. Ultimately, after reviewing historical data and the various simulations, we support GLHA’s proposed PM&E measure of a year-round minimum outflow of 1,700 cfs at McKay for average and wet years. The minimum flows at McKay under the current license are 1,000 cfs (9/16-10/14), 1,422 cfs (10/15-11/15), >1,422 cfs (11/16-6/7) and 1,000 cfs (6/8-10/14). We concur with GLHA’s opinion in Comment 15 that states:

“flow of 1,700 cfs is expected to greatly reduce the effects of changes in unit operation as fluctuations in river levels and the amount of habitat exposed would be reduced. GLHA’s proposal for a year-round flow of 1,700 cfs downstream of McKay Station would maintain the channel wetted from bank to bank.”

Operating at 1,700 cfs, according to our reading of the turbine curves, is an efficient operating mode with turbine 1 and 2 each releasing approximately 850 cfs (rated at approx. 1,100 cfs ea.). By increasing the minimum flow to 1,700 cfs under the new license, GLHA will, by definition, be reducing the overall operating range, lowering the upper operating range, and thereby decreasing the frequency and amplitude of ramping flows.

Initiation of Low Flow Protocol. The proposed minimum outflow of 1,700 cfs is well below the average annual inflow for average and wet years for the modeled period of record (POR) of 2001 – 2022. The table below is from the April 2023 ISR and ranks the years from 2001 – 2022 based on average annual inflow.

Table 12. 2001 – 2022 Water year classification based on calculated inflow to Ripogenus Project

Sorted Hydrology Ranking			
Year	Average Annual Inflow (cfs)	Rank	Description
2021	1,579	22	Dryest
2001	1,735	21	Dry
2002	1,824	20	Dry
2016	2,072	19	Dry
2004	2,139	18	Dry
2020	2,316	17	Dry
2015	2,320	16	Dry-Average
2012	2,377	15	Dry-Average
2013	2,502	14	Dry-Average
2003	2,588	13	Dry-Average
2018	2,616	12	Average
2010	2,669	11	Average
2014	2,690	10	Average
2022	2,741	9	Wet-Average
2007	2,956	8	Wet-Average
2009	2,981	7	Wet-Average
2017	2,994	6	Wet-Average
2006	3,113	5	Wet
2019	3,173	4	Wet
2008	3,409	3	Wet
2011	3,505	2	Wet
2005	3,554	1	Wettest

The average annual inflow for the average and wet years in the modeled POR ranged from approximately 2,377 cfs (2012) to 3,554 cfs (2005).

The FLA proposes no elevation or flow threshold that would initiate the Low Inflow Protocol. Based on GLHA’s proposed minimum flow of 1,700 cfs, and their regular calculation of “available water”, it seems logical that the low inflow protocol will be initiated when prolonged pumping at 1,700 cfs cannot maintain RIP impoundment levels, provided the system was operating within the System-Wide Rule Curve (i.e. the system had adequate storage) PRIOR to reducing the flow to 1,700 cfs. Reducing the available water through storage depletion cannot be a strategy used to initiate the low inflow protocol.

Storage Depletion. Our CSM minimum flow evaluation assumes **steady** flow at 1,700 cfs. As we have documented during the relicensing process, GLHA currently operates in a peaking/ramping mode during wet, average **and dry years**. The most recent example of GLHA peaking flows during a drought was January 2026 during a recognized drought when they claimed to be “implementing water conservation measures” (20260319-5144, page 1).

The table below was included in the GLHA March 19, 2026 letter to FERC re: “*Minimum Flow Reductions due to Severe Drought Conditions*”. The two excerpts show two time periods of clear examples of storage depletion in December 2025 and January 2026. GLHA’s peaking pattern at RIP during a “severe drought” included increasing the total flow from 1,275 (one turbine) up to a total flow up to 3,204 cfs (all three turbines). We note that total flow out of North Twin reached a maximum total daily flow of 4,080 cfs during this period (License requires 2,000 cfs). This is the exact opposite of “implementing water conservation measures”. But it is not a License violation.

Date	Ripogenus Project		Penobscot	
	McKay / Ripogenus		North Twin	
	Total Flow (cfs)	Elevation (ft. USGS)	Total Flow (cfs)	Elevation (ft. USGS)
November 25, 2025	1,233	927.25	1,944	486.59
November 26, 2025	1,552	927.22	1,945	486.57
November 27, 2025	1,753	927.19	1,952	486.58
November 28, 2025	1,747	927.14	1,914	486.57
November 29, 2025	1,752	927.11	1,921	486.62
November 30, 2025	1,752	926.96	1,924	486.56
December 1, 2025	1,751	926.96	1,925	486.63
December 2, 2025	1,752	926.86	1,926	486.59
December 3, 2025	1,751	926.82	1,928	486.62
December 4, 2025	2,004	926.76	2,430	486.64
December 5, 2025	1,989	926.62	2,563	486.52
December 6, 2025	1,797	926.49	2,561	486.41
December 7, 2025	1,805	926.41	2,560	486.36
December 8, 2025	2,019	926.33	2,561	486.32
December 9, 2025	2,348	926.18	2,560	486.24
December 10, 2025	1,444	926.05	2,558	486.21
December 11, 2025	1,280	926.01	2,558	486.23
December 12, 2025	1,279	925.92	2,557	486.16
December 13, 2025	1,279	925.84	2,557	486.05
December 14, 2025	1,283	925.78	2,555	485.95
December 15, 2025	2,320	925.64	2,553	485.85
December 16, 2025	2,275	925.45	2,552	485.77
December 17, 2025	1,277	925.43	2,132	485.78
December 18, 2025	1,278	925.46	1,928	485.81

January 17, 2026	1,275	924.59	1,935	485.96
January 18, 2026	1,275	924.56	1,934	485.96
January 19, 2026	2,341	924.46	2,513	485.91
January 20, 2026	2,344	920.23	2,723	485.22
January 21, 2026	2,343	924.16	2,744	485.84
January 22, 2026	1,275	924.07	2,161	485.87
January 23, 2026	1,490	924.03	2,468	485.87
January 24, 2026	2,405	923.89	2,768	485.79
January 25, 2026	2,733	923.67	2,899	485.67
January 26, 2026	2,824	923.49	2,853	485.69
January 27, 2026	3,204	923.21	3,537	485.68
January 28, 2026	3,200	922.92	4,080	485.62
January 29, 2026	3,196	922.63	4,077	485.59
January 30, 2026	3,192	922.33	4,076	485.55
January 31, 2026	2,268	922.09	4,076	485.48
February 1, 2026	1,270	921.99	4,059	485.36
February 2, 2026	1,268	921.91	2,724	485.22
February 3, 2026	1,268	921.82	1,898	485.14

RIP elevations were steadily dropping during this period while the North Twin elevation was held steady at elev. 486 to 485 msl. This is an example of how GLHA monetizes the drought – during the winter of 2025/26 they released far more water than necessary to meet any license condition (see Rule #1). This was not considered a license violation because the region is in a drought (and RIP has no elevation restrictions). GLHA simply concluded in March 2026, after depleting storage (“next year’s water”) during winter 2025/26, that they could not meet the Article 402 aquatic habitat flows as of March 7, 2026, continuing until early May 2026.

In our opinion, the Licensee is expert at operating this system. They hold the elevation of North Twin within +/- 0.5 feet of target for months at a time in the summer. They know the effects of ramping flows on lake drawdowns. We know the Licensee has the expertise to operate the entire system to avoid storage depletion in the RIP impoundment as well, but understand it will require license restrictions in the new license.

RIP Elevation Schedule. Our CSM concludes that maintaining close to full storage in RIP, i.e. elev. 940.1 until June 15th, provides the necessary storage to meet the downstream flow and elevation requirements consistent with the System-Wide Rule Curve for wet and average years. GLHA’s average drawdown in May of 3.4 feet for the period 2011-2022 does not generally comply with the System-Wide Rule Curve. Our proposed elevation of 940.1 msl (1.5 feet below full pool) at RIP until mid-June for average/wet years is consistent with GNP’s historical average drawdown of 1.0 feet on May 31st. **Elevation Target #1 is elev. 940.1 on June 15 (1.5 feet below full pool) for average and wet years.**

Maintaining the RIP elevation at 940.1 until mid-June is critical. Historical and simulated data indicate that beginning significant summer drawdown in May greatly increases the risk of not meeting the System-Wide Rule Curve storage targets over the summer season.

For example, the Caribou Lake boat launch is only usable to elevation 936.7 (4.9 feet below full pool of 941.6), cannot be lowered further (20240930-5071 FLA Ex. E, pg. E-597), and is the only legal public access point on Caribou Lake. Under GNP operation, the boat launch was usable during the entire summer season (Labor Day to Memorial Day) in wet and average years. Under GLHA's current operation (average 10.56 feet drawdown May 1 – Oct. 1) the Caribou Lake boat launch is not usable for a large part of the boating season during wet and average years, resulting in no direct legal public access to the lake. We understand that during a dry year, under a Low Inflow Protocol, that the elevation will drop below 936.7 before September, making the boat launch unusable. **Elevation Target #2 is elevation 936.7 on September 15 (4.9 feet below full pool) for average and wet years.**

Our proposal is not a drawdown limit or a partial drawdown limit for the RIP Impoundment (in the context those terms were used in FERC's 1996 FEIS). Our proposal is a drawdown schedule, with accompanying license requirements that GLHA and the NGO's have evaluated, modified and largely agreed to (minimum flows and recreation flows).

Status of Conceptual Site Model. The CCLCA's CSM relied on historical data and reports to reach our conclusions. The CHEOPS model was informative, but not determinative. We are not requesting additional model runs.

Further, on January 22, 2026 MEPRO (4 unified rafting companies) submitted a FERC filing (20260122-5147) presenting their updated whitewater flow proposal. The CCLCA has worked closely with MEPRO and, from the beginning, incorporated their recommendations and proposed whitewater flow schedule into our CHEOPS model runs. MEPRO's January 2026 filing proposes a 2 hour reduction in the daily flow duration. Their request will change the current 8:30 am – 5:00 pm schedule to 8:30 am – 3:00 pm. This represents a **23% reduction** in the daily recreation flow requirement. This significant change provides operational flexibility to GLHA and positive environmental benefits. During high inflow periods in May and June, this provides 2 additional hours for increased flow to prevent spillage and control RIP elevations, if needed. During low inflow periods, this allows 2 additional hours of reduced flow at 1,700 cfs to maintain RIP storage levels and elevation, if needed.

As of July 4, 2026, GLHA has not responded to the MEPRO January 22, 2026 filing. GLHA's June 22, 2026 comment letter does not address MEPRO's January 22, 2026 filing. The CHEOPS simulation model results requested by CCLCA in 2025, and commented on by GLHA on June 2, 2026, no longer represent the proposed conditions, based on the reduction in the

recreation flows MEPRO filed in January 2026. Our sensitivity analysis showed that reducing the recreation flows has a measurable benefit, **if** the system is operating within the existing System-Wide Rule Curve.

4.0 SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

Our CSM, contained specific questions/goals relative to the CHEOPS Model (with conclusions shown in **Red**):

1. Does the CHEOPS Model reasonably simulate lake elevations and flows per CCLCA's model requests? **YES**
2. Does the Model reasonably simulate power generation (the metric chosen by GLHA for comparison to Baseline) and indicate that the CCLCA model request has no significant impact on power generation? **YES**
3. (a) Did GLHA use an independent, peer reviewed, publicly available model? **NO**
(b) Did GLHA provide basic geographic data to the CCLCA to allow informative input during the iterative modeling process? **NO**
(c) Did GLHA manipulate the CCLCA's model request by altering the RIP Impoundment target fill elevation? **YES**
(d) Does the model present tabular and graphical data that would demonstrate compliance with the System-Wide Rule Curve for the period 2001-2022? **NO**
4. (a) Are the conclusions reached by CCLCA's CSM consistent with other filings? **YES**

We ask that FERC judge GLHA's actions and data (i.e. elevations and flows) before accepting their words. Their actions during the "severe drought" as described in this letter, do not comport with their words.

5.0 RESPONSE TO GLHA COMMENTS

The following numbered comments correspond to the numbered comments in GLHA's June 2, 2026 Response to Comment filing.

Comment #1. This relates to AIR #2 and the Low Inflow Protocol. GLHA filed the Draft Low Inflow Protocol on July 28, 2025. CCLCA filed comments on September 2, 2025 and March 27, 2026. **We intend to file additional comments.**

Comment #2. CCLCA's comments in AIR #5 regarding the iterative modeling process were noted. **No further response is planned.**

Comment #3. CCLCA's comments in AIR #7, #8, #9 regarding annual power generation numbers was explained in further detail. GLHA's use of the generation numbers is misleading to this writer. **We intend to file additional comments.**

Comment #4. This relates to AIR #5 and CCLA's request for CHEOPS model numerical input data, primarily storage volumes for each foot of elevation. We had estimated values from the storage volume curves and area capacity curves. In this response, GLHA provides their actual data input values. This satisfies part of our effort to use the same data as the Licensee. **No further response is planned.**

Comment #5. This relates to CCLCA stating that we support use of the existing System-Wide Rule Curve for average and wet years with the understanding that a dry year, or "Low Inflow" plan, is needed. CCLCA's model was presented as an average/wet year lake drawdown schedule. This is exactly why a Low Inflow Protocol must be part of a new license. **We intend to file additional comments.**

Comment #6. This relates to CCLCA's request about how the model results were presented. The period of record for the simulation was 1999 – 2021 and includes dry, average and wet years. We were not requesting the simulation be redone, or intend to say all the results were useless. We were saying some of the exceedance % calculations were biased.. **No further response is planned.**

Comment #7. This relates to CCLCA's presentation of our *Operations Model Error Analysis and Uncertainty Analysis* as no such quantitative analysis was performed by GLHA. We accept the first paragraph of GLHA's response. Specific comments 1 and 2 no longer represent the proposed recreation flow conditions. **No further response is planned.**

Comment #8. This comment relates to CCLCA's use of power generation numbers in our error analysis. GLHA provides a description of all the factors that go into analyzing the power generation numbers. In the end, GLHA provides no numerical error estimate of their proprietary model and does not allow review of input data files. This makes model verification and validation impossible for a reviewer. **No further response is planned.**

Comment #9. This relates to a request for GLHA to provide additional analysis on the Scenario 26 results. Since the Scenario 26 model run no longer represents the proposed recreation flow conditions, this is a moot point. **No further response is planned.**

Comment #10. This relates to a CCLCA June 26, 2025 one-page filing to correct two typos in the CCLCA June 24th filing (2 days prior). **No further response is planned.**

Comment #11. This relates to CCLCA's comments on the Draft Operations and Compliance Monitoring Plan. The **1st paragraph** of GLHA's response discusses the no-longer-representative model. We do not understand the **2nd paragraph** re: "downstream flow requirements". The downstream flow requirements are as they exist now: the recreation flows, the RIP minimum flow of 1,700 cfs, leakage of 100 cfs, and 2,000 cfs from N. Twin.

The **3rd paragraph** and graph discuss the Total Available Water concept as contained in the 1991 Water Use Plan. The **4th paragraph** discusses the fact that CCLCA's model request for average and wet years doesn't always work for dry years. The Scenario 25 and Scenario 26 model runs that GLHA bases their opinion on no longer represent the proposed recreation flow conditions.

In the **5th paragraph** GLHA states that they have "*incorporated proposed boat launch enhancements to improve usability at varying impoundment elevations*". On page 10 of this letter CCLCA discusses the Caribou Lake Boat Launch whose usability can't be improved; the launch site is simply too shallow and the launch is only usable to elevation 936.7. GLHA's mode of operation has left this launch unusable for large portions of the boating season due to excessive lake drawdown. GNP's historical mode of operation kept it usable for the boating season.

The **6th paragraph** responds to CCLCA's request that the loon nesting platforms be located in coordination with the lake elevation schedule. **We intend to file additional comments.**

Comment #12. This relates to CCLCA's comments on the Draft Low Inflow Protocol and its deficiencies. The draft protocol contains no numerical quantitative elevations, flows or water use plans. GLHA's response makes no mention of RIP elevation or storage controls. **We intend to file additional comments.**

Comment #13. This relates to CCLCA's question regarding historical and current usable storage capacities. GLHA has provided answers to our questions and a table that list the changes in current storage. We have updated our CSM with this data. **We intend to file additional comments.**

Comment #14. This relates to CCLCA’s multiple filings and emails requesting the CHEOPS **model input data files** that define the storage volumes by foot in RIP and North Twin. The GLHA letter answered several questions regarding the data sources for the storage volume curves, bathymetric maps, and drawdown calculations.

One data source we have requested since the January 2024 *Operations Model Technical Workshop* are the tabular input data files from the Physical Settings section of the CHEOPS model that specify the **storage volume by foot of elevation** in the RIP and North Twin impoundments. We have used the storage volume curves to estimate these values in our CSM, but requested the actual tabular input data in order to be consistent with GLHA’s analysis. On September 5, 2025 we emailed HDR requesting the data, as part of the “iterative” modeling process. After no response for a month, we emailed HDR again on October 3, 2025 repeating the request. On October 9, 2025 we received the following response from HDR:

“GLHA is working on compiling the requested data and anticipates being able to provide the requested data soon. We appreciate your patience, as the key staff needed to compile this data were out of the office for a few weeks for work and personal matters.”

We never received another response. We never received the data until the GLHA June 2, 2026 filing. The input data requested was part of the model prepared by HDR in 2024. There was no “compiling” required by GLHA key staff in 2025. Why would GLHA staff be working on their independent consultant’s proprietary model? The geographic data requested is not proprietary. The requested data file was attached to GLHA’s June 2, 2026 filing. Hence, the data we requested during the modeling time period was provided after the modeling window was closed. **No further response is planned.**

Comment #15. This relates to several CCLCA comments on the Draft Low Inflow Protocol. GLHA’s response provides descriptions of the available water curve, ramping, whitewater flow timing, flow travel time, and the CCLCA model. CCLCA’s comments on the available water curve and ramping requirements will be included in additional comments to the Low Inflow Protocol and other plans. GLHA’s comment on the “whitewater flow timing” (i.e. recreation flow) still assumes 8.5 hours per day, as opposed to the 6.5 hours per day proposed by MEPRO in January 2026. GLHA does acknowledge MEPRO’s January 2026 filing and state in their June 2, 2026 filing they are “in the process of evaluating” it.

GLHA claims in the 6th and last paragraph that “important details are missing” from the CCLCA model requests. For the record, CCLCA was never contacted by GLHA or their consultant HDR during the iterative modeling process regarding any missing details or questions they had on our model run request. **We intend to file additional comments.**

Comment #16. This relates to elevation and flow schedules proposed by CCLCA for the RIP Impoundment. GLHA’s response references the available water curve, and the wet/average/dry year classification process, and stresses that “GLHA continuously monitors and evaluates available storage” but provides no verifiable parameters to initiate a low flow plan. **We intend to file additional comments.**

Attachment 1 to this letter is a several page artificial intelligence (AI) analysis of GLHA’s 6-2-26 response letter as provided to CCLCA by Trout Unlimited (TU). CCLCA did not use the AI analysis in preparing this letter, but did review it, did not disagree with it, and found it to be worthwhile reading.

Thank you for considering these comments.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael J. Hudson, Hydrogeologist
Caribou and Chesuncook Lake Camp Associations (CCLCA)

ATTACHMENT 1

Ripogenus / Penobscot Mills Projects — GLHA Response to CCCA Comments

Filed June 2, 2026 (Acc. No. 20260602-5081) | Analysis: Maine TU Council

No.	Resource	Filing Date	CCCA Comment (Summary)	GLHA Response (Summary)	Analysis & Characterization
1	Low Flow Protocol / Water Management Plan	Mar 20, 2025	Include CCCA in development of the Low Inflow Protocol; request that it include a Rule Curve specifying flows based on lake elevations, snowpack, groundwater, and inflow data from multiple sources.	GLHA filed a draft Low Inflow Protocol with FERC on July 28, 2025 for review and comment by stakeholders.	Dismissive Two separate substantive requests — stakeholder inclusion and a Rule Curve — are both ignored. GLHA simply notes it filed a draft protocol, without addressing whether CCCA is included in its development or whether a Rule Curve will be incorporated. The response does not engage with the substance of the request.
2	CHEOPS Modeling	Mar 20, 2025	Keep the iterative CHEOPS modeling process open for additional model runs in response to pending requests, specifically CCCA Scenario 3.	Comment noted by GLHA.	Dismissive The most dismissive response in the matrix. “Comment noted” provides no commitment, no explanation, and no substantive engagement. It is the regulatory equivalent of acknowledgment without action.
3	Power Generation	Mar 20, 2025	Annual generation numbers used in model runs should reflect actual 2014–2023 data from the FLA, not the model's simulated baseline.	Lengthy explanation of model calibration, verification, and validation methodology presented at the January 2024 workshop. Does not directly state whether 2014–2023 actual data will be used.	Evasive / Non-responsive The response substitutes a technical explanation of how the model was calibrated for an actual answer to the question asked. CCCA's request is simple: use real generation data. GLHA's response never says yes or no — it redirects to methodology. Evasive.
4	CHEOPS Modeling	Jun 24, 2025	The operations model should demonstrate that stable lake levels are achievable in average and wet years, consistent with the system-wide Rule Curve. Provides corrections to storage volume units.	Provides specific storage volume data (17.7 BCF between elev. 925.1–941.59 ft; 2.1 BCF between 940.1–941.59 ft). Notes that in 14 of 23 model years, full pond target of 939 ft was exceeded; 9 of 23 years were at or above 940.1 on June 1.	Partially Responsive GLHA provides some data, but uses it selectively to imply CCCA's goals are unachievable without directly engaging with the Rule Curve governance argument. The fact that 940.1 ft was achieved on June 1 in 39% of years actually partially supports CCCA's position.
5	CHEOPS Modeling	Jun 24, 2025	GLHA's proposed PM&E measures do not provide sufficient lake elevation commitments; CCCA's proposed elevations should be incorporated.	Model results show CCCA-proposed elevations “are not achievable in most years” — 13 of 23 simulated years failed to meet them for the entire July–August period; only 5 years fully met them.	Self-Serving / Misleading GLHA correctly notes that 13/23 years failed, but does not acknowledge that 10/23 years (43%) did achieve the target — a meaningful fraction. Critically, the CCCA's Rule Curve only applies to average and wet years. Citing aggregate failure across all years including dry years misrepresents the relevant comparison.
6	CHEOPS Modeling	Jun 24, 2025	Dry years should be excluded from model scenario calculations because the system-wide Rule Curve applies only to average and wet years (7 out of 10 years by license definition).	Extensive technical explanation that dry years cannot be removed: wet years can be preceded by dry conditions; year-long classifications can mask within-year dry periods. Provides example of 2010 as an average year with a dry summer.	Partially Responsive GLHA makes a technically legitimate point that hydrological conditions interact across years. However, it does not engage with the core legal/license argument: the Rule Curve obligation explicitly does not apply to dry years. Modeling Rule Curve compliance using dry years misrepresents the licensee's obligation and skews results against CCCA's scenario.

7	CHEOPS Modeling	Jun 24, 2025	CHEOPS lacks a formal error analysis or uncertainty analysis. Without this, model results cannot be used with confidence to predict real-world conditions.	References the Operations Model Logic and Validation Report (Appendix E.4 of FLA) as documenting sources of deviation. Notes generation data are “metered” and thus more accurate than other inputs. Does not provide a formal error analysis.	Evasive / Non-responsive GLHA deflects to its existing validation report instead of providing the requested uncertainty analysis. Acknowledging that “many factors” cause deviations without quantifying them is not a substitute for an error analysis. The absence of formal error bounds is a legitimate modeling concern that GLHA does not resolve.
8	CHEOPS Modeling	Jun 24, 2025	The modeled generation reductions under alternative scenarios (-0.9%, -2.7%, -2.7%) fall within the model's own error margin, meaning the differences are not statistically distinguishable from zero.	States that CCCA’s comparison of historical to modeled generation is “not an appropriate comparison” because of inconsistencies (outages, etc.). Does not address whether the generation differences are within the model’s error margin.	Evasive / Non-responsive GLHA correctly identifies a methodological flaw in CCCA's table, but then uses that to avoid addressing the underlying point: if the model has significant error, the claimed generation reductions may be indistinguishable from noise. This is a legitimate critique that GLHA sidesteps entirely.
9	CHEOPS Modeling	Jun 24, 2025	Requests modified Scenario 26: eliminate 3,000 cfs North Twin flow (already in FLA); remove dry years from simulation calculations.	North Twin 3,000 cfs elimination is already in Scenario 26. Dry year removal is inappropriate — refers back to Comment #6 response.	Partially Responsive Half valid: GLHA correctly points out the 3,000 cfs elimination is already incorporated — a responsive clarification. The dry-year refusal is a repeat dismissal that, as noted above, ignores the Rule Curve’s limited applicability to average/wet years.
10	CHEOPS Modeling	Jun 26, 2025	Corrections to June 24 filing: elevation target should read 940.1 ft on 6/1; units in storage volume paragraph should be acre-feet, not BCF.	See response to Comment #4.	Appropriate This was a corrections comment; cross-referencing the earlier storage volume response is appropriate and sufficient.
11	Draft Operations & Compliance Monitoring Plan	Sep 3, 2025	Section 3.1 describes a gradual drawdown regime inconsistent with stable lake levels. CCCA requests specific elevation commitments and a binding Rule Curve for Ripogenus Impoundment incorporated into the Operations Plan.	Cites model results showing proposed elevations cannot be maintained while meeting downstream flows. Defends existing system-wide rule curve and 1991 Water Use Plan Ripogenus available water curve as already providing the requested functionality.	Deflective GLHA conflates two different things: the existing internal operational tools it uses to manage water and the enforceable license commitments CCCA is requesting. CCCA wants binding elevation commitments in the new license. GLHA's response explains its internal management tools without addressing whether those tools will be codified as enforceable license conditions.
12	Draft Low Inflow Protocol	Sep 3, 2025	The 5-page draft protocol is deficient: no specific triggers, no lake elevation thresholds, no inflow triggers, no defined conservation measures — just a statement that flows “may” be modified with 10-day notice to FERC.	Explains that GLHA continuously monitors inflows using the system-wide rule curve and Ripogenus storage curve, provided as Figures 1 and 3 in the protocol.	Dismissive CCCA’s critique is that the protocol contains no enforceable triggers or specific actions. GLHA's response describes its internal management tools without committing to any specific triggers in the protocol itself. This validates CCCA’s critique rather than refuting it: the protocol remains vague and discretionary.
13	Draft Low Inflow Protocol	Sep 3, 2025	GLHA’s FLA and protocol state total West Branch usable storage is 58.7 BCF — but this figure is outdated, as gate removals and the 2004 Storage Project license have reduced actual usable storage.	Provides a table documenting the reduction: West Branch usable storage decreased from 58.7 BCF (pre-2004) to approximately 55.6 BCF after the 2004 Storage Project license, a reduction of ~2.97 BCF. GLHA confirms the FLA’s 58.7 BCF figure reflects the 1991 License Application, not current conditions.	Valid but Damaging to GLHA This is GLHA’s most significant concession in the matrix. By confirming the system’s actual usable storage is ~55.6 BCF rather than the 58.7 BCF cited throughout the FLA, GLHA validates CCCA’s concern about storage capacity and undermines the model’s foundational input. The reduction (~5%) is not trivial in a system already prone to critical drawdowns.

14	Draft Low Inflow Protocol	Sep 3, 2025	The Ripogenus Storage Volume Curve (Fig. 2) is labeled “for planning purposes only, not of physical survey quality.” How were storage volumes calculated? Why is the curve not accurate? How were drawdown impacts computed?	Defends use of 1991 License Application storage curve. States the “not of survey quality” footnote means a physical survey was not conducted, not that the curve is inaccurate. Notes consistent application across scenarios. Attributes past dewaterings to “sustained multi-year droughts.”	Self-Serving / Misleading Using a 35-year-old, unverified storage curve for a relicensing affecting the next 50 years is a legitimate concern GLHA dismisses without providing updated survey data. The claim that past dewaterings were caused by drought directly contradicts documented evidence (TU filings, FERC’s own April 2026 letter) that Brookfield’s discretionary generation decisions contributed materially to the drawdowns.
15	Draft Low Inflow Protocol	Sep 3, 2025	Available Water Curve (Fig. 3) uses outdated storage assumptions. Also: whitewater flow timing should begin at 6:30 AM, not 8:30 AM; CCCA proposes specific minimum and recreation flow schedules tied to lake elevations.	Refers to Comment #11 on the available water curve. On whitewater timing: notes 1,700 cfs minimum would allow early boating and defers to MEPRO proposal review. On CCCA’s proposed flows: states they would increase drawdown; only 5 of 23 years achieved proposed elevations.	Evasive / Non-responsive Multiple substantive requests in one comment receive a multi-part response that deflects each: the storage curve critique gets a cross-reference; the timing issue gets a deferral to a third party’s proposal; the flow proposals get the same model results cited in Comment #5. No direct commitment is made on any point.
16	Draft Low Inflow Protocol	Sep 3, 2025	Requests that FERC require GLHA to: (1) create a real plan with lake elevation/inflow triggers; (2) define specific conditions for low flow/dry years; (3) determine wet/normal/dry years in real time; (4) develop a project-specific rule curve; (5) specify conservation actions at trigger points.	Refers to earlier responses for items 1–4. Claims the existing Ripogenus Available Water Curve IS the project-specific rule curve. States wet/normal/dry year determination can only occur after the close of the water year, not in real time.	Circular / Evasive GLHA’s claim that the Available Water Curve satisfies CCCA’s request for a binding rule curve is circular and misses the point: the CCCA wants the new license to require specific, enforceable conservation actions at defined trigger elevations. An internal planning tool used at GLHA’s discretion is not a license condition. The admission that wet/normal/dry determination cannot be made in real time actually validates CCCA’s concern about the protocol’s inadequacy.

CHARACTERIZATION LEGEND				
Dismissive	Evasive / Non-responsive	Deflective	Partially Responsive	Technically Valid
Self-Serving / Misleading	Appropriate	Circular / Evasive	Valid but Damaging to GLHA	