**Send Your Comments To FERC**

The Shafer and Freeman Environmental Conservation Corporation (SFLECC) has entered a critical phase in its fight to protect the values that Lake Freeman and Lake Shafer have provided for 90 years. Last year, NIPSCO sought to amend their license to operate the Oakdale and Norway dams. Their current license generally requires that lake levels not fall more than 3 inches but, if approved, the amended license would allow the lake level to fall more than **12 feet**. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) in Washington, D.C is now considering whether to approve these changes and is seeking comments from the public, especially from local groups and organizations, to help it decide the issue.

Presently, the deadline to submit comments regarding NIPSCO’s request is March 16, 2015, but SFLECC has asked FERC to extend this deadline by 30 days. SFLECC officials state that “local lake users, businesses, organizations, shoreline land owners, and local governmental bodies, know better than anyone how valuable the Lakes are because every day we experience the full range of economic, recreational and environmental benefits they provide.” SFLECC is urging support for their efforts to explain to FERC the severe, and perhaps unintended, consequences that will result if FERC does not deny, or at least modify the changes that NIPSCO seeks.

SFLECC President John Kopplemann stated that “Many people, individually and through organizations they support, have made contributions to SFLECC to enable us to hire the expert legal and scientific help we have needed to oppose NIIPSCO’s request. SFLECC will present this and other evidence to FERC in the weeks ahead. Thanks to everyone who has or intends, to contribute. But we’ll also need your help to show FERC that SFLECC is not alone in opposing the license modification that will decimate not only the recreational interests, but also the wildlife that depend on near constant water levels.”

SFLECC has stated that they have the hydrologic evidence that extreme fluctuations in Freeman and Shafer lake levels will occur regularly, almost every summer, that Lake closures like last August will happen, and there will be drastic impacts to the local community and environment that may not have been previously presented to FERC.

According to Joe Roach, SFLECC Executive Director “SFLECC is asking all concerned citizens and organizations to tell FERC how the dramatic changes to the management of the dams will impact you, your families, your businesses and your community. We are all in this together and, if we are to prevent these changes we need everyone’s help.”

**How to File Comments to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission**

**Comments by individuals on their own behalf may be made in one of two ways:**

1) Filing comments electronically:

* Go to FERC home page at: www.ferc.gov.
* Under “Documents and Filings” click on “eComment”.
* Click on the Orange tab “eComment does not require eRegistration”.
* Follow directions given there.

eComment filings by individuals allow up to 6,000 characters of text-only comments (no pictures or attachments). Reference Project Number P-12514-074.

2) Filing comments on paper via US Mail:

* Reference P-12514-074 as Project Number and in capital letters the title as “COMMENTS, PROTESTS, or MOTION TO INTERVENE”.
* Pictures or attachments may be included. Following your comments give your name and contact information.
* Mail an original and seven copies to:

Secretary Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

888 First Street, NE

Washington, DC 20426

**Comments on behalf of a company, agency, organization, association or other non-individual and comments exceeding 6,000 characters; and non-text material (exhibits, photos) or file attachments) may also be made in two ways:**

1) Filing comments electronically

* Must use FERC’s eFiling system that requires registration in an unrestricted eRegister account. To register go to http://www.ferc.gov/docs-filing/efilng.asp.
* To register click on Orange tab “eRegister to gain access to FERC on line applications”
* Once registered go to “eFiling”; log in and follow directions there.
* Reference Project Number P-12514-074.
* eFiling file size is limited to 50Mb and must be submitted in a text searchable format.

2) Filing Comments on Paper via US Mail.

* Reference P-12514-074 as Project Number and in capital letters the title as COMMENTS, PROTESTS, or MOTION TO INTERVENE
* No restriction on number of characters.
* Pictures or attachments may be included. Give your name and contact information (name of entity filing, address, phone number at the end of your comments.
* Mail an original and seven copies to:

Secretary Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

888 First Street, NE

Washington, DC 20426

**Recommended Sample FERC Comment Letter Format**

**Date:** *(Before end of comment period)*

**To: Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission**

**888 first Street, NE**

**Washington, DC 20426**

**Re: COMMENTS PROJECT NUMBER P-12514-074**

**Northern Indiana Public Service Company;**

**Notice of Application for Amendment of License**

**Article 405 and Article 403**

**From:** Your name (or organization)

**SECRETARY,**

**(I, we, the) is (are) in full support of the Shafer and Freeman Environmental Conservation Corporation (SFLECC) in opposition to the changes proposed by the Northern Indiana Public Service Company (NIPSCO) in their request to amend their license to modify the definition of abnormal river conditions and reservoir surface elevations. The FERC Temporary Order in place since July 2014 has already shown that extreme changes in our Lake levels can cause great damage to property, lake aquatic creatures, lake habitat, lake accessibility, lake businesses and the local tourism industry.**

**During the forced 23 inch lowering of Lake Freeman in August 2014 I (we) personally suffered the following losses:**

*Examples one might cite or elaborate on:*

*We could not access the Lake by boat*

*Our permanent shoreline structures were damaged*

*There were noxious odors from dead aquatic creatures and plant life*

*Our views of our beautiful Lake was displaced by uncovered muddy sea bottom*

*Our business was forced to lay off workers (business)*

**Looking to the longer term, If the proposed changes made by NIPSCO are made permanent and Lake (name) significant level changes occur, I (we) will suffer even more losses:**

*Examples one might cite or elaborate on:*

*Loss of property value*

*Lowered assessed valuation leading to less taxes for schools and county governments*

*Lake business closures*

*Damage to shoreline trees and growth*

**Thank you for your consideration of our situation here in Indiana.**

**Contact Information:** *Writers name; organization (if any); address, phone; email*