With respect to hydroelectric projects, FERC safeguards the environment by:

- Ensuring that planned projects will minimize damage to the environment;

- Requiring that all hydropower applicants communicate with federal and state Natural Resources agencies, Indian tribes, and state water quality agencies prior to submitting an application to FERC - Initial Consultation Contact List;

- Ensuring that all license applicants perform the necessary studies to base an informed decision on the project;

- Issuing draft Environmental Assessments (EAs) or draft Environmental Impact Statements (EISs) for comment. FERC makes electronic copies of the draft and final EISs available to the public. A limited number of paper copies are also available from the Public Reference Room (call toll-free 1-866-208-3676);

- Incorporating license requirements designed to reduce environmental impacts;

- Visiting projects that are requesting relicenses or license amendments. Scoping meetings are held to determine the most important environmental resources to address in an EA or EIS; and

- Maintaining a licensing handbook with guidelines for preparing the Exhibit E, the environmental information exhibit required to be included with each application.