

To: Office of Planning and Research
P.O. Box 3044, Room 113
1400 Tenth Street
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

County Clerk
County of Fresno
2221 Kern Street
Fresno, CA 93721

From (Public Agency):
State Water Resources Control Board
Division of Water Rights
Attention: Eric Bradbury
P.O. Box 2000
Sacramento, CA 95812

Project Title: Courtright Intake/Discharge Gate, Cylinder, and Piping Improvements Project

Project Applicant: Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E)

Project Location – Specific: The Helms Pumped Storage Project (FERC No. 2735) is a component of the Haas-Kings River Project (FERC No. 1988), which is located on the North Fork Kings River in Fresno County, California. Courtright Reservoir serves as the forebay for the Helms Pumped Storage Project and Wishon Reservoir serves as the afterbay. The Courtright Intake/Discharge Gate, Cylinder and Piping Improvements Project (Courtright Project) is located approximately 52 miles east of the City of Fresno in Fresno County, California.

Project Location – City: Shaver Lake

Project Location – County: Fresno

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project: PG&E owns and operates the Haas-Kings River Project and the Helms Pumped Storage Project. PG&E seeks to implement the Courtright Project to replace hydraulic lines, cylinders, intake/discharge bulkhead gates, and bypass gates at Courtright Reservoir. PG&E also seeks to replace the existing oil spill containment domes at the Courtright Project site, which are ineffective at capturing hydraulic oil leaks, with a new system that seals to the top of the existing concrete structure and monitors the position of the intake/discharge gates while the gates are in operation. The replacement of intake/discharge-related infrastructure will not increase the generation capacity of the Haas-Kings River Project or the Helms Pumped Storage Project. On December 29, 2023, PG&E applied for a water quality certification from the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) for the proposed work. This Notice of Exemption is for the State Water Board’s approval, as lead agency, of the water quality certification for the proposed Courtright Project.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: State Water Resources Control Board

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: PG&E

Exempt Status: (check one):

- Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15268);
- Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(a));
- Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));
- Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: Existing Facilities, § 15301; Replacement or Reconstruction, § 15302
- Statutory Exemptions. State code number: _____

Reasons why project is exempt: The Project construction is categorically exempt from the requirements to prepare environmental documents under California Code of Regulations, title 14, section 15301 (Existing Facilities) and section 15302 (Replacement or Reconstruction). Construction will only consist of replacing existing infrastructure that is beyond its serviceable lifetime or insufficient in preventing hydraulic oil discharges. Work within the Courtright Reservoir footprint will be limited to temporary improvement of existing roads inside the reservoir via grading and potential placement of cleaned crushed base rock. None of the exceptions to the categorical exemptions apply.

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code.

Date Received for filing at OPR: _____

Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.

Lead Agency: State Water Resources Control Board

Contact Person: Eric Bradbury

Area Code/Telephone/Extension: (916) 327-9401

If filed by applicant:

1. Attach certified document of exemption finding.
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project? Yes No

Signature: Parker Thaler Title: Program Manager Date: 7/5/2024

Signed by Lead Agency

Signed by Applicant