



Black Mesa Pumped Storage Project (BMPSP)



Tó Nizhóní Ání

“Sacred Water Speaks”

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Black Mesa Pumped Storage Project

Applicant: Nature & People First - Arizona

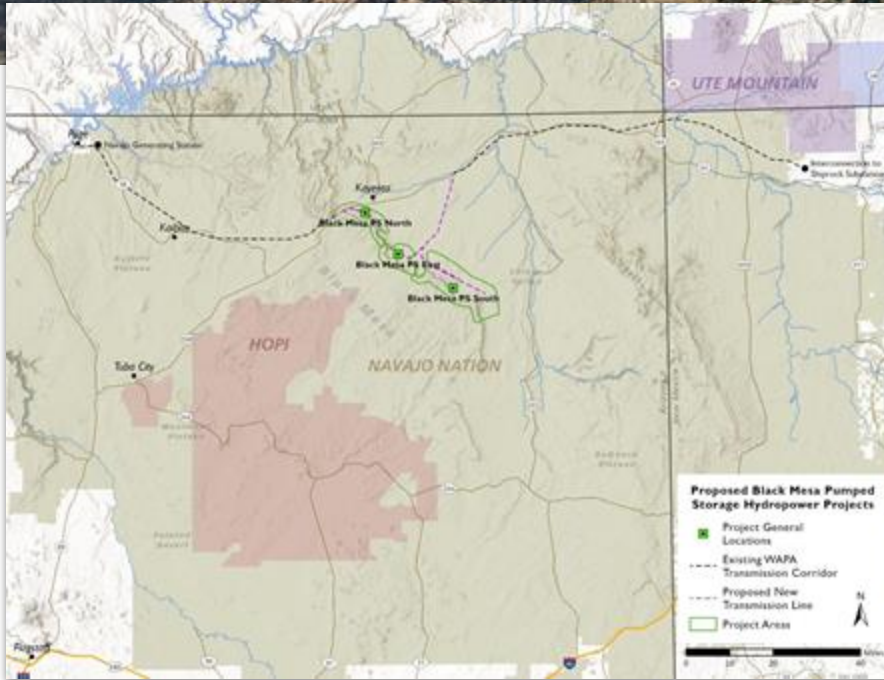
Filing Date: November 7, 2022 (P-15233-000)

Federal Agency: Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC)

Location: Navajo Nation (3 miles south of Kayenta)

Duration: 100 years

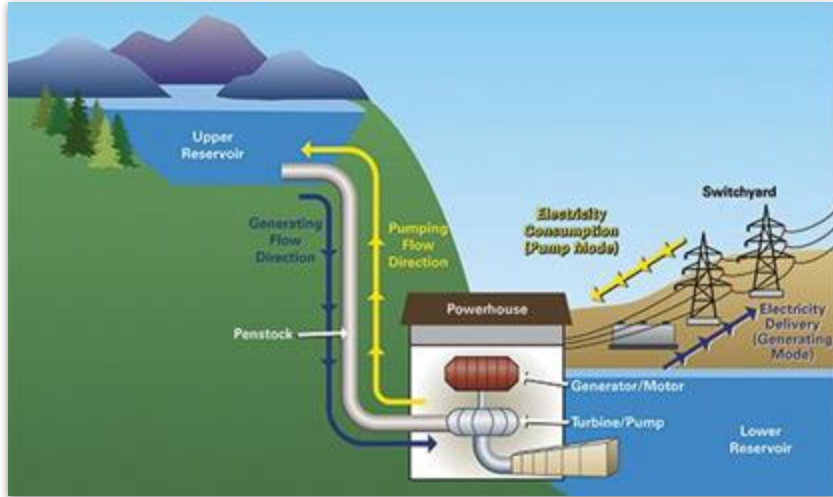
Black Mesa Pumped Storage Project



Map by the [Grand Canyon Trust](#)

The **Black Mesa Pumped Storage Project** (BMPSP) is a pumped storage hydropower project proposed by **Nature & People First**. This energy development company wants to build three “Pumped Storage” energy projects along the northeastern edge of Black Mesa which would require **450,000 acre-feet** of Navajo water.

What is a Pumped Storage energy project?



Pumped storage hydropower (PSH) is a type of hydroelectric energy storage. It is a configuration of two water reservoirs at different elevations that can generate power as water moves down from one reservoir to the other (discharge), passing through a turbine. The system also requires power as it pumps water back into the upper reservoir (recharge).

These pumped storage projects would pump water uphill to newly constructed reservoirs atop Black Mesa when electricity prices are low and generate electricity and revenue from return flows to reservoirs below the mesa when prices are higher.

Black Mesa Pumped Storage Project



The Black Mesa Pumped Storage Project is three projects identified as:

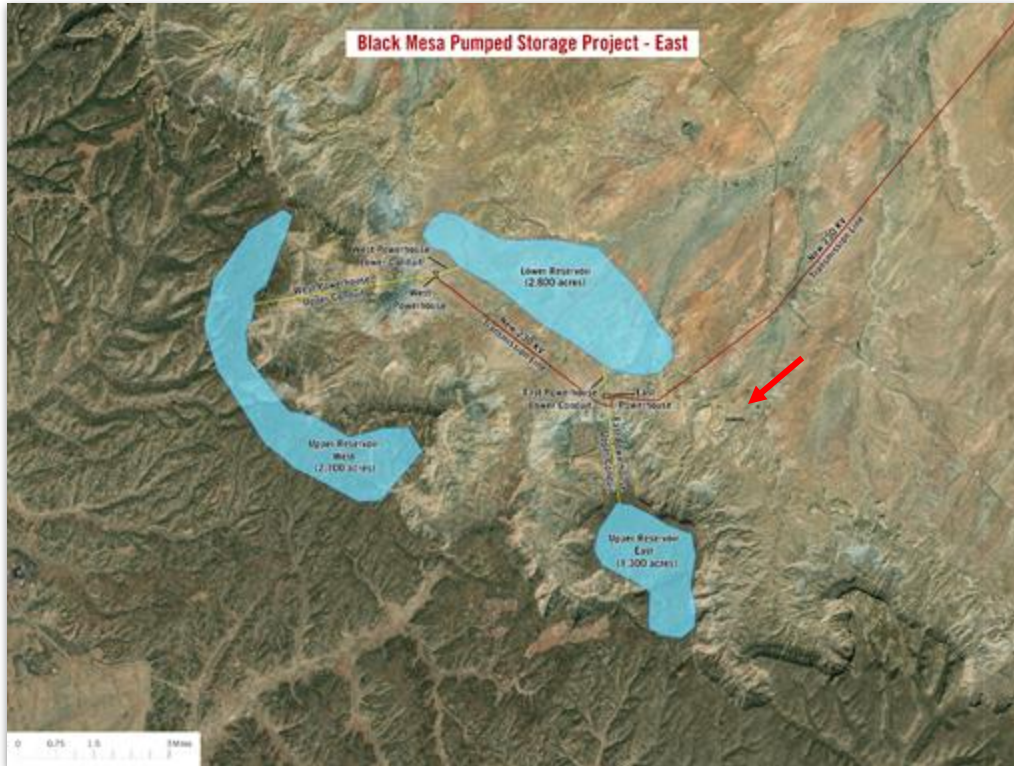
- North Project
- East Project
- South Project

BMPSP North



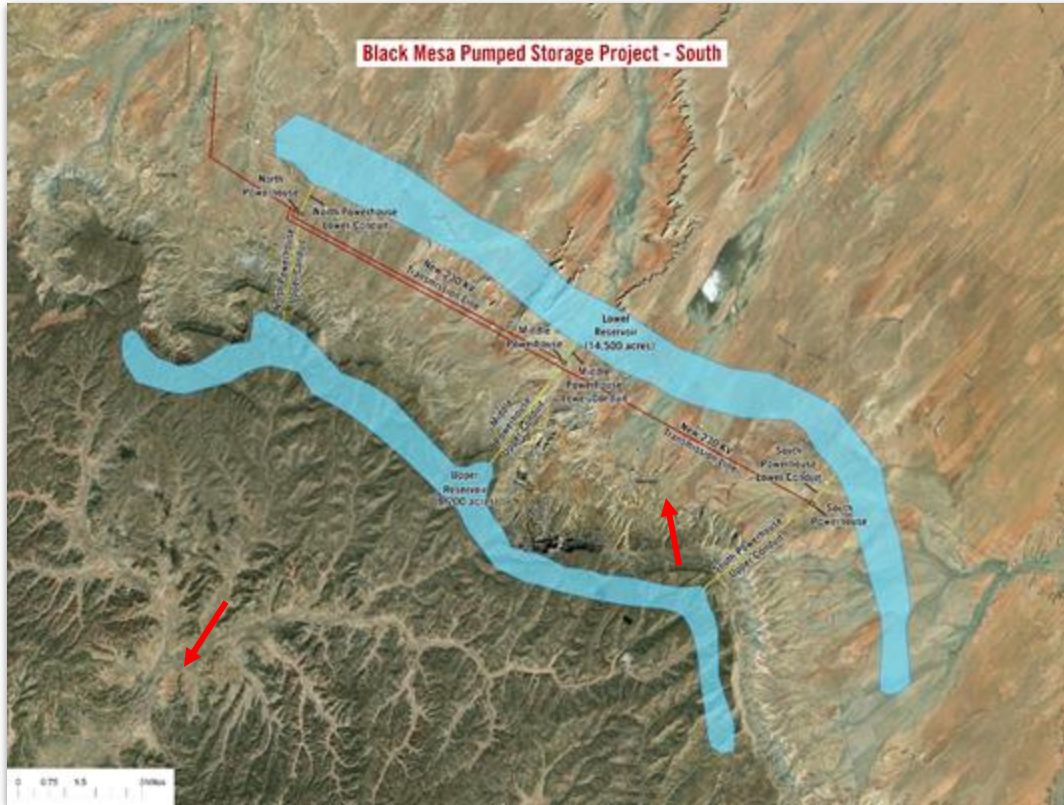
- Adjacent Community/Town: Kayenta
- 4 reservoirs
 - Upper west
 - Lower west
 - Lower middle
 - Lower south
- 65 billion gallons (100,000 AF) of water
- Source of water:
 - Colorado River
 - San Juan River
 - and/or local aquifers
- 3 powerhouses
 - West + Middle + North with 3 turbine-generator units each
- 5 miles of tunnels and conduits
- 80 miles of transmission lines
- Navajo Generating or Powell Glen Canyon substations
- 4,928 GWH annual power generation

BMPSP East



- Adjacent Community/Town: Chilchinbito
- 3 reservoirs
- Upper West
- Upper East
- Lower
- 65 billion gallons (100,000 AF) of water
- Source of water from:
 - Colorado River
 - San Juan River
 - and/or local aquifers
- 2 powerhouses:
 - West and Middle with 3 turbine-generator units each
- 6 miles of tunnels and conduits
- 110 miles of transmission lines
- Shiprock substation
- 3,285 GWH annual power generation

BMPSP South



- Adjacent Community/Town: Rough Rock, Black Mesa/Kitsilii Chapter
- 2 reservoirs:
 - Upper
 - Lower
- 81 billion gallons (250,000 AF) of water
- Source of water from:
 - Colorado River
 - San Juan River
 - and/or local aquifers
- 3 powerhouses:
- North, Middle, and South with 3 turbine-generator units each
- 10 miles of tunnels and conduits
- 110 miles of transmission lines
- San Juan substations
- 4,028 GWH annual power generation

Black Mesa Pumped Storage Project



Our **Concerns** with this Project

1. **Dangerous use of water**
2. The water source is **not identified**
3. **Water evaporation**
4. **Lack of Community Consultation/Consent**
5. **Land & Wildlife Impacts**



All 3 Projects combined would **require:**

450,000 acre-feet of water (nearly 127 billion gallons) initially:

- Water source mentioned in The preliminary permits mention the following water sources: permits: **Black Mesa groundwater** and/or the Colorado River and San Juan River.
- **9 reservoirs** on/near Black Mesa totaling 35,720 acres.
- Additional **8,000 acre-feet of water** is estimated to be required each year after project completion



All 3 Projects combined would **require**:

30-40 miles of Black Mesa's north and northeastern edge would be **industrialized** with:

- Reservoirs
- Pump stations
- Generators
- Roads
- Water
- Electric lines



This project would **destroy**:

- **Aquifers and spring** productivity
groundwater withdrawals
- Traditional **land** uses
- Endangered **Mexican Spotted Owl** habitats
- **Geological stability** due to overdraft of
aquifers
- Impact endangered species like the **Navajo
Sedge & Colorado Pikeminnows**

Navajo Water Facts



Photo By: Wheatfield Lakeside Store [Facebook Page](#)

- 450,000 acre-feet = nearly 127 billion gallons
 - **Over 2 billion 55 Gallon Barrels**
- Wheatfields Lake has only 4,500 acre-feet of water and covers 315 acres.
 - **100x Wheatfields Lake**
- Total industrial withdrawals from the Navajo aquifer from 1965-2018 from the Black Mesa area, 154,800 acre-feet.
 - **3 x Coal Mining Impacts**

Black Mesa Pumped Storage Project

- Nature & People First have already applied for preliminary permits for the three projects from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC).
- The preliminary permits, if approved, **will not allow construction but will allow Nature & People First to begin surveys, studies, and other planning.**

September 1, 2022

Via E-Filing

Frank Blackett, Regional Engineer
Office of Energy Projects
Division of Dam Safety and Inspections
San Francisco Regional Office
100 First Street, Suite 2300
San Francisco, CA 94105

Application for Preliminary Permit, Black Mesa Pumped Storage Project - North

Dear Mr. Blackett:

On October 4, 2021, pursuant to 18 C.F.R. 4.32 and 4.81, the Commission's (Commission) regulations, I submitted an Application for a Preliminary Permit for the proposed Black Mesa Pumped Storage Project - North (Project). The proposed facility is a pumped storage hydroelectric facility located near Kipenta in Navajo County, Arizona.

As detailed in the application, NPA proposes to evaluate the potential development of this pumped storage power plant in consultation with the Navajo Nation, NPA has a keen interest in harnessing and increasing renewable energy production and looks forward to working with the Commission while developing this important new source of clean and sustainable energy storage.

The application was filed with Commission's Secretary but not with the Regional Office pursuant to 18 C.F.R. 4.32(b)(7). Therefore, NPA herewith submits the application to the San Francisco Regional Office.

If you require additional information, please contact me at (781) 491-5364 or at Denis.Papre@natureandpeoplefirst.com.

Sincerely,



Denis Papre
President and CEO
Nature and People First Arizona PHS, LLC
405 Waltham St, Suite 145
Levittown, MA 02461

September 1, 2022

Via E-Filing

Frank Blackett, Regional Engineer
Office of Energy Projects
Division of Dam Safety and Inspections
San Francisco Regional Office
100 First Street, Suite 2300
San Francisco, CA 94105

Application for Preliminary Permit, Black Mesa Pumped Storage Project - East

Dear Mr. Blackett:

On October 4, 2021, pursuant to 18 C.F.R. 4.32 and 4.81, the Commission's (Commission) regulations, Nature and People First submitted an Application for a Preliminary Permit for the proposed Black Mesa Pumped Storage Project - East (Project). The proposed facility is a 5,500 megawatt (MW) pumped storage hydroelectric facility located near Kipenta in Navajo County, Arizona.

As detailed in the application, NPA proposes to evaluate the potential development of this pumped storage power plant in consultation with the Navajo Nation, NPA has a keen interest in harnessing and increasing renewable energy production and looks forward to working with the Commission while developing this important new source of clean and sustainable energy storage.

The application was filed with Commission's Secretary but not with the Regional Office pursuant to 18 C.F.R. 4.32(b)(7). Therefore, NPA herewith submits the application to the San Francisco Regional Office.

If you require additional information, please contact me at (781) 491-5364 or at Denis.Papre@natureandpeoplefirst.com.

Sincerely,



Denis Papre
President and CEO
Nature and People First Arizona PHS, LLC
405 Waltham St, Suite 145
Levittown, MA 02421

September 1, 2022

Via E-Filing

Frank Blackett, Regional Engineer
Office of Energy Projects
Division of Dam Safety and Inspections
San Francisco Regional Office
100 First Street, Suite 2300
San Francisco, CA 94105

Application for Preliminary Permit, Black Mesa Pumped Storage Project - South

Dear Mr. Blackett:

On October 4, 2021, pursuant to 18 C.F.R. 4.32 and 4.81, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's (Commission) regulations, Nature and People First Arizona PHS, LLC (NPA) filed an Application for a Preliminary Permit for the proposed Black Mesa Pumped Storage Project - South (Project). The proposed facility is a 2,250 megawatt (MW) pumped storage hydroelectric facility located near Kipenta in Navajo County, Arizona.

As detailed in the application, NPA proposes to evaluate the potential development of this pumped storage power plant in consultation with the Navajo Nation, NPA has a keen interest in harnessing and increasing renewable energy production and looks forward to working with the Commission while developing this important new source of clean and sustainable energy storage.

The application was filed with Commission's Secretary but not with the Regional Office pursuant to 18 C.F.R. 4.32(b)(7). Therefore, NPA herewith submits the application to the San Francisco Regional Office.

If you require additional information, please contact me at (781) 491-5364 or at Denis.Papre@natureandpeoplefirst.com.

Sincerely,



Denis Papre
President and CEO
Nature and People First Arizona PHS, LLC
405 Waltham St, Suite 145
Levittown, MA 02421

Black Mesa Pumped Storage Project

- Nature & People First is asking for these federal permits **before consulting with or obtaining the consent** of impacted communities on and near Black Mesa.
- The Navajo Nation Department of Justice, Grand Canyon Trust, Tó Nizhóní Ání, Diné C.A.R.E, and Center for Biological Diversity filed a motion with FERC **opposing the project.**

PROCEEDINGS BEFORE
THE FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION

Nature and People First Arizona PHS, LLS Docket No. P-15233-000
Preliminary Permit Application for
Black Mesa Pump Storage Project - North

MOTION TO INTERVENE OF THE NAVAJO NATION

The Navajo Nation moves to intervene in this application as a matter of right.

INTERESTS OF THE NAVAJO NATION

Pursuant to 18 C.F.R. § 385.214(b)(2), the Navajo Nation is a federally recognized Indian tribe with sovereign authority within its territorial jurisdiction which includes the project area in this application.

Nature and People First Arizona PHS, LLC (NPFA) ("the Applicant") has an permit from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission for a proposed all water conveyance conduit, generating facilities at off-channel locations, infrastructure ("the Project") located on lands of the Navajo Nation in Navajo Project is intended to create a closed-loop pumped storage power plant for 2,250 MW. The three strings referenced are various alternative designs in same project scheme, same and geographic area. The Project may affect water, Navajo Endangered and Threatened wildlife and plants including Fish under the Endangered Species Act, and cultural resources of the Navajo Nation.

The Applicant has made attempts to contact the Navajo Nation and the land the Project would be located for the use of the lands associated with the Project similar to its efforts. However, if the Applicant has directly reached out to it for implementation of Navajo Nation permitting for Endangered Fish Clearances (Navajo Natural Heritage Program), land use permitting (Geot Department), water use permitting (Department of Water Resources) / Heritage and Historic Preservation Department). Rather, it appears the contacted local chapters and the Navajo Nation Office of the President as failed to make necessary contact with the appropriate regulatory groups within Government. The above-named departments have significant concerns adversely impact the use of these lands by the Navajo Nation and its means

and

The application describes the Colorado River, San Juan River and two unit source of water for the Project. The Navajo Nation claims historic, agree water rights to these sources of water and is a party to the ongoing suit in the Superior Court of the State of Arizona in and for the County of Apache Application of All Rights to the Use of Water in the Little Colorado River

BEFORE THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION

People and Nature First Arizona PHS, L.L.C., Black Mesa Pumped Storage Project North	Project No. 15233-000 Project No. 15234-000 Project No. 15235-000
and	Tó Nizhóní Ání Diné Citizens Against Mining and Environment, Center for Biological Diversity Motions to Intervene
People and Nature First Arizona PHS, L.L.C., Black Mesa Pumped Storage Project East	
and	
People and Nature First Arizona PHS, L.L.C., Black Mesa Pumped Storage Project South	

Tó Nizhóní Ání, Diné Citizens Against Mining and Environment, Center for Biological Diversity,
MOTION TO INTERVENE RE: PROJECT NO. 15233, 15234, 15235

I. INTRODUCTION

On November 3, 2022, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) issued a NOTICE OF PRELIMINARY PERMIT APPLICATION ACCEPTED FOR FILING AND SOLICITING COMMENTS, MOTIONS TO INTERVENE, AND COMPETING APPLICATIONS ("Notice") regarding an application from People and Nature First Arizona PHS, LLC ("NPFA") for a proposed project called the Black Mesa Pumped Storage Project North ("proposed North Project") (P-15233).

In accordance with the Notice and Rule 214 of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure, 18 CFR § 385.214, the Center for Biological Diversity (the "Center"), Diné Citizens Against

Motion to Intervene in Project No. 15233-000, Project No. 15234-000 and Project No. 15235-000
Black Mesa North, East, and South Pumped Storage Project

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Tó Nizhóní Ání “Sacred Water Speaks”

Contact: Adrian Herder | adrian@tonizhoniani.org

www.tonizhoniani.org/no-bmpsp

Supporting Documents:

- Nature & People First Preliminary Permits: North, East, and South
- Community Group Motion to Intervene Letter
- Navajo Nation Motion to Intervene Letter
- Community Group Press Release
- Project Summary Presentation developed in partnership with Grand Canyon Trust

Source:

- Application for Preliminary Permits, Nature & People First
- Water Resource Development Strategy for the Navajo Nation, NNDWR Motion to Intervene of the Navajo Nation, NNDOJ
- Groundwater, Surface-Water, and Water-Chemistry Data, Black Mesa Area, Northeastern Arizona—2016–2018, USGS