
State Water Resources Control Board

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD AND NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION FOR PACIFIC GAS AND ELECTRIC COMPANY'S LAKE FORDYCE DAM SEEPAGE MITIGATION PROJECT

To Interested Parties:

On May 26, 2020, Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) filed an application with the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) for water quality certification (certification) under section 401 of the Clean Water Act for the Lake Fordyce Dam Seepage Mitigation Project (Project). Lake Fordyce Dam is part of the Upper Drum-Spaulding Hydroelectric Project (Federal Energy Regulatory Commission Project No. 2310).

The State Water Board, as lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), is proposing to adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration and an associated Initial Study (IS/MND) for the Project. This information is provided in satisfaction of the formal written notice requirements for public review of a proposed mitigated negative declaration (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15072). Notice is hereby given that the State Water Board is accepting comments on the Project's IS/MND.

Project Description:

Lake Fordyce Dam is on Fordyce Creek, a tributary of the South Fork of the Yuba River, in Nevada County. The dam is about 7 miles northwest of Soda Springs, California, and 15.5 miles northwest of Truckee, California. Lake Fordyce Dam is a 156 foot-high, 1,220 foot-long soil and rock-fill dam with a concrete liner on the upstream face. The dam impounds Fordyce Creek to form Lake Fordyce. Inflow to Lake Fordyce is fed by Meadow Lake, Sterling Lake, and White Rock Lake, as well as unregulated inflow from rain and snowmelt within its watershed. Water released from Lake Fordyce flows into Fordyce Creek, which then drains to PG&E's Lake Spaulding.

In 2005, the California Department of Water Resources, Division of Dam Safety (DSOD) instituted a seepage threshold of 30 cubic feet per second (cfs) for Lake Fordyce Dam. Seepage at Lake Fordyce Dam exceeded the threshold in November 2011. Accordingly, in 2012 DSOD required PG&E to submit a plan and schedule to mitigate the seepage. The Project is intended to bring Lake Fordyce Dam into compliance with DSOD's seepage threshold.

The Project consists of a number of prescribed improvements designed to reduce seepage which include: placing an impermeable membrane liner on the dam's upstream

E. JOAQUIN ESQUIVEL, CHAIR | EILEEN SOBECK, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

face to cutoff seepage through the embankment; constructing a new concrete plinth and grout curtain at the upstream toe of the dam to address seepage at the low level outlet; and excavating a portion of the existing debris-laden fill at the upstream toe of the dam and replacing it with engineered fill. To implement these dam improvements, Lake Fordyce Road would be improved to allow construction equipment access. Additionally, a cofferdam would be constructed in Lake Fordyce to create a dry work area on the upstream face of the dam. The Project is scheduled to occur from April to October each year for three consecutive years. The cofferdam may be removed in the fourth year of construction due to weather conditions in the third construction year. During Project construction, minimum flow releases of 5 cfs into Fordyce Creek would continue to be met.

Comment Submittal and Deadline:

The State Water Board is accepting comments on the IS/MND for the Project. The IS/MND comment period is from the date of this notice through October 26, 2020.

Comments on the IS/MND must be received by 5:00 pm on October 26, 2020.

Comments can be submitted electronically or by mail to:

Mr. Jordan Smith
State Water Resources Control Board – Division of Water Rights
Water Quality Certification Program
P.O. Box 2000
Sacramento, CA 95812-2000

or

Email: wr401program@waterboards.ca.gov

The IS/MND is available under Related Document on the State Water Board's Drum-Spaulding Project webpage, which is located online at:

https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/waterrights/water_issues/programs/water_quality_cert/drum_spaulding_ferc2310.html

If you cannot access the document online, a hard copy of the IS/MND will be available by October 1, 2020 at the below locations:

**Lahontan Regional
Water Quality Control
Board Office**
2501 Lake Tahoe Blvd
Lake Tahoe, CA 96150
(530) 542-5400
Open Monday – Friday
8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Placer County Clerk Office
2954 Richardson Dr
Auburn, CA 95603
(530) 886-5600
Open Monday – Friday
(530) 866-5610
Open Monday – Friday
8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

**State Water Resources Control
Board/CalEPA Office**
1001 I Street,
2nd Floor Room 2-114
Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 341-5300
Open Wednesday and Friday
9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
by appointment only

KEEP INFORMED OF PROJECT MILESTONES

To receive emails related to the Project and other projects pursuing certifications managed by the Division of Water Rights, interested persons should enroll in the "Water Rights Water Quality Certification" e-mail notification service. Instructions on how to sign up for the State Water Board's Email Subscription List are outlined below:

1. Visit:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/resources/email_subscriptions/swrcb_subscribe.shtml#rights

2. Provide your name and email in the required fields.

3. In the categories below the email and name fields, select "Water Rights," then "Water Rights Water Quality Certification."

4. Click the "Subscribe" button.

5. An email will be sent to you. You must respond to the email message to confirm your membership on the selected list(s).

By enrolling in this email list, you will receive notices for other current projects in the Division of Water Rights' Water Quality Certification Program, including the Project. If you do not have internet access or do not wish to participate in the email subscription list, you may contact Mr. Jordan Smith at the phone number listed below to request to receive notices for the Project by mail. You can enroll or un-enroll from the email subscription service at any time.

If you have questions regarding this notice, please contact Mr. Jordan Smith by phone at (916) 323-3645 or by email at jordan.smith@waterboards.ca.gov

Ann Marie Ore
Program Manager
Division of Water Rights

Date