

2020 Hydropower MOU and Action Plan Frequently Asked Questions

Last Updated: June 2, 2021

1. What are the 2020 Hydropower Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and Action Plan? What is their purpose?

The [2020 Hydropower MOU](#) is the latest in a series of five-year MOUs among the Department of Energy (DOE), the US Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) and the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). The 2020 MOU continues and builds upon the work completed under the [2015 Hydropower MOU extension](#) and the [2010 Hydropower MOU](#).

The 2020 Hydropower MOU, signed August 24, and resulting Action Plan, released on June 2, 2021 will enhance collaboration and coordination across these three agencies, create opportunities to align collective efforts and utilize expertise across agencies, and create opportunities for federal hydropower customer participation. [The Action Plan](#) details various proposed projects within five topic areas: Asset Management; Value of Hydropower; Workforce; Water Supply Reliability; and Environmental Outcomes.

2. What agencies are involved in this process?

DOE, Reclamation, and USACE are signatories to the 2020 Hydropower MOU. Within DOE, the Water Power Technologies Office (WPTO) within the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE), and the Power Marketing Administrations (PMAs), have been working with Reclamation and USACE to develop the Action Plan projects. Staff from each agency comprise a federal interagency coordination team, which includes the following points of contact:

DOE: Tim Welch 202-586-7055; timothy.welch@ee.doe.gov

Reclamation: Michael Pulskamp 303.445.2931; mpulskamp@usbr.gov

USACE: Daniel Rabon 202-761-4889; daniel.w.rabon@usace.army.mil

BPA: Sonya Baskerville 202.253.7352; slbaskerville@bpa.gov

WAPA: Dionne Thompson 202.586.3191; dthompson@wapa.gov

SEPA / SWPA: Barbara Smith 202.586.3192; barbara.smith@swpa.gov

3. How long is this MOU in place? How soon will the projects start?

This is a five-year MOU expiring August 24, 2025. We expect the projects will require several months of scoping followed by various timelines for project development and execution. In many cases, the projects are studies that would be completed within the five-year MOU period.

4. How are federal hydropower customers involved in this process?

Customers were invited to provide comments and input on the MOU's Draft Action Plan at three customer webinars in December 2020 and during a comment period in early

2021. The customers who submitted comments were primarily PMA preference power customers.

5. How are all these projects being funded? Are the costs reimbursable by water and power customers?

Costs for the proposed projects will primarily be funded through non-reimbursable appropriations and therefore will not affect rates paid by federal water and hydropower customers. For any projects where water or power customer funding is considered, we will engage with those customers early and involve them in the decision-making process prior to moving the projects forward.

6. Has the Action Plan of proposed projects been finalized?

The Action Plan was finalized and released on June 2, 2021. Many of the projects identified in the Action Plan require further scoping and development by the participating agencies and interagency project teams leading the topic areas, which will take several more months. The interagency project teams will also help inform the signatory agencies on potential future MOU projects, such as research and case studies, to benefit the Federal Hydropower Program. The Action Plan will be considered a living document and will be updated as needed to reflect any notable changes in projects' direction or scope.

7. How do customers stay involved and informed about the Hydropower MOU Action Plan and any related progress?

The federal interagency coordination team will hold a webinar this summer to answer any questions about the Action Plan and will further update this FAQ based on feedback from that webinar. Once the webinar date is finalized, WPTO will notify federal customers via WaterPowerTechnologiesOffice@ee.doe.gov.

Additionally, the federal interagency coordination team will host bi-annual updates on all projects under the 2020 Hydropower MOU. Dates for those meetings have not yet been identified. Those meetings will occur via webinar, like the December 2020 customer meetings.

Information about these webinars will be made available on the [WPTO website](#) and PMAs will directly inform federal hydropower customers of these engagement opportunities.

Water and power customers can continue to engage with their appropriate agency at regular customer meetings where agencies will provide updates on projects in the 2020 Hydropower MOU or Action Plan that may impact specific regional customers. Water or power customers can also contact their respective regional PMA office at any time with questions about specific 2020 Hydropower MOU projects. Stakeholders and customers are also invited to engage in topic area working groups.

8. How can I ask for more information?

Please contact your agency contact listed in section two of this document or email the WPTO at WaterPowerTechnologiesOffice@ee.doe.gov. To stay current with WPTO announcements, please sign up for [the Water Wire](#).