

RESOLUTION NO. 2015-02

A RESOLUTION of the Susquehanna River Basin Commission encouraging the use of dry cooling technology for power generation and other facilities for the conservation of the waters of the Susquehanna River Basin (the “basin”).

WHEREAS, the Susquehanna River Basin Commission (the “Commission”) has always encouraged water conservation, particularly when that use is consumptive with respect to the waters of the basin; and

WHEREAS, the reported basinwide consumptive use for power generation is approximately 93 million gallons per day, or 73 percent of all reported consumptive use in the basin; and

WHEREAS, it has been the practice of the Commission to encourage pre-application meetings between project sponsors and Commission staff to determine utilization of the most appropriate cooling technology given the water availability within a particular hydrologic setting; and

WHEREAS, the Commission recognizes that an increasing number of power generation facilities, most recently combined cycle natural gas powered plants, are utilizing dry cooling technology to reduce the environmental footprint in the basin, and are demonstrating overall efficiencies in operations that are equivalent to wet cooling processes; and

WHEREAS, it has been the practice of Commission staff to encourage project sponsors to consider dry cooling based on the technology’s greatly reduced water need; and

WHEREAS, the Commission recognizes that securing consumptive use makeup water has become an increasing challenge due to increasing and competing demands in the basin, which can be exacerbated with proposed facility locations in higher quality and headwater settings; and

WHEREAS, consumptive use requests for power generation are increasingly occurring in portions of the basin where water resources may be limited or have competing demands, and uninterruptible sources of supply are not available; and

WHEREAS, the Commission’s Comprehensive Plan provides that power generation facilities should be required to evaluate the costs, benefits, trade-offs and drawbacks of various cooling and water conservation techniques, and fully evaluate options for providing effective consumptive use mitigation; and

WHEREAS, the Commission anticipates that the utilization of dry cooling technology will reduce the water demand of such facilities providing increased flexibility in locating facilities in proximity to fuel sources and electrical transmission lines; and

WHEREAS, use of dry cooling technology reduces impacts to aquatic ecosystems through the reduction of thermal impacts associated with large industrial volume discharges; and

WHEREAS, it is the desire of the Commission to promote and encourage the use of dry cooling technology in order to reduce the burden of consumptive uses in the basin, reduce dependence on large volume sources, avoid potential for alteration of natural stream regimen, effects on water quality and other uses of the watercourse.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. With due regard for all approval standards, applicable laws, and other safeguards, the Commission will prioritize the review of projects utilizing dry cooling processes for reducing consumptive water use.

2. As appropriate, the Commission will require project sponsors proposing consumptive water use for the purposes of cooling to consider the use of dry cooling technologies.

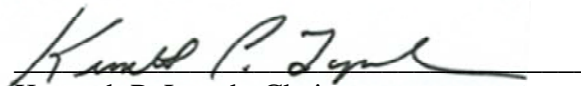
3. As appropriate, the Commission will require project sponsors not utilizing dry cooling technology to submit for Commission review a rigorous alternatives analysis as justification consistent with 18 C.F.R. § 806.21(b) and Part III, B. 18 of the Commission's Comprehensive Plan.

4. As appropriate, the Commission will consider relaxing applicable passby flow conditions to projects providing upstream flow augmentation in order to provide for uninterrupted operations.

5. As appropriate, the Commission will consider application of allowable discretion under applicable Commission regulation and policy in reviewing and approving alternate consumptive use mitigation and passby flow thresholds consistent with 18 C.F.R. § 806.22.

6. This resolution shall be effective immediately.

Dated: March 5, 2015


Kenneth P. Lynch, Chair
New York