

**NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION**  
**FOR THE**  
**HELL HOLE WORKER CAMPGROUND, POTABLE WATER SUPPLY SYSTEM, AND**  
**COMMUNICATIONS UPGRADE PROJECT**

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Placer County Water Agency (PCWA) is the Lead Agency for the Hell Hole Worker Campground, Potable Water Supply System, and Communications Upgrade Project (Proposed Project or Project). The Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) for the Project is published and open for public review and comment from March 24, 2025 – April 22, 2025.

**Project Objectives:**

PCWA has identified the need for construction of a designated worker campground that would reduce the need for use of public campgrounds to accommodate work crews and reduce the need for use of public roads to commute to/from work in this remote area from outside communities. In addition, the campground would concentrate use in a formalized area, reducing potential dispersed use and associated impacts to surrounding natural habitat.

The Recreation Plan for the MFP, which is required to be implemented under U.S. Department of Agriculture - Forest Service (USDA-FS) Final 4(e) Condition 34 of the FERC license, requires several improvements to the Hell Hole Boat Ramp General Parking Area, including restoration of portions of the parking area including removal/restoration of portions of the parking area that were not previously restored in 2010; chip sealing of parking areas and roadways; painting traffic markings; and replacing the existing chain link fence. The Recreation Plan also requires provision of potable water to the Hell Hole General Parking Area. The existing water supply system, which currently serves the dormitory, cottages, and shop, consists of a water pump located in the Hell Hole Reservoir Tunnel (fed by Hell Hole Reservoir), 50,000-gallon storage tank, and distribution infrastructure. The current water supply system is non-potable, as it is sourced directly from the Hell Hole Reservoir Tunnel without treatment. Therefore, PCWA has identified the need to drill a new well that will provide potable water not only to the General Parking Area, as required under the license, but also to the new worker campground, and to improve the quality of water being provided to the dormitory, cottages, and shop.

Finally, considering that excavation and trenching is required for installation of the new water system, PCWA also is proposing to remove its dated and vulnerable above-ground telecommunication lines and install new communications cable along with the new water lines. This will improve data and internet service, and will improve the visual environment and scenic views of the reservoir and vicinity.

**Brief Project Description:**

PCWA is initiating planning and design activities associated with the construction of the Project. This Project includes the following components:

- Construction of a new worker campground, which includes 18 recreational vehicle camping stalls and utility hook-ups, for use by PCWA or others (as approved) working in the vicinity of the Middle Fork American River Project. The Proposed Project is located on lands that are currently owned and operated by the Eldorado National Forest (ENF). At some point in the near future, the land will be transferred to PCWA ownership as part of a land exchange. The worker campground will be a private facility and will not be available for use by the general public.
- Installation of a new potable water system, including a new groundwater well. This system would also serve the worker campground, Hell Hole Dormitory, operator cottages, and shop, and the Hell Hole Boat Ramp General Parking Area.

- Installation of a new underground telecommunications system to provide data and internet services to the worker campground, Hell Hole Dormitory, operator cottages, and shop. Telecommunications cable will also be extended to the Hell Hole Boat Ramp General Parking Area for potential future use (to avoid the need for re-trenching at a future date).
- Improvements to the Hell Hole Boat Ramp General Parking Area, including chipsealing, painting, and replacing fencing.

**Project Location:**

The Project is located approximately 22 miles northeast of Foresthill, Placer County, California in Township 14N, Range 14E, Sections 9 and 16 on the U.S. Geological Survey Bunker Hill 7.5-minute quad, Mount Diablo Meridian (Map 1). The Project is located on lands that are currently owned and operated by the Eldorado National Forest (ENF) but, at some point in the near future, the land will be transferred to PCWA ownership as part of a land exchange. The Project is located along the southwest end of Hell Hole Reservoir and is accessed via Forest Road 2. Project work and staging areas are located primarily on previously undeveloped lands located adjacent to several developed facilities associated with the MFP, including the Hell Hole dormitory, worker cottages and shop.

**Project Issues Discussed in the Document:**

Project issues discussed in the document are provided in the table below.

Aesthetic/Visual	Noise
Agricultural Land	Public Services/Facilities
Air Quality	Recreation/Parks
Archeological/Historical Resources	Septic Systems
Biological Resources	Soil Erosion/Compaction/Grading
Energy	Solid Waste
Flood Plain/Flooding	Toxic/Hazardous
Forest Land/Fire Hazard	Vegetation
Geologic/Seismic	Water Quality
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	Water Supply/Groundwater
Land Use and Planning	Wetland/Riparian
Minerals	

With incorporation of mitigation measures, none of these effects will be significant.

**Public Review:**

The PCWA Hell Hole Worker Campground, Potable Water Supply System, and Communications Upgrade Project IS/MND is published and open for review and comment from March 24, 2025 – April 22, 2025. The IS/MND is available for public review electronically, on the PCWA website (<https://www.pcwa.net/about-pcwa/environmental-planning>).

**Written comments must be received by 5:00 p.m. on April 22, 2025.**

The PCWA encourages all commenters to submit their comments on the IS/MND in writing. All comments or questions regarding the Draft IS/MND should be addressed to:

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A public hearing on this proposed project is scheduled for May 19, 2025 at 2:00 PM which will be held in the American River Room at the Placer County Water Agency, 144 Ferguson Road, Auburn, California. The project and the environmental analysis will be considered at that time.