

Franklin Hydroelectric Project (FERC # 2603)

Report on High Water Availability for Recreation and Recreation Opportunity Studies

The Franklin Project is located on the Little Tennessee River in the town of Franklin in a mountain valley setting surrounded by commercial and industrial development, woodlands, wetlands and open fields. The river arises in the mountains of north Georgia and travels north into Franklin, North Carolina. The average annual runoff is about 749 cfs measured at Needmore, which is about 19 miles downstream of the project. The Little Tennessee River joins the Nantahala and Tuckasegee Rivers in Fontana Reservoir, which is managed by the Tennessee Valley Authority as a hydroelectric project. At full pond, Fontana Reservoir begins about five miles downstream from Needmore. Information about river flows at Needmore is available through the Tennessee Valley Authority phone messaging system for the public interested in downstream recreation. The TVA numbers are 800 238 2264 and 800 438 2264 (for hearing impaired). Real time flow information can be obtained from the United States Geological Survey (USGS) gauge at Needmore (gauge number 03503000) on the USGS website.

The Franklin Project does not significantly affect flow levels in the Little Tennessee River since it is a hydroelectric project with limited storage. Water either flows through the generator(s) and back into the riverbed below the 35-foot high dam or it runs over the dam or both. Since the Project has minimal effects on either river flows or reservoir levels, it also has no impact on angling and paddling recreational opportunities on the reservoir and downstream of the Project whether at low or high stream flows. Further information will be available from the Franklin Plant Operation Plan currently being developed as part of Federal Energy Regulatory Commission relicensing of the Franklin Project.

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