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Bills Aimed at Streamlining Small Hydropower Development Signed into Law

September 11, 2013 | *William S. Huang*

On August 9, 2013, the President signed two new acts aimed at promoting and streamlining the development of small hydropower on existing dams and conduits. The changes introduced by these laws are incremental; but the bills represent a general, positive shift in policy towards hydropower and include provisions that could significantly speed development of small projects, particularly on existing conduits.

If you have considered developing small hydro on an existing conduit, the new laws may now make it cheaper and easier for you to do so. FERC will also hold a public workshop on October 2, 2013, to discuss developing a faster, two-year licensing process for closed-loop pumped storage projects (i.e., those that are not continuously connected to a naturally-flowing water feature) and hydropower development at non-powered dams.

Feel free to contact us with any questions.

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- Hydropower and Water

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