UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

BEFORE THE FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION

DRAFT APPLICATION FOR NEW LICENSE FOR MAJOR PROJECT - EXISTING DAM

EXHIBIT B – PROJECT OPERATION AND RESOURCE UTILIZATION

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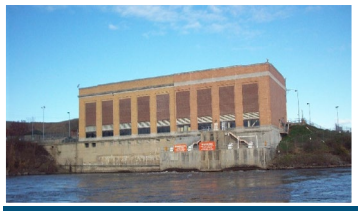
VISCHER FERRY HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT RELICENSING FERC NO. 4679




NEW YORK STATE OF OPPORTUNITY. | NY Power Authority

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1 Introduction

The Vischer Ferry Hydroelectric Project (Project) (FERC No. 4679) is an 11.8 MW hydroelectric project located on the Mohawk River in Saratoga and Schenectady Counties, New York, and in the Towns of Clifton Park and Niskayuna and the City of Schenectady. The Vischer Ferry Project and Crescent Project (FERC No. 4678) are located adjacent to one another on the Mohawk River in New York at river miles 14 and 4, respectively. The downstream project boundary of the Vischer Ferry Project is the upstream project boundary of the Crescent Project. The FERC-licensed Little Falls Project (FERC No. 3509) owned by Little Falls Hydroelectric Associates, L.P. is the closest upstream hydroelectric project (approximately 65 miles upstream) of the Vischer Ferry Project. The Vischer Ferry Project generally consists of a dam, powerhouse, impoundment, and appurtenant facilities. The Vischer Ferry Project dam was originally constructed as part of the New York State Barge Canal System[1] (Barge Canal System[2]) to 'canalize' the Mohawk River from Scotia to Crescent, providing navigable conditions for barges and vessels and facilitating water level control and lock operations. To this day, the first priority for operation of the Vischer Ferry Project is to provide adequate water levels for operation of the New York State Barge Canal, with power generation being the second priority. The Vischer Ferry Project is owned and operated by the Power Authority of the State of New York (d/b/a "New York Power Authority" and referred to as "the Power Authority").

This exhibit is required under the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) regulations which can be found in Title 18 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Sections 4.51(c) and 5.18(a)(5)(iii). The information provided herein covers the specifics prescribed for Exhibit B and serves the purpose of providing a statement of operation and resource utilization.

[1] The existing Barge Canal System was created following the passage of the Barge Canal Act in 1903. However, some portion of the original Erie Canal built between 1817 and 1825 still exists. For the purposes of this document, the Licensee will consistently refer to the portions of the Barge Canal or Erie Canal adjacent to the Projects as the Barge Canal System.

[2] The Barge Canal System is owned by the People of the State of New York and operated by the New York State Canal Corporation (NYSCC), which was created by the New York State Legislature in 1992 as a subsidiary of the New York State Thruway Authority (NYSTA). Prior to 1992, the operations of the Barge Canal System fell under the New York State Department of Transportation. On January 1, 2017, the NYSCC became a subsidiary of the Power Authority (N.Y. Public Authorities Law § 1005-b).

2 Project Operation (18 CFR Section 4.51(c)(1))

2.1 Operational Control

The Vischer Ferry hydropower plant can be operated remotely and manually. The plant is generally staffed Monday-Friday, during business hours, but the Project is typically operated remotely from the Power Authority's Blenheim Gilboa control room. The Project utilizes a programmable logic controller (PLC) system to monitor impoundment water levels and plant output. Many safeguards are in place for monitoring Project operations at all times.

2.2 Annual Plant Factor

The average annual plant factor is determined using the following equation:

$$\frac{\text{Average Annual Output}}{\text{Nameplate Capacity x 8,760 hrs./yr.}} = \text{Avg. Annual Plant Factor}$$

The Project has a gross average annual energy production of approximately 56,881 megawatt-hours (MWh) per year (2011-2020) and an annual plant factor of approximately 55.0% based on its current FERC-authorized capacity of 11.8 MW.

2.3 Existing and Proposed Power Plant Operations

2.3.1 Relevant Background Information

The Vischer Ferry Project dam was designed in 1907 and construction of the dam was completed in 1913 as part of the extensive modifications made to upgrade the original Erie Canal. These modifications allowed canal traffic to navigate on the Mohawk River, except where channels were constructed to bypass natural barriers. There is a single canal lock at the Vischer Ferry Dam, Lock E-7, which is operated by New York State Canal Corporation (NYSCC).

The current powerhouse was constructed in 1925 and expanded in the 1980s. It houses the two original 2.8 MW Francis turbines with an installed capacity of 5.6 MW and the two newer 3.0 MW Kaplan turbines, for a total capacity of 11.6 MW. On April 8, 1991, FERC issued an Order amending the license to an installed capacity of 11.8 MW based on actual performance.

2.3.2 Current Project Operations

The Vischer Ferry Project is operated on a run-of-river basis. The original purpose of the Vischer Ferry Dam was to impound water to support navigation on the Barge Canal; this remains true today. In 1983, the State of New York and the Power Authority entered into a Development Agreement whereby the State agreed to grant a perpetual hydroelectric easement to the Power Authority to develop and operate hydropower facilities at both the Vischer Ferry and Crescent project sites. The Development Agreement contains certain protocols for standard operation and maintenance of both the Project and the Barge Canal System. During unusual conditions or emergencies associated with either system, public safety is always the first priority. Otherwise, navigation and Barge Canal System operations take priority over the operation of the Project. Unless emergency conditions exist, the Project operates in run-of-river mode. The Power Authority proposes to continue operating the Project in the same manner as under the current license.

Vischer Ferry Project operations are performed in a manner to maintain the normal full pool elevation of the impoundment. Flow through the Project is through the powerhouse or over the dam. A minimum flow of 200 cfs (or inflow, whichever is less) is required to be passed at the Vischer Ferry Dam. Once Project minimum flows and any diversion required for canal operations are met, the remaining flow is available for power generation.

Flashboards are installed along the spillway crests of the Vischer Ferry Dam seasonally for the navigation season. The flashboards are 27 inches high and are installed in sockets spaced 4 ft. apart. When the flashboards are installed the elevation of the spillway is El. 213.25 ft. Barge Canal Datum (BCD). The flashboards are set to fail when the headpond level overtops the flashboards by between 1-3 feet, depending on the dam section.

The Project operators monitor available water level and weather forecasting information (i.e., USGS webpage) for severe weather predictions. The USGS maintains a streamflow gage upstream of the Crescent and Vischer Ferry Projects at Little Falls (USGS Gage No. 01347000), and downstream of the Crescent Project at Cohoes Falls (USGS Gage No. 01357500). The USGS also has streamflow gages in between the Projects and the Little Falls USGS gage, however, these gages have limited periods of records. The Little Falls USGS gage has a period of record extending back to 1927. The Cohoes USGS gage has a period of record extending back to 1917.

2.3.3 Operation During Adverse, Mean, and High Water Years

During normal water conditions, the Project is operated in accordance with the Power Authority's Water Management Plan for the Crescent and Vischer Ferry Projects. Under the Plan, the Vischer Ferry units are generally operated to maintain the impoundment elevation between 1 to 4 tenths of a foot below crest. Without flashboards the Vischer Ferry impoundment is maintained between 210.9 (max) and 210.6 (min), with a target elevation of 210.8 BCD. With flashboards the impoundment is maintained between 213.1 (max) and 212.8 (min), with a target elevation of 213.0 BCD. The newer Kaplan units are used first. As flow rises, one of the Francis units is brought on at full load, and the remaining load is balanced between the new units to maintain the required impoundment elevation. As the flow rises, output of new units is increased, and once all four units are operating at full output, water is spilled over the dam crest.

During high river flows the Project is operated in close cooperation with the Canal Corporation and in accordance with the Project's High Water Guidelines; procedures are located in the Project's control room.

The Project has a FERC-approved Emergency Action Plan (EAP) and is operated in accordance with the requirements of the EAP. The Power Authority conducts periodic inspections upstream and downstream of the Project to verify that no changes have occurred that would reasonably be expected to adversely affect public health, safety, or property in the event of a dam failure. An independent inspection by the Licensee's engineering staff is also conducted at least annually and routine repairs are performed as needed.

During both scheduled and unscheduled maintenance and unit shutdown events, the Licensee will continue to pass inflow downstream through operation of the remaining units, through the gates or over the crest of the spillway, as necessary. Order of operation or shutdown of any of the units is based on flow conditions and what specific event is taking place.

3 Resource Utilization (18 CFR Section 4.51(c)(2))

3.1 Dependable Capacity

There are two capability periods: summer (May 1 – October 31) and winter (November 1 – April 30). For each capability period, the New York Independent System Operator (NYISO) calculates the dependable capacity ("Unforced Capacity") for small hydro projects according to Market Services Tariff 5.12.6.2. The calculation is based on the amount of generation the Project produced during the NYISO's 20 peak load hours for each capability period. The dependable maximum net capability (DMNC) values for the limited control run of river projects are not supported by seasonal testing, but instead are representative of their nameplate installed capacity, and are not expected to change. The DMNC for the Vischer Ferry Project is 11.6 MW for the summer period and 11.6 MW for the winter period.

3.2 Average Annual Energy Generation

Table 3-1 lists the annual and monthly gross generation (kilowatt hours (KWh) at the Project for the past 10 years, 2011-2020.

Table 3-1 Vischer Ferry Project Annual and Monthly Gross Generation (KWh) 2011-2020

Month	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	10-year Avg
Jan	4,931,788	6,659,216	5,786,267	5,743,267	4,410,776	2,999,383	7,399,358	6,572,113	5,960,585	6,278,712	5,674,147
Feb	4,641,138	5,597,242	4,755,445	4,057,144	2,190,906	4,963,518	6,310,469	5,466,748	6,893,606	5,589,678	5,046,589
Mar	8,370,255	6,477,868	7,119,745	5,383,796	4,339,441	6,099,470	6,743,293	8,743,765	6,857,369	6,218,955	6,635,396
Apr	8,797,085	2,858,699	8,081,444	6,471,051	6,285,016	5,067,682	8,309,467	8,713,577	7,502,390	6,035,940	6,812,235
May	7,050,543	6,289,441	4,996,102	6,444,119	2,656,903	3,648,423	7,844,314	5,948,478	7,852,857	5,459,009	5,819,019
Jun	4,809,296	3,229,858	7,576,288	4,563,368	4,613,766	1,867,788	5,876,281	1,734,598	6,136,016	1,892,492	4,229,975
Jul	3,423,047	996,258	4,743,195	2,768,745	3,226,400	1,358,785	5,318,376	1,339,048	2,779,378	615,865	2,656,910
Aug	2,863,983	1,243,008	1,380,893	2,306,751	491,683	2,111,553	2,291,916	3,877,257	2,992,414	1,374,911	2,093,437
Sep	5,106,465	1,242,087	2,448,687	1,620,467	494,404	887,073	1,986,053	3,966,087	2,353,696	749,551	2,085,457
Oct	8,107,630	3,187,896	3,179,426	2,921,539	2,378,832	2,144,888	2,923,227	6,694,901	6,697,548	2,571,478	4,080,737
Nov	6,956,923	3,429,066	5,459,618	3,766,834	3,618,259	3,960,238	7,597,116	8,918,264	6,457,579	4,397,375	5,456,127
Dec	8,676,469	6,849,811	5,943,388	6,667,841	4,132,313	6,679,262	5,203,132	8,625,758	4,721,407	5,405,391	6,290,477
Total	**73,734,622**	**48,060,450**	**61,470,498**	**52,714,922**	**38,838,699**	**41,788,063**	**67,803,002**	**70,600,594**	**67,204,845**	**46,589,357**	**56,880,505**

Generation statistics are based on hourly generation data.

3.3 Project Hydrology

There are several methods and indicators available to monitor the flow rates on the Mohawk River. In addition to the hourly outflow data collected by the Licensee at the Projects, the USGS also collects streamflow data for the Mohawk River. The USGS maintains a streamflow gage downstream of the Crescent Project at Cohoes Falls (USGS Gage No. 01357500), and upstream of the Vischer Ferry Project at Little Falls (USGS Gage No. 01347000). The USGS also has streamflow gages between the Projects and the Little Falls USGS gage; however, these other gages have limited periods of records. The Little Falls USGS gage has a period of record extending back to 1927. The Cohoes USGS gage has a period of record extending back to 1917.

The annual and monthly minimum, median, mean, and maximum flows in cfs at the Vischer Ferry Project for the period January 1, 2011 through December 31, 2020 are provided in Table 3-2. Annual flow duration curves for the Vischer Ferry Project for the same period of record (January 1, 2011 through December 31, 2020) are shown in Figure 3-1. Monthly flow duration curves are provided in Figures 3-2 through 3-13. The flow statistics and flow duration curves were developed from outflow data collected by the Licensee at the Projects. Mean daily discharge data were used to develop the flow duration curves.[3]

[3] The Power Authority's Project outflow data used to develop the flow duration curves were reviewed and outliers excluded. To do this, inconsistent mean daily discharge values (values that were peaks or valleys as compared to adjacent daily discharge values) were excluded from the data used to develop the flow duration curves.

Table 3-2 Flow Statistics* (in cfs) for the Vischer Ferry Project

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Annual
Period of Record: 10 years (January 1, 2011 - December 31, 2020)													
Min	1,489	1,308	1,174	791	685	376	137	133	171	328	1,094	1,638	133
Median	4,834	4,129	6,211	9,797	4,796	2,277	1,325	1,071	1,072	2,321	3,752	5,272	3,675
Mean	6,268	6,432	8,197	12,311	6,351	3,673	2,298	1,805	2,271	4,152	5,009	6,935	5,541
Max	31,512	56,768	53,049	52,929	31,152	32,885	23,331	37,508	44,736	28,694	38,380	48,875	56,768

Source: New York Power Authority

* Flow statistics are based on the average daily total station flow.

Figure 3-1 Annual Flow Duration Curves for the Vischer Ferry Project

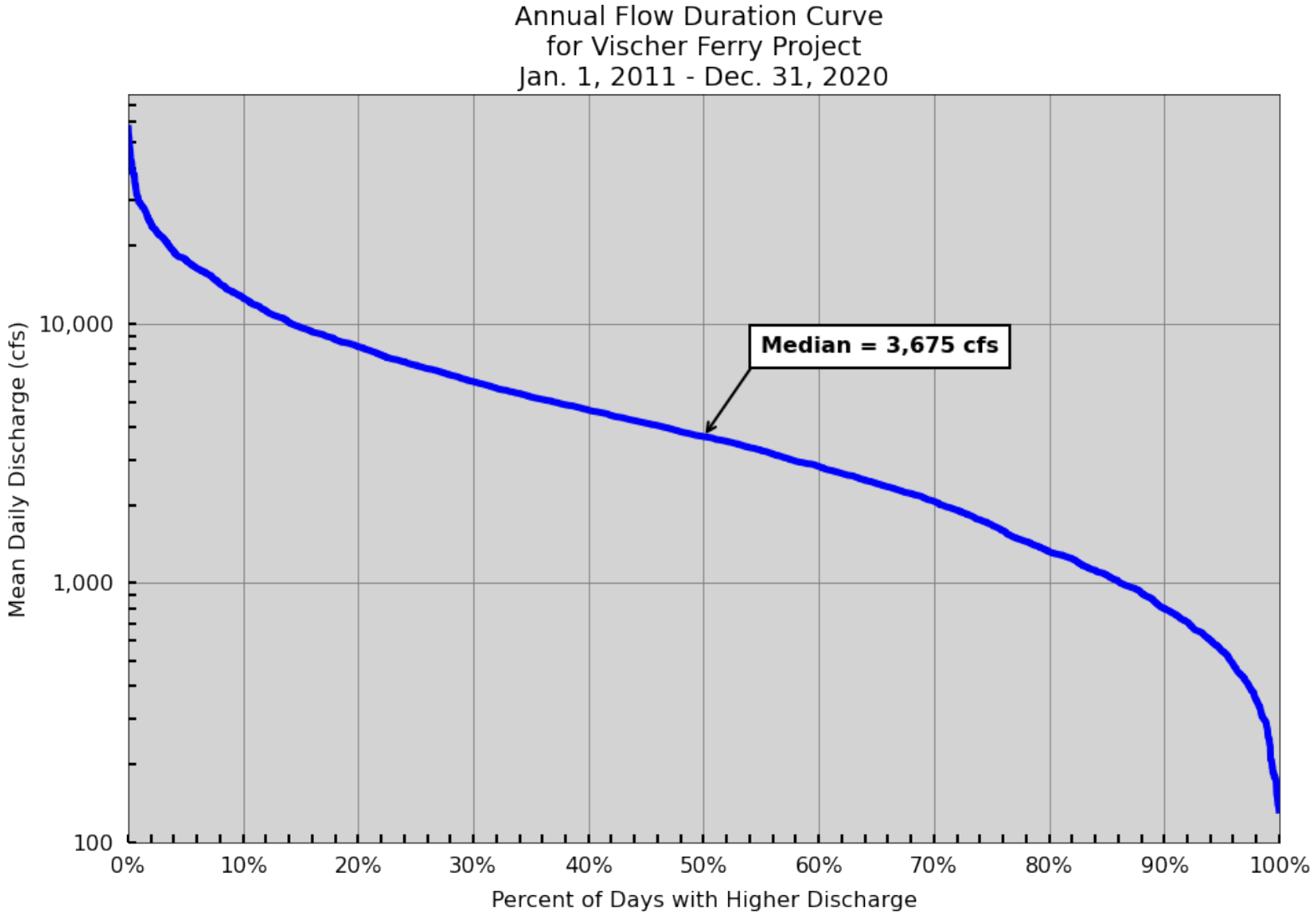


Figure 3-2 Monthly Flow Duration Curve for the Vischer Ferry Project - January

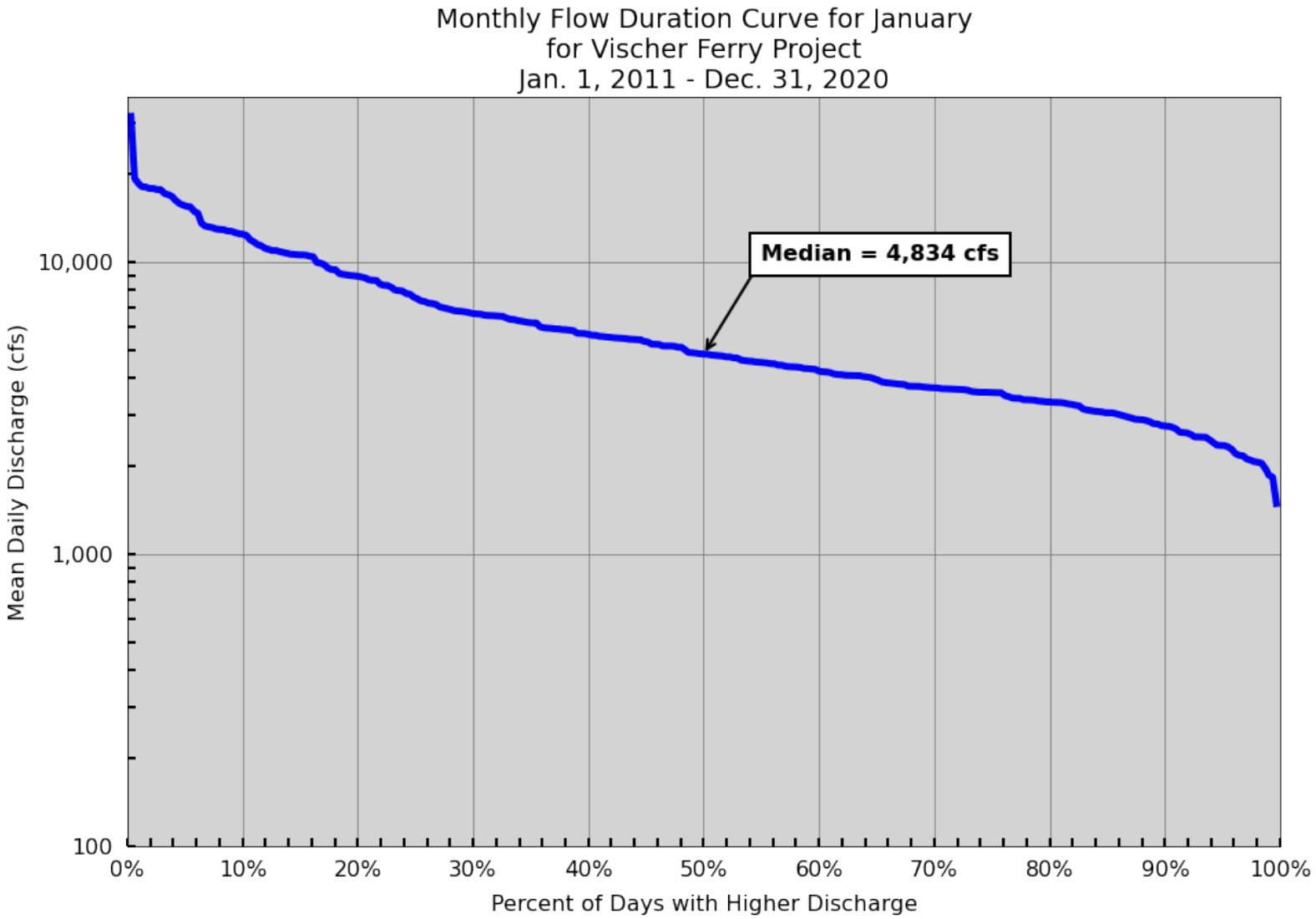


Figure 3-3 Monthly Flow Duration Curve for the Vischer Ferry Project - February

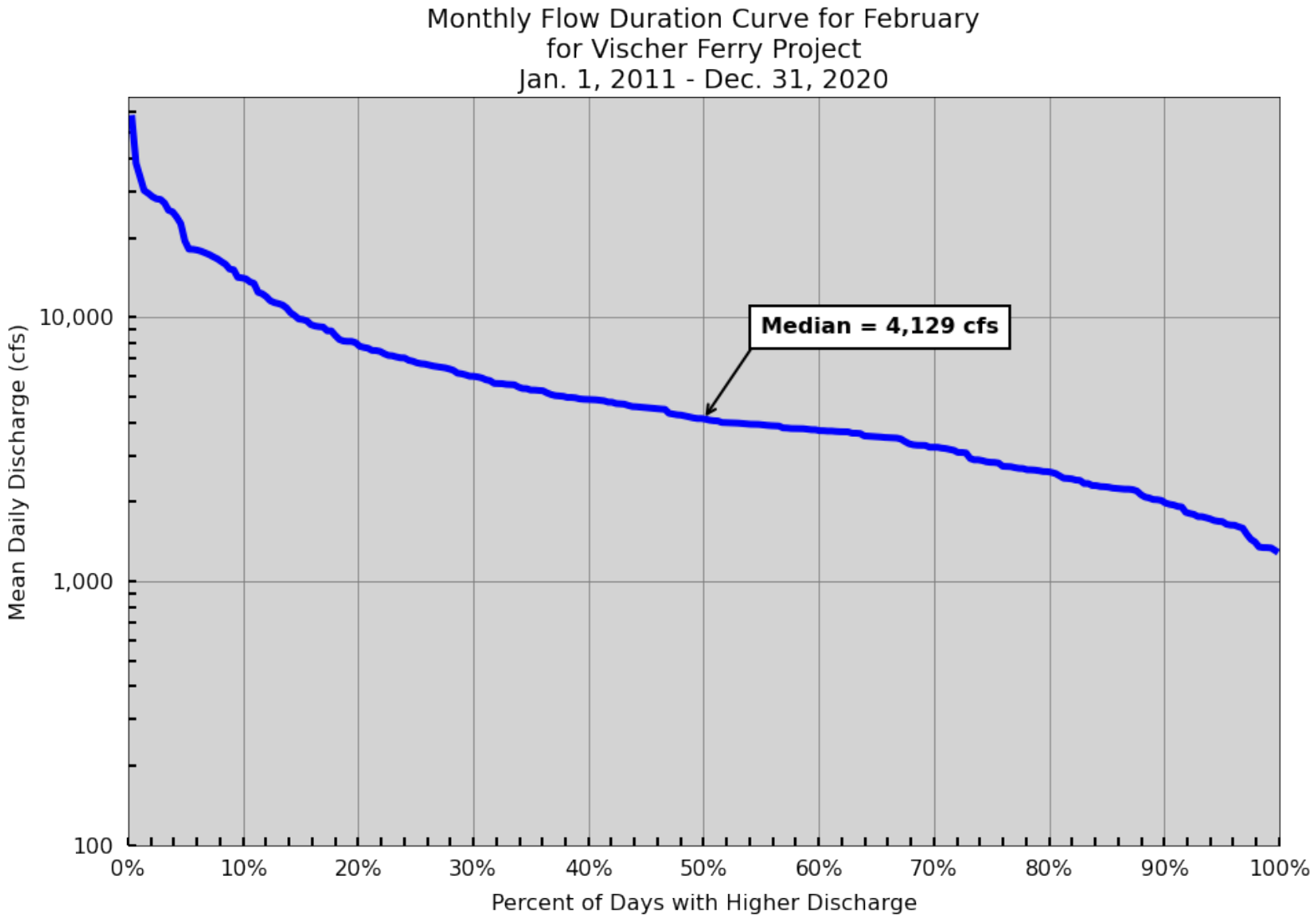


Figure 3-4 Monthly Flow Duration Curve for the Vischer Ferry Project - March

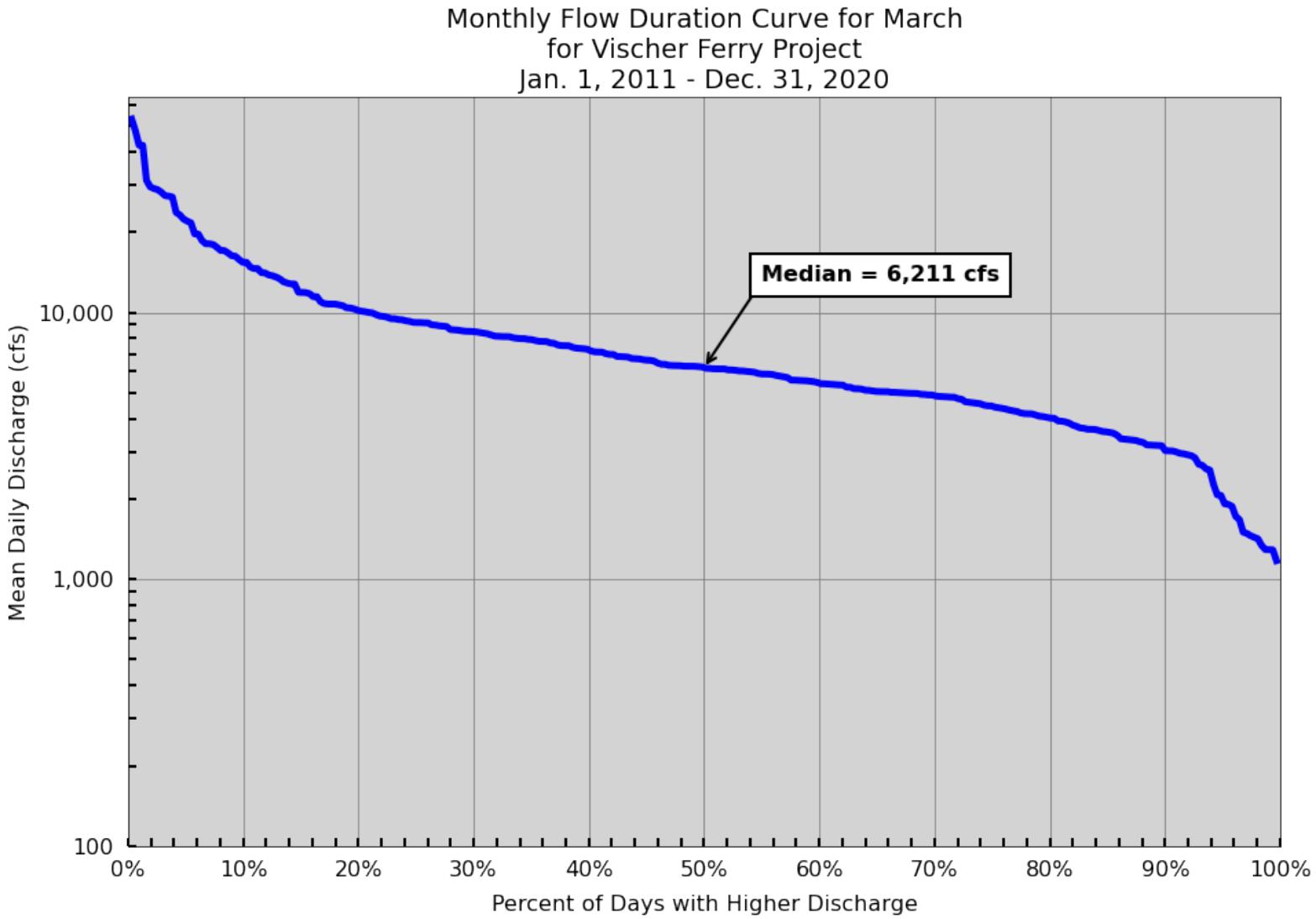


Figure 3-5 Monthly Flow Duration Curve for the Vischer Ferry Project - April

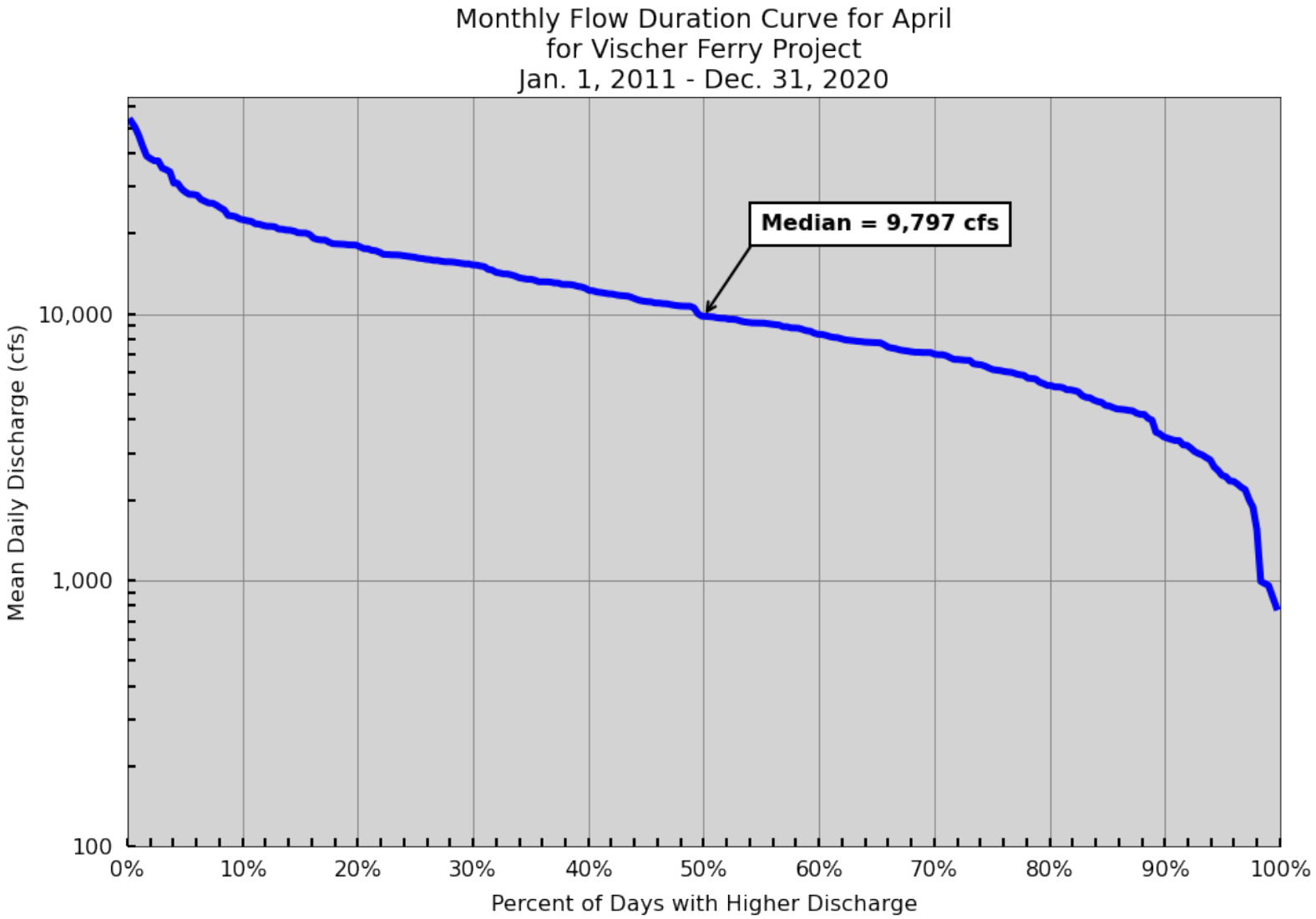


Figure 3-6 Monthly Flow Duration Curve for the Vischer Ferry Project - May

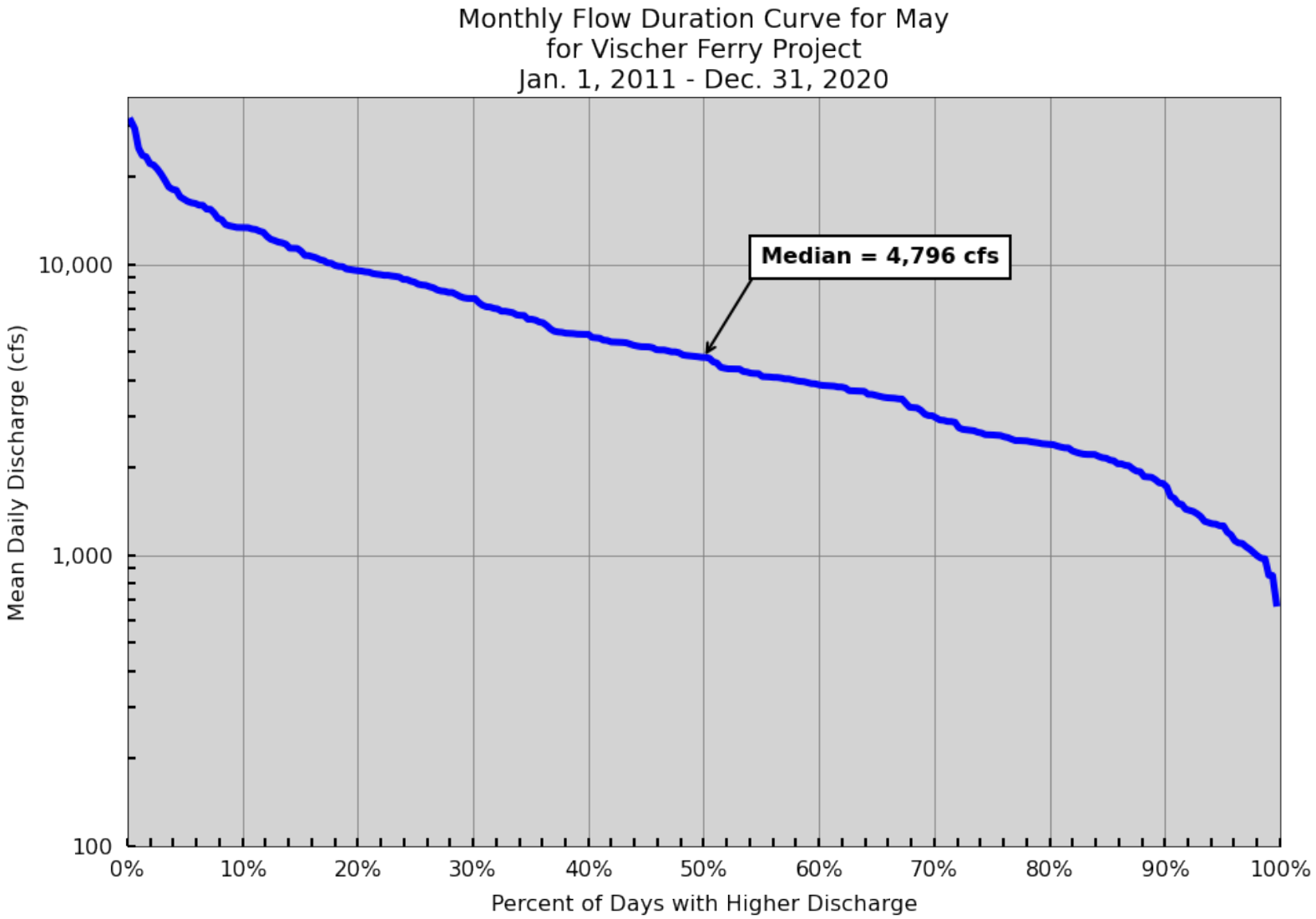


Figure 3-7 Monthly Flow Duration Curve for the Vischer Ferry Project - June

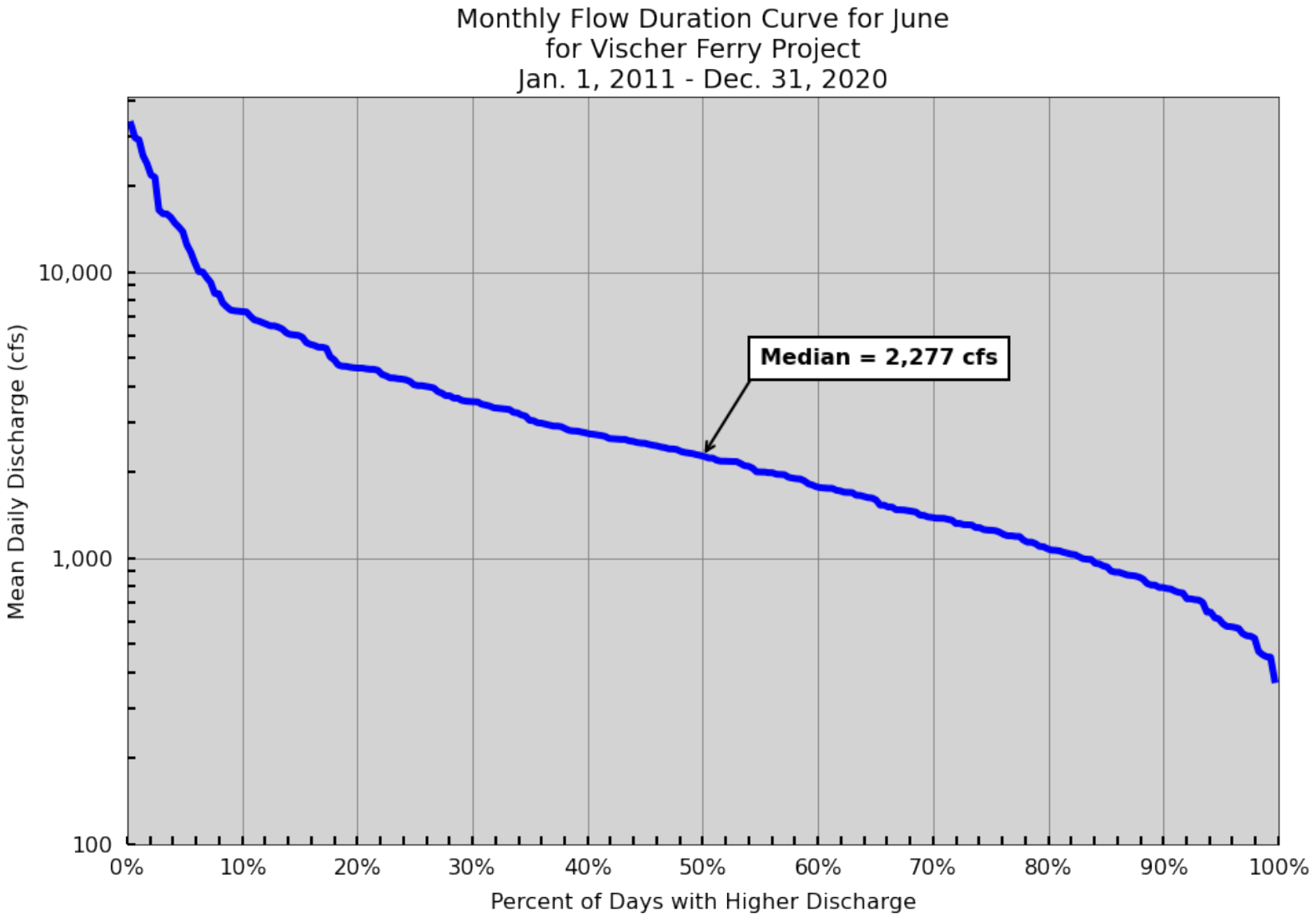


Figure 3-8 Monthly Flow Duration Curve for the Vischer Ferry Project - July

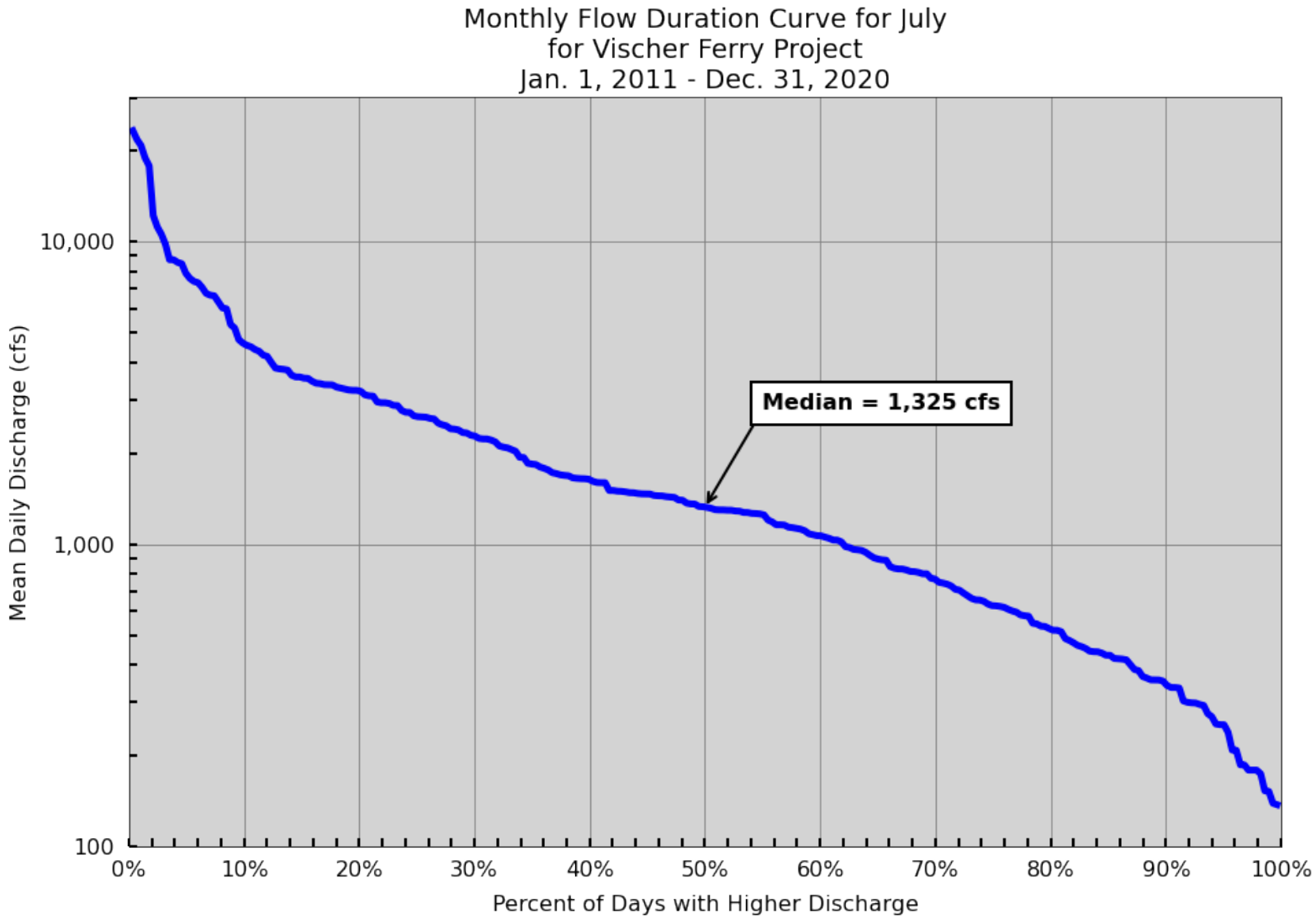


Figure 3-9 Monthly Flow Duration Curve for the Vischer Ferry Project - August

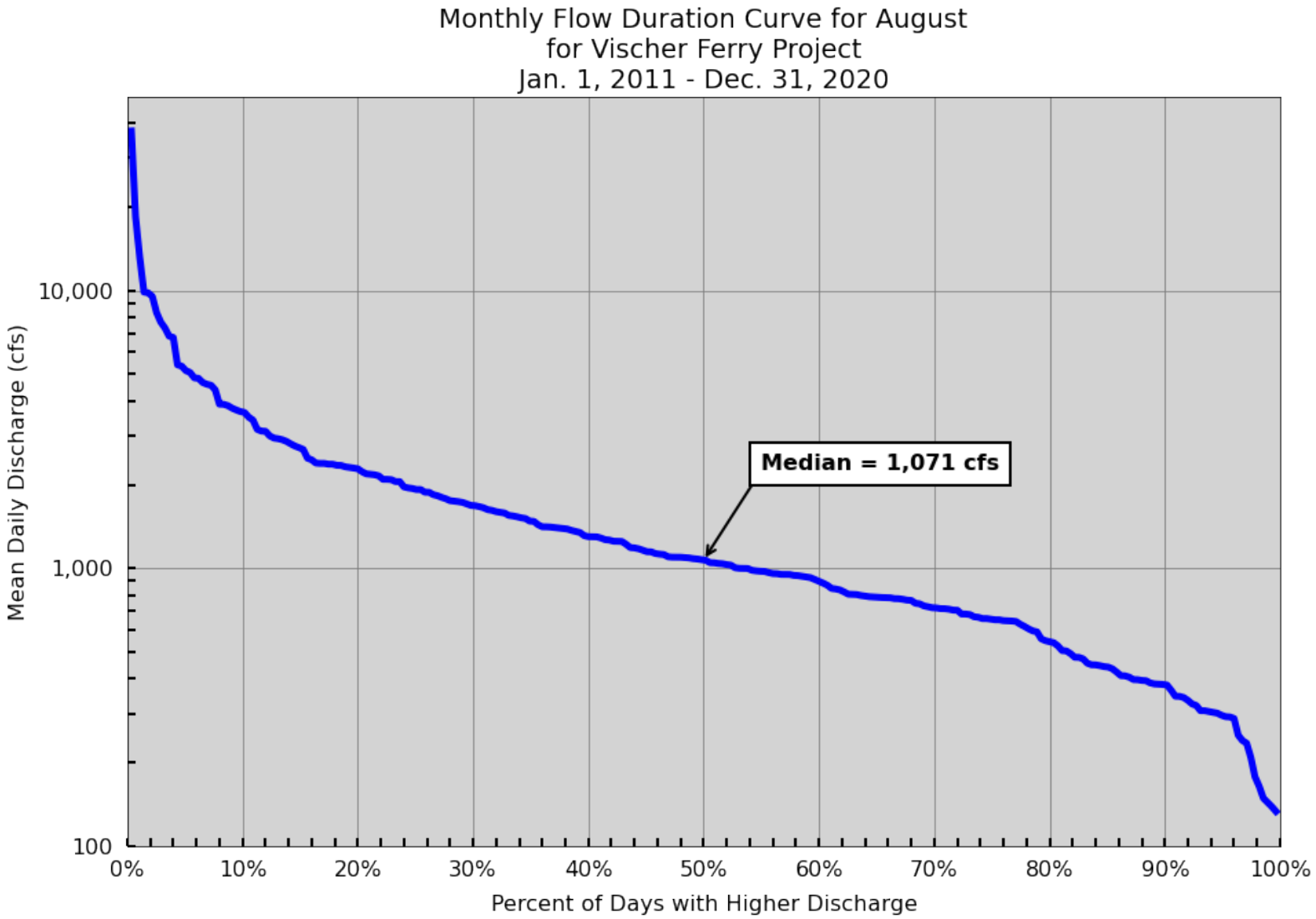


Figure 3-10 Monthly Flow Duration Curve for the Vischer Ferry Project - September

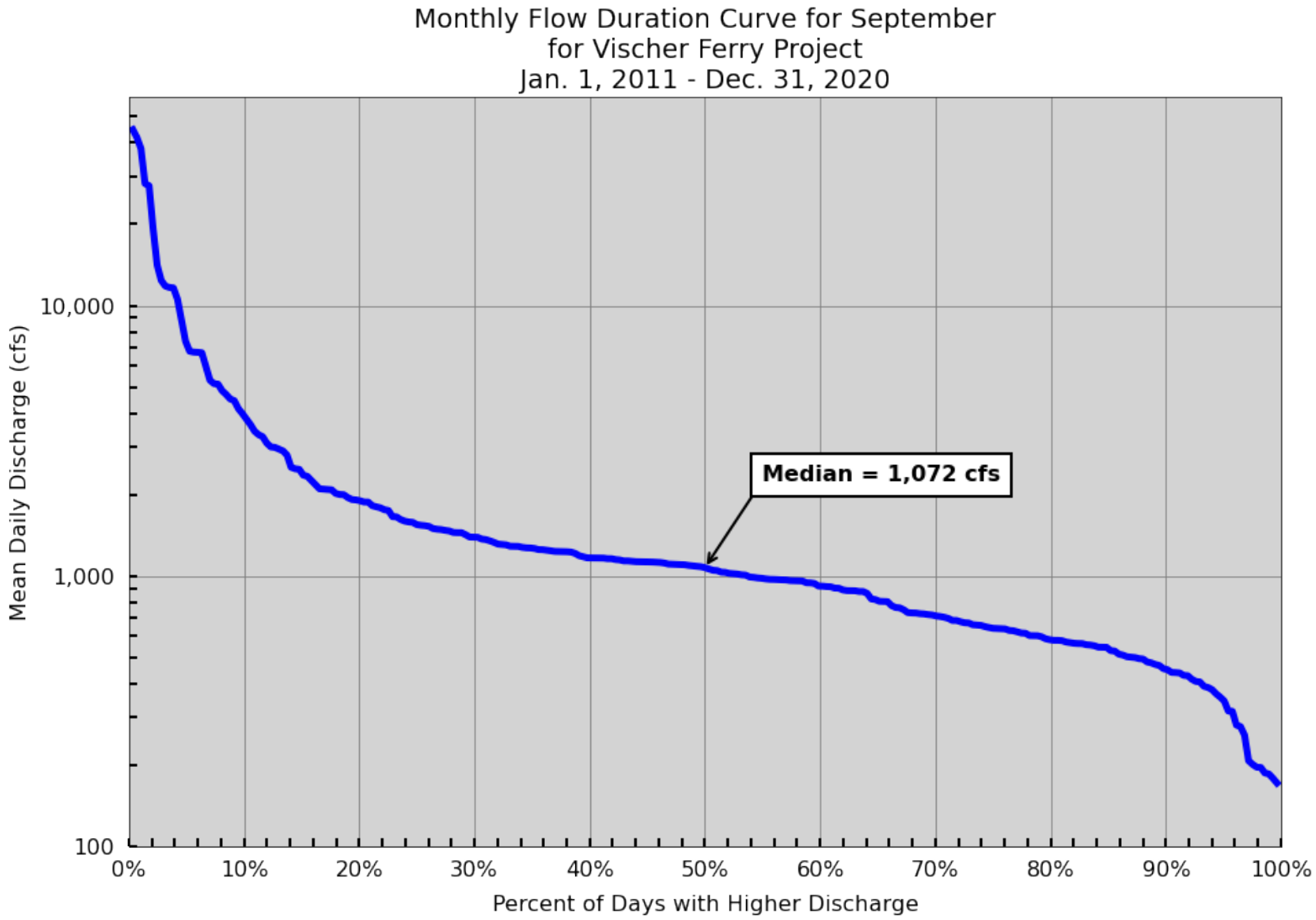


Figure 3-11 Monthly Flow Duration Curve for the Vischer Ferry Project - October

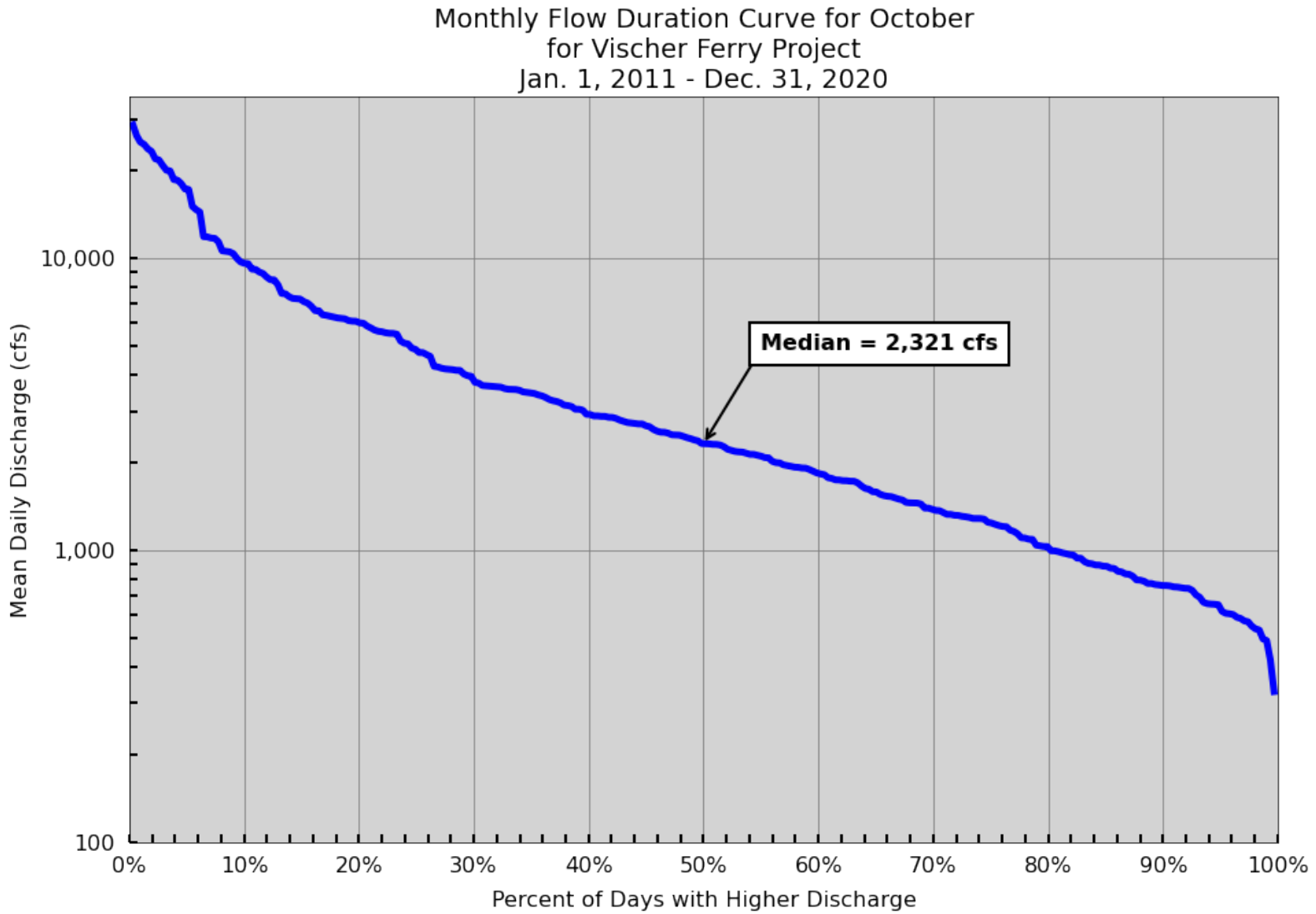


Figure 3-12 Monthly Flow Duration Curve for the Vischer Ferry Project - November

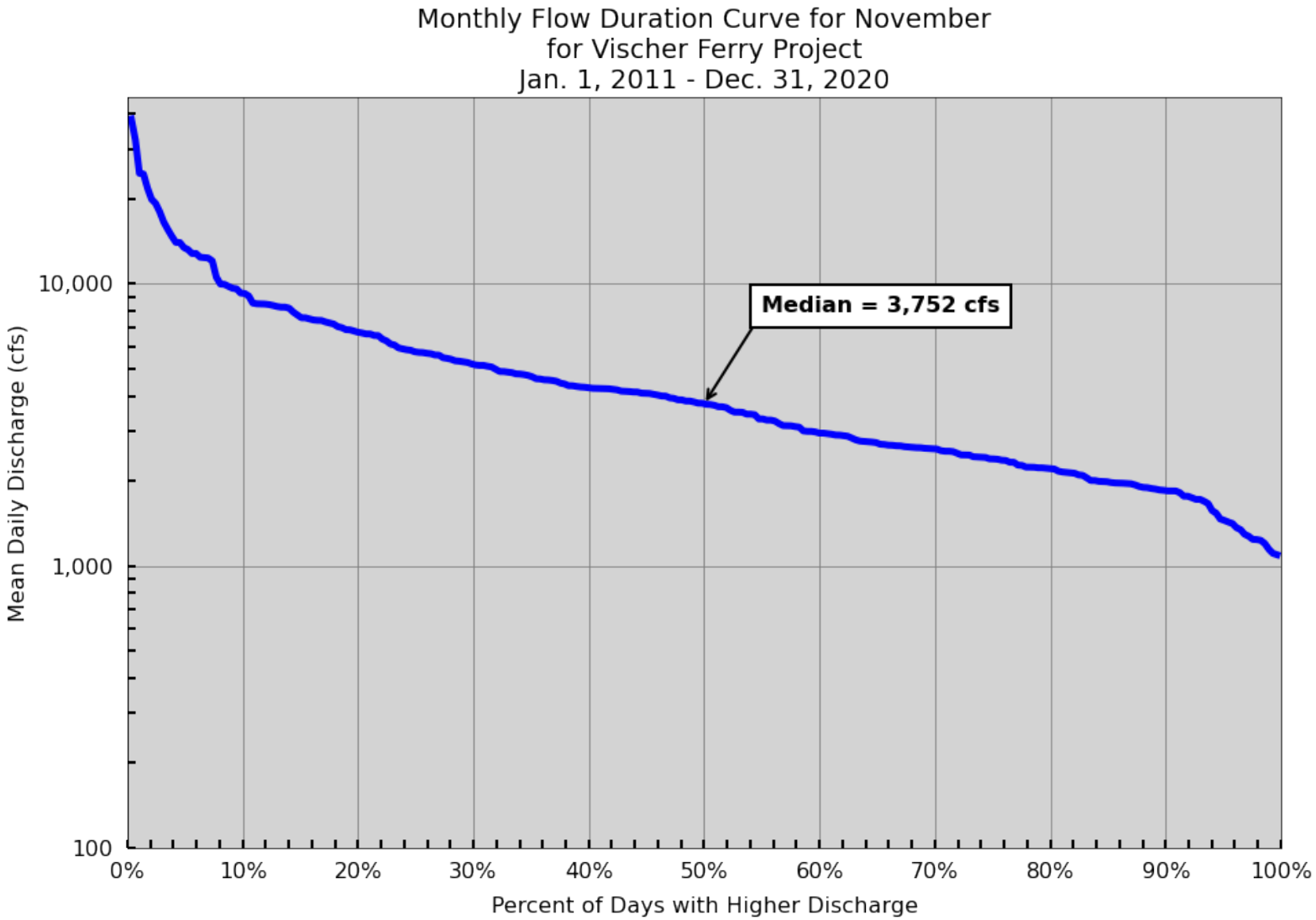
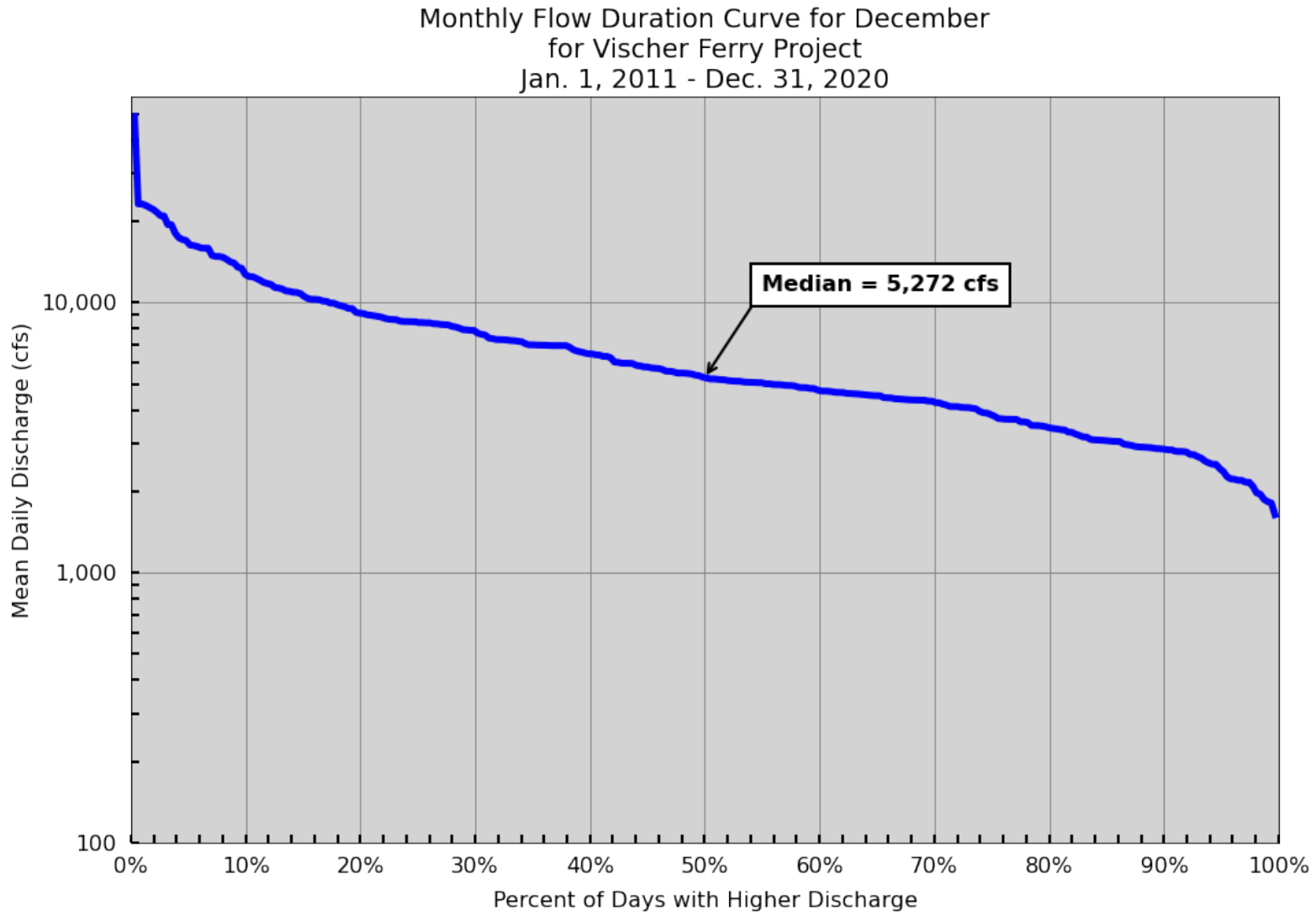


Figure 3-13 Monthly Flow Duration Curve for the Vischer Ferry Project - December



3.4 Area Capacity and Rule Curve

The Vischer Ferry Project is operated as run-of-river. The Project has limitations on impoundment level fluctuations and requirements for minimum flows and does not have the capacity to store or manage flows on a long-term basis.

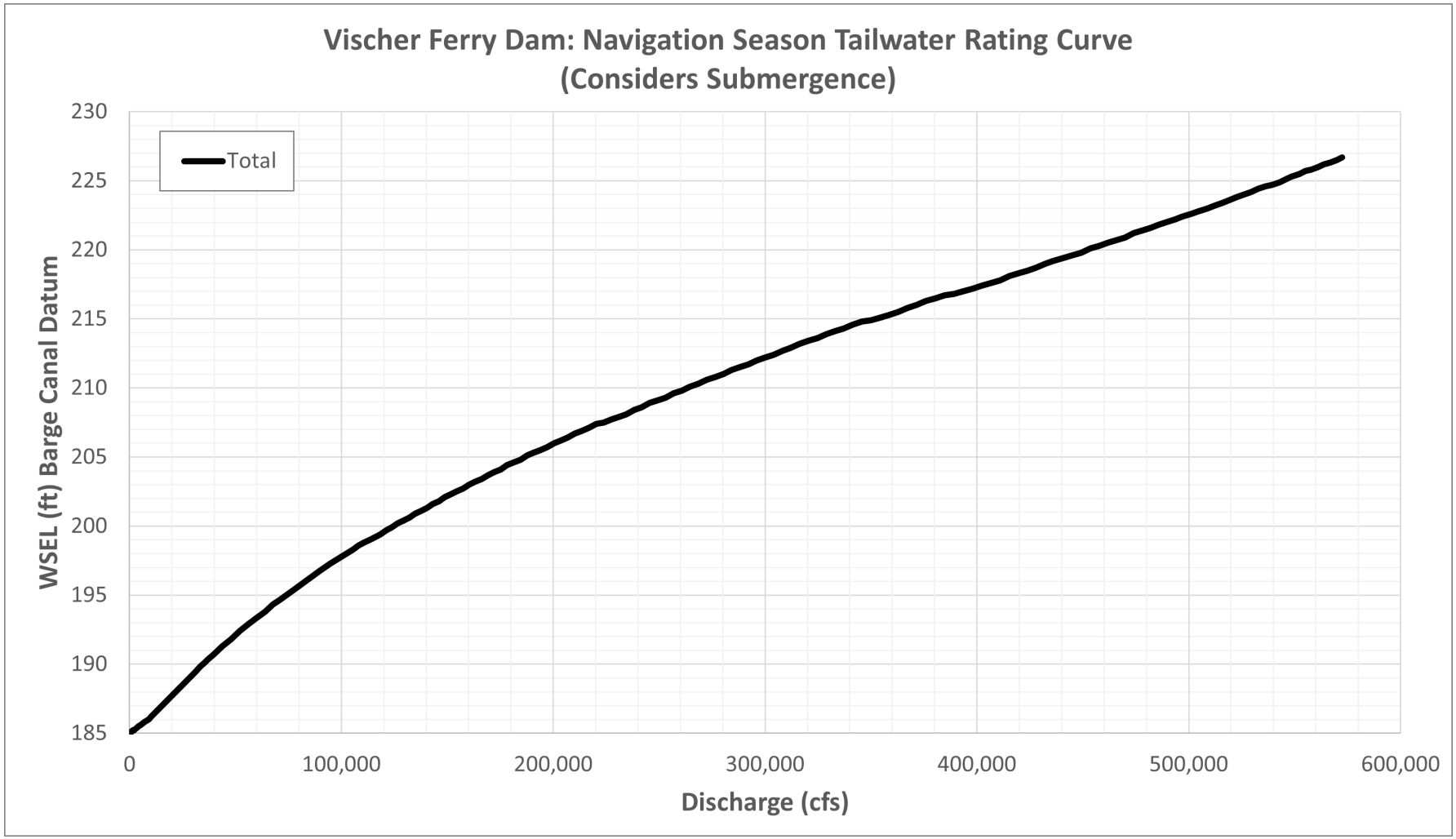
3.5 Hydraulic Capacity

The minimum hydraulic capacity of each of the Project's four turbine units is approximately 350-400 cfs. The maximum hydraulic capacity of each of the Project's four turbine units is approximately 1,500-1,820 cfs.

3.6 Tailwater Rating Curve

The tailwater elevation for the Project is approximately El. 185 BCD. The tailwater rating curve for the Project is shown in Figure 3-14.

Figure 3-14 Vischer Ferry Project Tailwater Rating Curve



4 Utilization of Project Power (18 CFR Section 4.51(c)(3))

The primary purpose of the Project dam is for navigation in support of the operation of the Barge Canal System. The Project's other purpose is for generation of clean, renewable power. Electricity generated at the Project is used to supply energy and capacity to the NYISO, a regional transmission organization that coordinates the generation and transmission of wholesale electricity within the state of New York. The Project plays a role in New York's renewable energy portfolio because it provides low-cost emissions-free, baseload power.

5 Plans for Future Development (18 CFR Section 4.51(c)(4))

The Power Authority has no plans to construct new facilities or to alter operations at the Project. The Power Authority seeks authorization to continue operating the Project in its current configuration and as it is currently licensed to operate.

6 Literature Cited

Gomez and Sullivan Engineers. P.C. May 2013. Crescent and Vischer Ferry Hydroelectric Projects - Flashboard Assessment and Discharge Rating Curve Revisions. Prepared for the Power Authority.