

Absurd License Conditions Federal Regulators Impose on Hydropower

Six head scratching examples of conditions
far beyond a project's impact that will make you say:
PAIR THE PERMIT TO THE PROJECT!



The National Marine Fisheries Service required fish passage for 2 million migratory fish. There were 20,000. That's a lot of empty seats.
(Maine, P-2808-017, EA, 2019)



The U.S. Forest Service asked a facility to create a climbing and caving plan, because nothing says hydropower like a good spelunking session.
(P-1971, SEIS, 2026, Oregon / Idaho)



A hydropower project needed 0.7 miles of road. The Forest Service required 22.7. You can't make this up.
(P-2106, EIS, 2011, California)



Ever had to measure floating wood debris? That's what one facility was asked to do by the U.S. Forest Service. FERC didn't get it either, but it's in the final permit.
(P-619, EIS, 2020, California)



The Bureau of Land Management asked a facility to build and permanently maintain a livestock water trough. A hydropower producer. Building a cow bar.
(P-298, EA, 2024, California)



The U.S. Forest Service ordered a utility to secure access to a private road — on land the Forest Service doesn't own. FERC said “what?” but the order remained.
(P-2035, FEIS, 2019, Colorado)