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For Immediate Release

Five companies named Outstanding Stewards of America's Waters

Washington, D.C. (April 28, 2015) – The National Hydropower Association today recognized five companies through its Outstanding Stewards of America's Waters (OSAW) Awards. The winners – New York Power Authority, Pacific Gas & Electric, Tacoma Power, McMillen Jacobs Associates, and Minnesota Power – developed projects that have provided extraordinary recreational, historical, environmental, or educational value.

“This year's OSAW winners are prime examples of the dedication the industry has shown to good water stewardship,” said Linda Church Ciocci, Executive Director of NHA. “Working with their local communities to preserve the natural ecosystems and educate on the value of hydropower are exactly what we set out to encourage when we established the OSAW awards.”

Three awards were conferred for Recreational, Environmental & Historical Enhancement:

Tacoma Power collaborated with the Skokomish Indian Tribe and regulatory agencies on the **Little Falls Fish Passage Improvements**, carving fish ladders into existing bedrock at Little Falls on the North Fork Skokomish River. The innovative project eases fish passage, preserves the beauty of this culturally significant location and helps secure salmon and steelhead populations.

Pacific Gas & Electric, in partnership with California Waterfowl Association, restored 500 acres of PG&E property to wetlands. The **McArthur Swamp Wildlife Habitat Improvement Project** created swales and loafing islands that are flooded annually to create high-quality feeding, breeding and nesting habitat for waterfowl migrating along the Pacific Flyway.

New York Power Authority undertook the **Frog Island Wetland Restoration Habitat Improvement**, rebuilding a historic wetland within the highly energetic upper Niagara River where it had gone barren. Using an innovative design under challenging conditions, NYPA excavated two acres to varying depths and enhanced substrates to support new native plantings, protecting them with a low-profile stone berm on three sides.

Two companies garnered awards in the Public Education category:

McMillen Jacobs Associates coordinated **Community Involvement and Contribution in the Blue Lake Hydroelectric Expansion Project**. The City and Borough of Sitka completed the largest public works project in their history by raising the existing Blue Lake Dam by 83 feet to produce 33% more power using the same water source. The City, along with McMillen Jacobs Associates and Barnard Construction Company, also completed a successful outreach and education campaign to inform the community of the benefits of the project.

Minnesota Power's "Hometown Hydropower: Rededication to Service" educated the public on the important role renewable hydropower plays for its customers through public speaking engagements, community festival booths, media tours, a public kiosk, ice cream socials, making donations to community projects and the creation of tangible materials such as maps, fact sheets, a commemorative medallion, a time capsule, and an informational website at www.mhydro.com.

NHA's OSAW selection panel, which included representatives from across the industry and media interests, determined the OSAW Award winners based on the project or program's initial challenge, innovation, collaboration with stakeholders, and results. The panel judges every project by its own merits.

NHA presented the awards today at the association's annual conference in Washington, D.C.

About the Outstanding Stewards of America's Waters Awards

In 1994, the National Hydropower Association (NHA) created the Hydro Achievement Awards to recognize organizations and projects committed to excellence in the development and operation of hydropower. In 1999,

NHA added the Outstanding Stewardship of America's Rivers (OSAR) Report to profile the best examples of hydropower's ability to generate clean, renewable, reliable and affordable electricity while protecting the riverine ecosystem.

Beginning in 2007, these two recognition programs were merged to more effectively provide recognition to deserving organizations and to reflect the changing nature of the hydropower industry, particularly the fact that hydropower can be used in various waterways. The new award program is called the Outstanding Stewards of America's Waters (OSAW).

NHA invites you to learn more about these outstanding endeavors, both past and present, at www.hydro.org/osaw.

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