

environmental resources and/or to mitigate for any adverse environmental impacts that would occur due to operation and maintenance of the project.

This draft environmental assessment (EA) assesses the effects associated with operation of the proposed project and alternatives to the proposed project, and makes recommendations to the Commission on whether to issue a license, and if so, recommends terms and conditions to become a part of any license issued. In deciding whether to issue a license for a hydroelectric project, the Commission must determine that.

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The project would be best adapted to a comprehensive plan for improving or developing the waterway. In addition to the power and developmental purposes for which licenses are issued, the Commission must give equal consideration to the purposes of energy conservation, the protection, mitigation of damage to, and enhancement of fish and wildlife (including related spawning grounds and habitat), the protection of recreational opportunities, and the preservation of other aspects of environmental quality.

In this draft EA, we, the Commission staff, assess the effects of operating the project as proposed by Parowan, and operating the project as proposed by Parowan with staff's mitigative and enhancement measures. We also consider the effects of the no-action alternative.

#### B. Need for Power

Parowan operates the Center Creek Project (FERC No. 1273) and Red Creek Project (FERC No. 2782) to provide power to its customers through its municipal power system. In addition to these two sources, Parowan also meets its power needs by: (1) purchasing power through the Utah Association of Municipal Power Systems (UAMPS), of which Parowan is a member, and (2) encouraging power conservation by its customers.

Power demand for Parowan in recent years is summarized in table 1. Included in this power demand are residential, commercial, and other customers. Over the given 4-year period, total demand has risen about 7 percent. As part of its energy conservation effort, Parowan annually distributes energy saving inserts that are provided by UAMPS. Additionally, Parowan is in the process of upgrading from a 2,400-volt delta system to a 12,470-volt wye system.

Parowan is also converting street lighting from 200-watt mercury bulbs to 100-watt sodium fixtures.

TABLE 1.—RECENT RETAIL POWER LOAD FOR PAROWAN CITY

[Source: Parowan City]

Year	Retail power load (MWh)
1998 .....	12.89
1999 .....	13.07
2000 .....	13.49
2001 .....	13.81

The project is located in the Northwest Power Pool Area (NWPP) of the Western Electricity Coordinating Council (WECC) region of the North American Electric Reliability Council (NERC). WECC annually forecasts electrical supply and demand in the region for a 10-year period. The most recent report on annual supply and demand indicates that, for the period from 2002–2011, the average annual growth rate is projected to be 2.5 percent. In response to projected growth, WECC members will be adding or contracting for about 16,000 megawatts (MW) of new capacity generation during the 10-year period. The electricity generated from the project would benefit the region by providing a portion of the needed regional power.

If relicensed, the project would continue to contribute to Parowan's power needs as well as meeting a small portion of the regional need for power. The project would also continue to displace non-renewable fossil-fueled power generation used by some of the facilities in the UAMPS, thereby conserving fossil fuel resources and avoiding associated atmospheric emissions.

### III. Proposed Action and Alternatives

#### A. Parowan's Proposal

##### 1. Parowan's Project Facilities and Operation

The existing project consists of: (1) A 15-foot-high, 54-foot-long concrete overflow type diversion dam; (2) a radial gate; (3) trash racks; (4) a 19.9 acre-foot de-silting pond; (5) an 18 to 26-inch-diameter, 19,300-foot-long steel penstock; (6) a 600-kW powerhouse; (7) an 80-foot-long, 2.4-kilovolt underground transmission line; and (8) appurtenant facilities (figure 2).

Parowan proposes to continue operating the project run-of-river. When operating, the project diverts a maximum of 24 cubic feet per second (cfs) of stream flow from Center Creek.

Water exiting the powerhouse goes into an irrigation canal for the use of downstream irrigation right-holders.

#### 2. Proposed Environmental Measures

Parowan proposes to monitor and remove any noxious and undesirable plants after any ground-disturbing activities. Parowan does not propose any changes to project facilities or operation.

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#### B. Staff's Preferred Alternative

The staff considered what, if any, protection, mitigation, and enhancement measures would be beneficial to those resources affected by the project and its operation. We recommend in addition to Parowan's proposal that if any archeological or historic sites should be discovered during project operation or maintenance, Parowan prepare a site-specific plan in consultation with the Utah State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) and BLM to evaluate the significance of the sites and to mitigate impacts to those sites that are determined to be eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

#### C. No-Action Alternative

Under the no-action alternative, the project would continue to operate under the terms and conditions of the existing license, and no new environmental protection, mitigation, or enhancement measures would be implemented. We use this alternative to establish the baseline environmental condition for comparison with other alternatives.

#### D. Alternatives Considered But Eliminated From Detailed Study

We considered the following alternatives to Parowan's proposal but eliminated them from detailed study because they are not reasonable in the circumstances of this case.

##### 1. Nonpower License

A nonpower license is a temporary license that the Commission would terminate whenever it would determine that another governmental agency would assume regulatory authority and supervision over the lands and facilities covered by the nonpower license. In this case, no government agency has suggested its willingness or ability to do so. No party has sought a nonpower license, and we have no basis for concluding that the project should no longer be used to produce power.