

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS
MEETING**

**MARCH 16, 2021
7PM**

**Nuyakuk River
Hydroelectric
Project
(P-14873)
Update**



INTENT

- Describe progress made in feasibility evaluation and licensing process for the proposed project over the past year
- Document current status of study planning and mechanisms in place to finalize program
- Lay out short and long-term schedules for:
 - Finalizing the study program
 - Re-initiating the formal FERC licensing process
 - Remainder of the study program and licensing effort
- Discuss the current and future opportunities for involvement through:
 - Meetings
 - Calls
 - Direct NETC contact

SUMMARY OF PAST MILESTONES

- Initial Cooperative-driven feasibility assessment (desktop and on-site) – Late 2017/early 2018
- Preliminary Permit Acquired – June 2018
- Internal Study Plan Assessment January 2019- February 2020
- Senate Bill 91 development/approval – Summer 2019 (signed into law on 8/17/19)
- NOI/PAD Filed (ILP Requested) – October 2019
- Agency Kick-off Meeting – November 2019
- FERC Scoping – November 2019 – February 2020
- NETC Organized over 90 Informational Meetings and Presentations (31 in the region) – October 2017- February 2020

KEY DEVELOPMENTS OVER THE PAST YEAR

- Initial Proposed Study Plan (PSP) filed with FERC – March 2020
- Revised PSP Filed with FERC – April 2020
- Developed a Project website - <https://www.nuyakukhydro.com/>
- Study Planning Meeting w/interested parties – April 2020 (3 meetings)
- Additional coordination needs identified with BBSRI and other resource agencies

KEY DEVELOPMENTS OVER THE PAST YEAR

- COVID related issues
- FERC Abeyance
- Continued refinement of conceptual project design
- Baseline data collection during abeyance
- Formation and collaboration with the ARWG

PROPOSED STUDY PLAN

- Initial PSP developed based on internal assessment and agency feedback
 - Aquatics
 - Water Resources
 - Terrestrial
 - Cultural
 - Recreation and Visual
- FERC requested additional detail culminating in NETC updating the PSP and re-filing
- NETC held a study planning meeting concurrent with the revised filing to provide additional context at the onset of the comment period
- Not long after, NETC received a request from BBEDC and other regional entities to delay the licensing process to have further study design dialogue and to accommodate scheduling conflicts associated with the upcoming fishing season

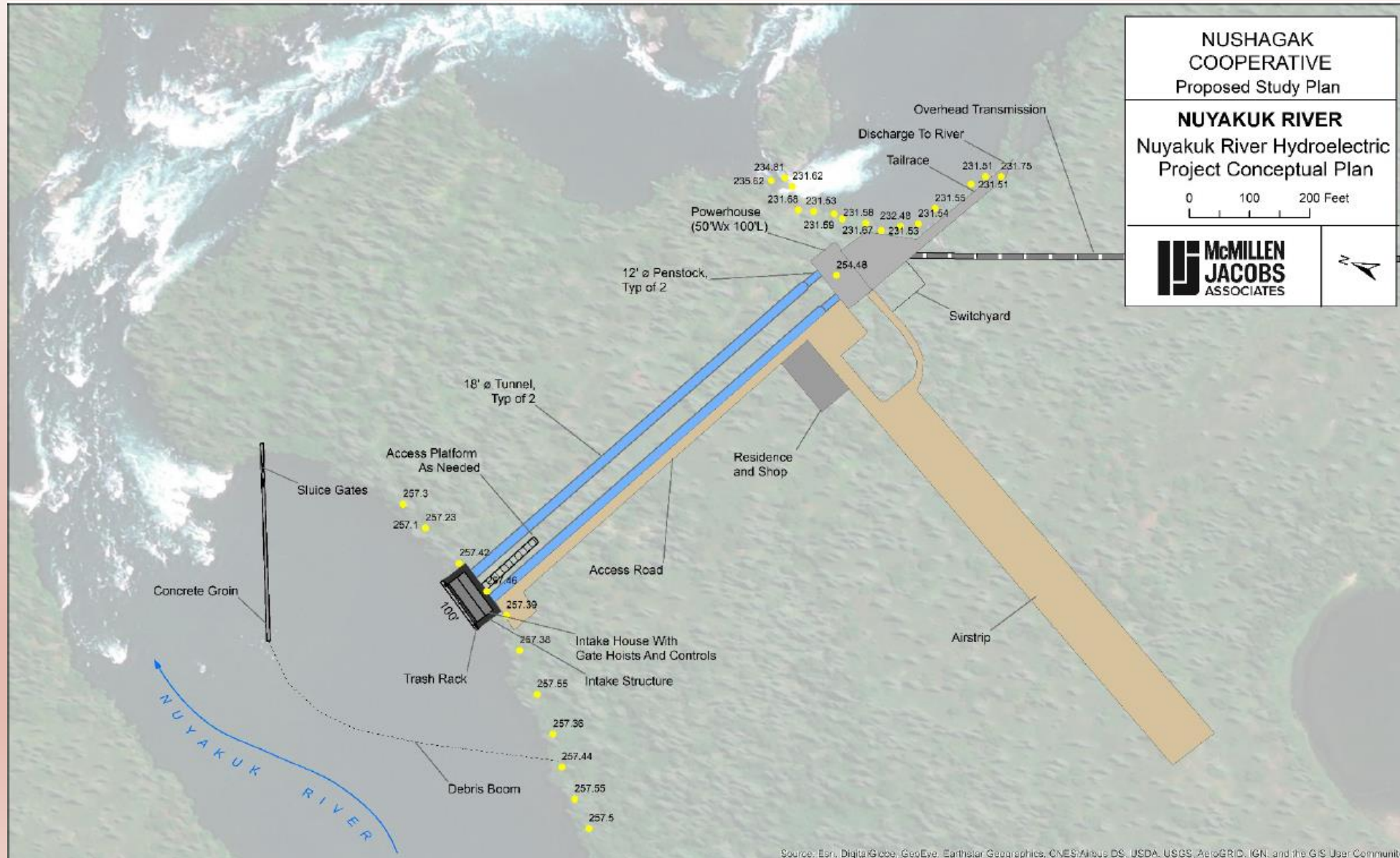
COVID-19 RELATED ISSUES

- Beginning in March, COVID concerns began escalating in Dillingham and the surrounding region
- Given the phase of the process NETC was in, lack of access to the area and in-person meetings made moving forward nearly impossible
- NETC discussed options with FERC and requested an abeyance
- In their request, NETC cited both the need for additional time to collaborate with BBEDC and other regional entities related to study planning and the issues COVID had created
- FERC immediately approved the request

ABEYANCE

- Formally approved by FERC on June 9, 2020
- Remains in effect until a revised PSP is filed by NETC and a re-initiation is requested
- Overall federal schedule considerations and restriction still apply
- NETC has an interest in re-engaging in the formal federal process as soon as final agreement on study planning is reached and COVID allows
 - Preliminary permit considerations
 - Length of study program
 - Fundamental document development

CONTINUED REFINEMENT OF CONCEPTUAL PROJECT DESIGN



BASELINE DATA COLLECTION

- Certain baseline data and logistical prep is necessary to adequately conduct the studies, regardless of timeframe:
 - Bathymetry
 - Topography
 - Historical streamflow information
 - Temporary lodging for biologists
- Acquired necessary permits from State Parks
- Temporary cabin construction partially completed in 2020

BASELINE DATA COLLECTION

- LiDAR data collected
- Site selected for on-site stream gage and historical hydrology analyzed
- Flyovers conducted at multiple flows/seasons to gain an understanding of localized river movement

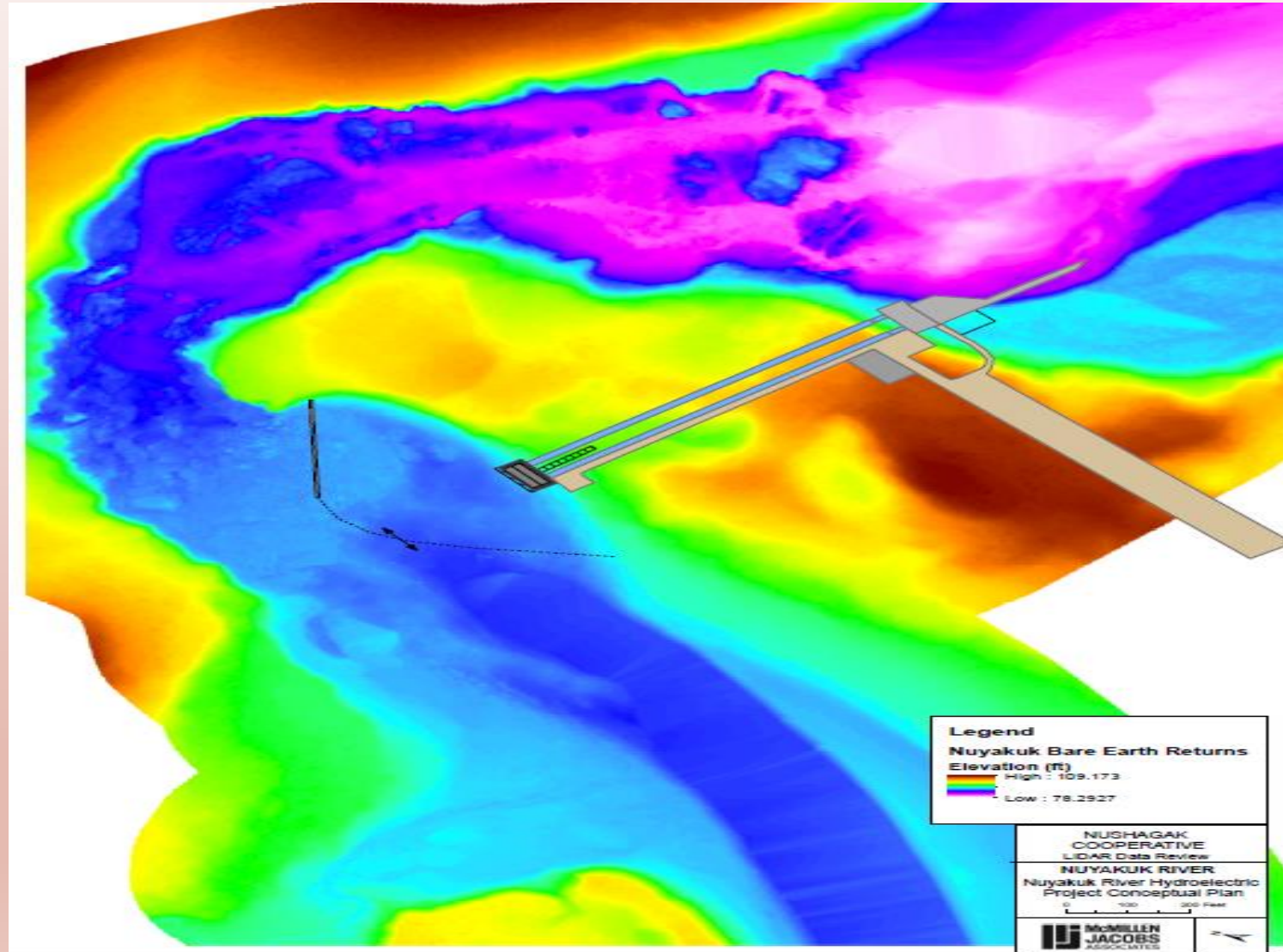
LIDAR

July 17, 2020



**Nuyakuk River, Alaska Topobathymetric
Lidar Technical Data Report**

LIDAR



LIDAR



SEASONAL AERIAL ANALYSIS



AQUATICS RESOURCE WORKING GROUP

- Formed as a fundamental component of the overall licensing process.
- Spans the entire licensing time frame: development, implementation and compliance.
- Provides for sharing of perspectives and engagement in constructive debate on the scope and approach for assessing potential Project impacts and guiding future monitoring.
- Made up of aquatic resource specialists, agency representatives and local entities. Operates according to a *Mission Statement*.
 - Initial meeting held October 22, 2020
- Subgroup of technical experts that report back to larger ARWG
 - Series of meetings - December 4, 2020 January 21, 2021 March 10, 2021

AQUATICS RESOURCE WORKING GROUP

- **Status** – making positive progress on achieving the near-term goals of the ARWG
 - Engaged in constructive discussions on several stakeholder concerns of the proposed fish study plan.
 - Identified and discussed the primary differences in perspective regarding the overarching scope and approach toward conducting an impact assessment.
 - Developing a conceptual and analytical framework for fish and the proposed Project that can serve as a guide in the refinement of fish studies.
 - Evaluating the applicability and feasibility of creating a Life Cycle Model for Nuyakuk fish populations and their relationships with the proposed Project.

AQUATICS RESOURCE WORKING GROUP

➤ **Planned Milestone Activities and Products (near-term)**

- Formalize a conceptual and analytical framework to conduct an integrated risk assessment of the proposed Project on fish populations.
- Collaboratively refine the studies of the PSP into a RSP that identifies adequate sampling and analytical methods that can support comparison of baseline and future conditions and inform risk assessments.
- Hold a technical workshop to advance progress on ARWG products.

AQUATICS RESOURCE WORKING GROUP

- Dialogue with FERC regarding progress made during abeyance
- Re-file the PSP for comment and re-enter the formal FERC ILP
- All requisite federal timelines re-start

NEXT STEPS

2021

- Formalize aquatic study program agreement with the ARWG
- File revised PSP for review and comment
 - Re-initiates ILP timeline
- Review/respond to PSP comments and develop RSP
- Study Plan Determination from FERC



NEXT STEPS

2021

- Stream gage installation
- Complete temporary housing
- Geotechnical analysis
- Initiate study permitting process for 2022 and 2023

NEXT STEPS

2022 AND BEYOND

- High level
- Many discreet steps incorporated
- Ongoing consultation/meetings/project updates throughout
- Cooperative committed to a transparent process
- Focus on more cost-effective and renewable energy for the region

NEXT STEPS

2022 AND BEYOND

Key Milestones

- Comprehensive Study Seasons – 2022 and 2023
- Study Reporting – 2022 and 2023
- Study Reporting Meetings – 2022 and 2023
- Ongoing Infrastructural and Site Analysis and Design – 2022-2024
- Further Geotechnical Analysis – 2023
- Preliminary Licensing Proposal – 2023
- PLP Comment Period – 2023
- Final License Application - 2024



THANK YOU

Questions?