

Notice of Exemption

Appendix E

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

County Clerk

County of: _____

From: (Public Agency): State Water Resources Control Board
P.O. Box 2000
Sacramento, CA 95812

(Address)

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

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

Project Location - Specific:

Courtright Reservoir on North Fork Kings River

Project Location - City: Shaver Lake Project Location - County: Fresno

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

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 Area is located approximately 52 miles east of the City of Fresno in Fresno County, California.

PG&E owns and operates the Haas-Kings River Project and the Helms Pumped Storage Project. PG&E seeks to implement the Courtright Intake/Discharge Gate, Cylinder and Piping Improvements Project (Courtright Project), which will 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 add indication to the intake/discharge gates for monitoring their positions 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 July 7, 2024, the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) issued a water quality certification (certification) for the work. On August 15, 2024, PG&E requested to amend the certification to update Condition 3 of the certification to allow crane maintenance and refueling within the ordinary high-water mark of Courtright Reservoir. This Notice of Exemption is for the State Water Board's approval, as lead agency, of the amendment to the certification for the 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));

X 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, potential placement of cleaned crushed base rock, and maintenance and refueling of the crane. None of the exceptions to the categorical exemptions apply.

Lead Agency

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 Date: 10/1/24 Title: Environmental Program Manager

■ Signed by Lead Agency Signed by Applicant