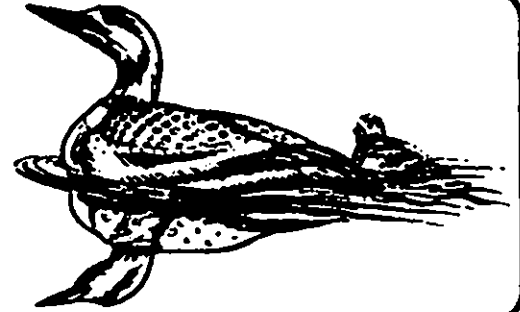


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FINGER LAKES ECOLOGY ASSOCIATION

4692 COOLS DRIVE, GENEVA, NEW YORK 14456



ORIGINAL

535 Lansing Station Road
Lansing, NY 14882
August 26, 2008

Mr. Peter Valeri
FERC – New York Regional Office
19 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001-3006

Dear Mr. Valeri:

I represent the Finger Lakes Ecology Association (FLEA), a group that concerns itself with the water levels of Cayuga and Seneca Lakes, the two largest Finger Lakes in New York State. Since its founding in 1993, FLEA has advocated applying the sciences of hydrology, climatology, geology, and hydraulic engineering to the management of water levels in Seneca Lake, Cayuga Lake, and the New York State Barge Canal downstream to Baldwinsville, NY.

Some of our members who own marine businesses on and/or live on Seneca Lake have become very concerned because the water level of Seneca Lake has again been below the range that the Seneca Falls Power Corporation (Project #2438) is required to maintain for this time of year. Several people have complained to our organization that they cannot get their boats out of hoists and into the water and that sail boat keels are getting stuck in the mud at marinas.

We wrote to your agency in Washington about this problem in 2006 and again in July 2008; we appreciate your efforts in 2006 to help bring the Seneca Falls Power Corporation into compliance with their contract, but have not had a response from FERC in 2008.

Several times this summer, Seneca Lake water levels have dropped below the power plant's contract-required levels associated with the Hansen Plan Rule Curve (446.0 ± 0.1 feet). The attached graph downloaded from the New York State Canal Corporation's website demonstrates that this level has been below the required range of lake water levels for summer (please see the bright red line on left-hand side of the graph). The low water level of Seneca Lake is due to the licensee (Seneca Falls Power Corp.) running water through the electric generating plant in violation of its contract – even though the water is now below the minimum target level, the licensee continues to generate electricity. Why is FERC allowing this to happen?

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FERC

Due to the presence of rock shelves that extend far out from many shores of Seneca Lake, even moderately low water has a negative effect on the ability of residents and marinas to use their docks, hoists and boats. Since tourism in summer and fall is a major business in the Finger Lakes, we are concerned about possible negative impacts on this part of our local economy.

Since the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) has regulatory oversight over the Seneca Falls Power Corporation operation of their Waterloo and Seneca Falls hydroelectric generation facilities (Project #2438), could FERC please inform FLEA (at the Lansing, NY address above) about what steps they will take to ensure that Seneca Falls Power Corporation is operating within the FERC license requirements to minimize the negative impacts that low lake levels are having on Seneca Lake's marine businesses and on the surrounding lake shore residents?

Thank you very much for your immediate attention to this matter.

Yours truly,



Donna L. Scott
President
Finger Lakes Ecology Association (FLEA)

Cc:
Kimberly Bose, Secretary, FERC
US Representative Michael Arcuri
US Representative Randy Kuhl

Last Modified: 08/21/2008

SENECA LAKE LEVEL at GENEVA - 2008

