

Kleinschmidt Helps Deliver Innovative Fish Passage Solution at York Haven Hydroelectric Project

Innovative Engineering and Collaboration Deliver Improved Fish Passage on the Susquehanna River

STRASBURG, PA, UNITED STATES, June 30, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ --

[Kleinschmidt](#) Associates is proud to announce the successful completion of the construction of the York Haven Nature-Like Fishway Project, a landmark fisheries engineering and hydropower initiative on Pennsylvania's Susquehanna River.



York Haven NLF Completed Project

Developed in partnership with [York Haven Power Company](#), LLC, the project fulfills a key [Federal Energy Regulatory Commission](#) (FERC) license requirement to provide upstream passage for

migratory fish species, including American shad and river herring, while allowing for the continued generation of renewable energy from this 20 MW hydropower plant.

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The York Haven Nature-Like Fishway embodies the future of hydropower—where innovation, environmental stewardship, and renewable energy generation advance together.”

Neal Simmons, Chief Executive Officer of Eagle Creek Renewable Energy

The York Haven Nature-Like Fishway Project presented significant technical, environmental, dam safety, and constructability challenges. Originally conceived as a 300-foot wide in-river fishway requiring extensive modifications to the existing dam, project costs increased substantially during design development and dam safety reviews. Located on the nearly mile-wide Susquehanna River, the fishway needed to function across a wide range of flow conditions while withstanding extreme flood events, handling debris and ice loading, meeting environmental

permitting requirements, and working within the existing century-old dam infrastructure.

Working in close coordination with federal and state resource agencies, Kleinschmidt helped York Haven Power Company secure approval for a redesigned fishway that is approximately 60% narrower than the original design while better aligning with long-term operational, environmental, and dam safety objectives. Additional schedule and cost savings were realized during construction when unusually low river conditions allowed the project team to replace a planned earth-fill cofferdam with a turbidity curtain, while still maintaining the project's water quality protection requirements during construction.

Serving as the owner's engineer, Kleinschmidt provided ongoing technical oversight and real-time problem-solving throughout construction, helping the client manage risk, improve efficiency and maximize project value. Prior to the fishway's completion, Kleinschmidt's lead fisheries biologist on the project, Chris Frese, passed away due to cancer, but YHPC chose to honor Chris at the May 27, 2026, ribbon cutting for the fishway.

"I'm proud to be part of a strong client, consultant, and resource agency collaboration that worked to support the generation of both clean energy and year-round fish passage on the Susquehanna River. Having worked alongside Chris Frese for over a decade, I'm saddened that he could not see the fishway operate but appreciate YHPC honoring him in this way. May his legacy live on through the strong science and engineering that is contained within this fishway," said Tyler Kreider, Kleinschmidt Associates.

"The York Haven Nature-Like Fishway embodies the future of hydropower—where innovation, environmental stewardship, and renewable energy generation advance together. By bringing together agencies, stakeholders, scientists, engineers, and construction professionals, we developed a solution that not only improves fish passage and river connectivity but also strengthens our ability to provide clean, renewable electricity to the region. This project



York Haven NLF Construction 2025



York Haven NLF Ribbon Cutting 2026

demonstrates how collaboration and innovation can create lasting benefits for both people and the environment, and it represents the very best of what our industry can achieve," said Neal Simmons, Chief Executive Officer of Eagle Creek Renewable Energy (parent company to York Haven Power Company).

York Haven provides a scalable example for the hydropower industry, as it is believed to be the largest Nature-Like Fishway at a hydropower facility in the USA. The Nature-Like Fishway Project demonstrates how creative engineering, advanced hydraulic modeling, and collaborative stakeholder engagement can achieve environmental compliance objectives while providing resident and migratory fish passage, significantly reducing costs, improving constructability, and supporting the long-term viability of renewable energy infrastructure.

The completed fishway represents a significant milestone in fish passage restoration efforts within the Susquehanna River watershed and highlights the hydropower industry's commitment to balancing clean energy production with ecological sustainability.

About Kleinschmidt:

Kleinschmidt Associates performs engineering, regulatory, and environmental consulting for North American energy companies and governmental agencies that strive to protect and enhance the natural environment without compromising performance. We work at the intersection of regulatory requirements, environmental science, and engineering solutions to achieve our clients' objectives.

For over half a century, Kleinschmidt has continually delivered new ideas that offer practical solutions to tough problems and sensitive issues. Our goal is to bring energy, water, and the environment into balance so future generations will thrive. For more information, visit www.kleinschmidtgroup.com.

About York Haven Power Company, LLC:

York Haven Power Company, LLC's York Haven Hydroelectric Project is a 19.6 MW run-of-river hydroelectric project on the Susquehanna River in south central Pennsylvania. York Haven began commercial operations in 1901, making it one of the oldest hydroelectric projects in America. The facility is equipped with 13 horizontal Francis turbines, 4 vertical Kaplan turbines, and 3 vertical propeller units. York Haven produces a long-term average generation of 135,485 MWh of clean electricity annually, which is enough to power 13,027 homes.

On December 22, 2015, FERC issued a new 40-year license to operate and maintain the York Haven Hydroelectric Project, and construction of a Nature-Like Fishway was one of the license requirements. York Haven Power Company, LLC is very pleased with the new state-of-the-art Nature-Like Fishway, which opens river connectivity for volitional movement of migratory and resident aquatic species on the Susquehanna River.

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