
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 UPPER DRUM-SPAULDING HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT AND LOWER DRUM HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT

To Interested Parties:

On February 4, 2020, Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) filed an application with the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) for a water quality certification (certification) pursuant to section 401 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. § 1341) for the Upper Drum-Spauldung Hydroelectric Project (Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) Project No. 2310) and the Lower Drum Hydroelectric Project (FERC Project No. 14531) (collectively referred to as Proposed Projects).

The State Water Board, as the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), intends to adopt an Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) for the Proposed Projects. This information is provided to satisfy 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 Proposed Projects' IS/MND and appendices.

Proposed Projects Description:

The Proposed Projects are located in Nevada and Placer counties in the South Yuba River, Bear River, North Fork American River, and Sacramento River basins. The overarching purpose of the Proposed Projects is continued hydroelectric power generation, under a new FERC license. The Proposed Projects involve the transfer of water from the South Yuba River and North Fork of the North Fork American River to the Bear River basin, and the transfer of water from Bear River to the Sacramento River basin. The Proposed Projects are comprised of 29 reservoirs; six major water conduits; 11 powerhouses; five transmission lines; one distribution line; and associated structures, including recreation facilities. PG&E proposes some modifications to existing facilities, most notably, the permanent retirement of Alta powerhouse unit 2, the renovation of Spaulding Dam's low-level outlet valve, and discontinuing operation of the Jordan Creek diversion and associated conveyance system. PG&E has separated the original license for Project No. 2310 into three individual licenses: Upper Drum-Spauldung Hydroelectric Project (Project No, 2310), Lower Drum Hydroelectric Project (Project 14531), and Deer Creek Hydroelectric Project (Project 14530). The Deer

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

Creek Hydroelectric Project is not included in the certification application and is therefore not analyzed as part of the IS/MND.

Comment Submittal and Deadline:

The State Water Board is accepting comments on the IS/MND and appendices for the Proposed Projects. The comment period is from the date of this notice through January 19, 2021. **Comments must be received by 5:00 pm on January 19, 2021.** 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

Executive order N-54-20, extended by executive order N-80-20, provides public access requirements for projects undergoing CEQA review to be satisfied by: a) posting materials on the agency's web page, b) filing with the State Clearinghouse, and c) engaging with known interested parties or individuals. As part of the alternative public access requirements, the IS/MND and appendices are available on the State Water Board's Upper Drum-Spaulding and Lower Drum Hydroelectric Projects webpage:

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

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the State Water Board's offices are currently closed. If you require additional assistance accessing the IS/MND or related materials, please contact our staff at the email address above.

KEEP INFORMED OF PROPOSED PROJECT MILESTONES

To receive emails related to the Proposed Projects 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 Proposed 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 Proposed 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