

79 FERC ¶ 61,376

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION

Before Commissioners: James J. Hoecker, Chairman;
Vicky A. Bailey, William L. Massey,
and Donald F. Santa, Jr.

The Montana Power Company)
)
Confederated Salish and) Project No. 5-021
Kootenai Tribes of the)
Flathead Reservation)

ORDER APPROVING MITIGATION AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

(Issued June 25, 1997)

On June 22, 1990, the Montana Power Company filed with the Commission a proposed Mitigation and Management Plan, as required by the license for the 185-megawatt Kerr Project No. 5, located on the Flathead River in Lake and Flathead Counties, Montana, and partially on lands within the Flathead Indian Reservation, and on other federal lands. As discussed below, we approve the plan, as modified herein.

BACKGROUND

The Kerr Project is located on the lower Flathead River approximately 4.5 miles downstream from the natural outlet of Flathead Lake. 1/ The project includes a 200-foot-high, 381-foot-long dam, a 126,000-acre reservoir, three penstocks, 765, 785, and 865 feet long and all 23.33 feet in diameter, and a powerhouse containing three generating units, each rated at 60 megawatts. The penstocks deliver water from the lake to the powerhouse, which is located approximately 1,500 feet downstream from the dam. 2/

Flathead Lake, the largest natural freshwater lake west of the Mississippi, is 28 miles long and, at its broadest point, is 15 miles wide. The lake and the nearby portions of the Flathead River house a thriving and varied fishery, and support a varied

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- 1/ By impounding the river, the project expanded Flathead Lake, so that the lake now ends at the project's dam. In the absence of the project, the lake would end some 4.5 miles upstream.
 - 2/ Water used by the project thus bypasses an approximately 1,500-foot stretch of the river. No issues regarding the bypassed reach have been raised in this proceeding.

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