

FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION  
Washington, DC 20426  
June 9, 2020

OFFICE OF ENERGY PROJECTS

Project No. 2997-031 – California  
Camp Far West Hydroelectric Project  
South Sutter Water District

**Subject: Scoping Document 1 for the Camp Far West Hydroelectric Project**

To the Parties Addressed:

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (Commission) is currently reviewing the license application filed on July 1, 2019, by South Sutter Water District (South Sutter) for relicensing the Camp Far West Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2997) under the Traditional Licensing Process.<sup>1</sup> The 6.8-megawatt project is located on the mainstem Bear River in Yuba, Nevada, and Placer Counties, California. The project, with the proposed project boundary modifications, would occupy a total of 2,674 acres. No federal or tribal lands occur within or adjacent to the project boundary or along the Bear River downstream of the project.

Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended, Commission staff intends to prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA), which will be used by the Commission to determine whether, and under what conditions, to issue a new license for the project. To support and assist our environmental review, we are beginning the public scoping process to ensure that we identify and analyze all pertinent issues, and have the information we need, to ensure the EA will be thorough and balanced.

We invite your participation in the scoping process and are circulating the attached Scoping Document 1 (SD1) to provide you with information on the Camp Far West Hydroelectric Project. We are also soliciting your comments and suggestions on our preliminary list of issues and alternatives to be addressed in the EA.

We invite all interested agencies, Indian tribes, non-governmental organizations, and individuals to participate in the paper scoping process. Further information on our paper scoping process is available in the enclosed SD1.

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<sup>1</sup> On October 25, 2019 and December 30, 2019, South Sutter filed amendments to its license application, which include revisions to proposed measures and supporting information on proposed changes to project facilities.

SD1 is being distributed to South Sutter's distribution list and the Commission's official mailing list (see section 9.0 of the attached SD1). If you wish to be added to or removed from the Commission's official mailing list, please send your request by email to [FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov](mailto:FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov) or by mail to: Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street, N.E., Room 1A, Washington, DC 20426. All written or emailed requests must specify your wish to be removed or added to the mailing list and must clearly identify on the first page: **Camp Far West Hydroelectric Project No. 2997-031**.

Please review SD1 and, if you wish to provide comments, follow the instructions in section 5.0, *Requests for Information*. If you have any questions about SD1, the paper scoping process, or how Commission staff will develop the EA for this project, please contact Quinn Emmering at (202) 502-6382 or [quinn.emmering@ferc.gov](mailto:quinn.emmering@ferc.gov). Additional information about the Commission's licensing process and the Camp Far West Hydroelectric Project may be obtained from our website, <http://www.ferc.gov>.

Enclosure: Scoping Document 1

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SCOPING DOCUMENT 1  
CAMP FAR WEST HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT

CALIFORNIA

PROJECT NO. 2997-031

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission  
Office of Energy Projects  
Division of Hydropower Licensing  
Washington, DC

June 2020

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# SCOPING DOCUMENT 1

## Camp Far West Hydroelectric Project No. 2997-031

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (Commission or FERC), under the authority of the Federal Power Act (FPA),<sup>2</sup> may issue licenses for terms ranging from 30 to 50 years for the construction, operation, and maintenance of non-federal hydroelectric projects. On July 1, 2019, South Sutter Water District (South Sutter) filed an application for a new license for the Camp Far West Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2997).<sup>3</sup>

The hydroelectric project is located on the mainstem Bear River in Yuba, Nevada, and Placer Counties, California (Figure 1). The project, with the proposed project boundary modifications, would occupy a total of 2,674 acres. No federal or tribal lands occur within or adjacent to the project boundary or along the Bear River downstream of the project.

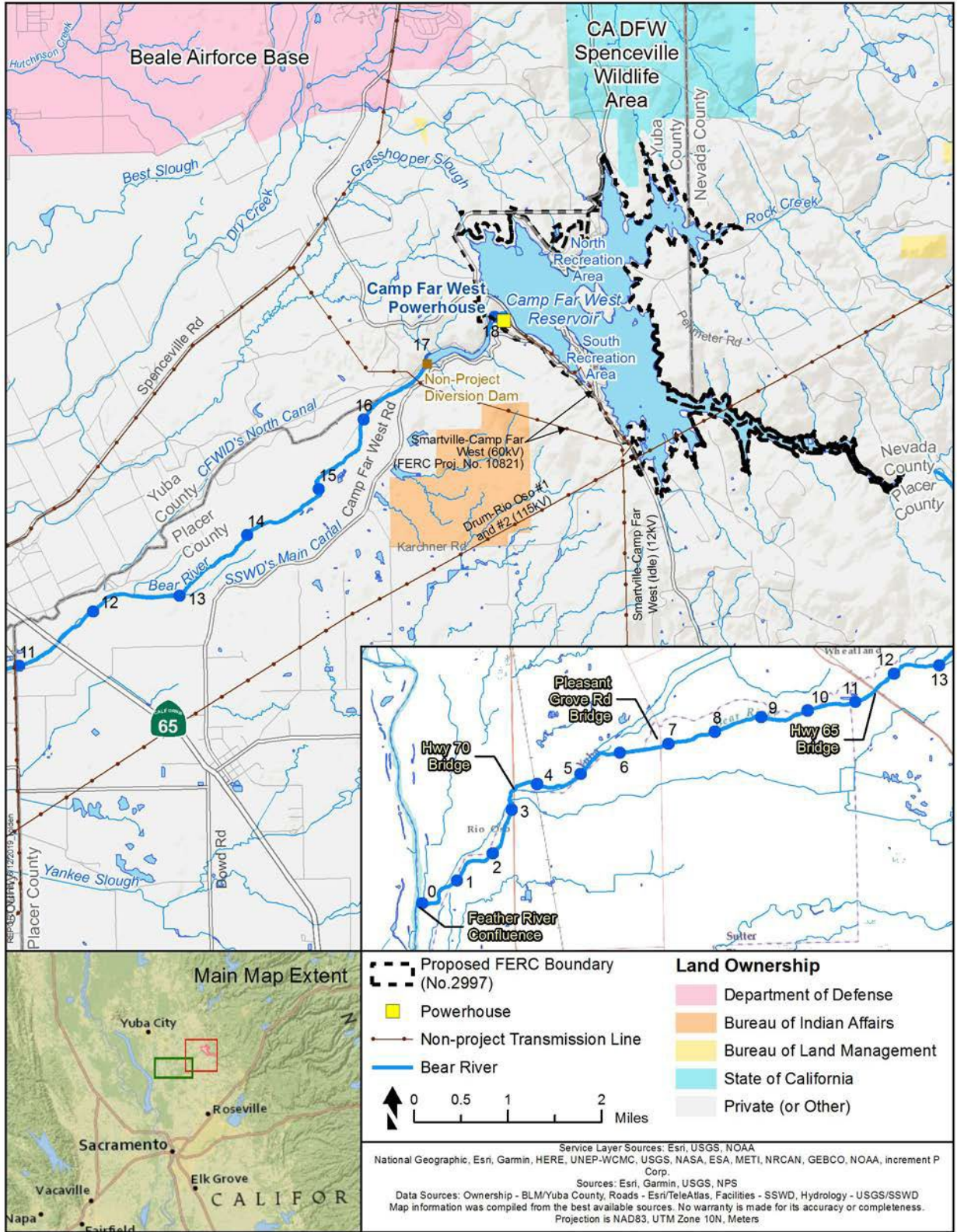
The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969,<sup>4</sup> the Commission's regulations, and other applicable laws require that we independently evaluate the environmental effects of relicensing the Camp Far West Hydroelectric Project as proposed, and also consider reasonable alternatives to the licensee's proposed action. At this time, we intend to prepare an environmental assessment (EA) that describes and evaluates the probable effects, including an assessment of the site-specific and cumulative effects, if any, of the proposed action and alternatives. The EA preparation will be supported by a scoping process to ensure identification and analysis of all pertinent issues.

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<sup>2</sup> 16 U.S.C. § 791(a)-825(r).

<sup>3</sup> The Commission issued the current license for the Camp Far West Hydroelectric Project with an effective date of July 1, 1981, for a term of 40 years and an expiration date of June 30, 2021.

<sup>4</sup> National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, 42 U.S.C. §§ 4321-4370(f) (2006).



**Figure 1.** South Sutter Water District’s Camp Far West Hydroelectric Project and project vicinity.

## **2.0 SCOPING**

This Scoping Document 1 (SD1) is intended to advise all participants as to the proposed scope of the EA and to seek additional information pertinent to this analysis. This document contains: (1) a description of the scoping process and schedule for the development of the EA; (2) a description of the proposed action and alternatives; (3) a preliminary identification of environmental issues; (4) a request for comments and information; (5) a proposed EA outline; and (6) a preliminary list of comprehensive plans which are applicable to the project.

### **2.1 PURPOSES OF SCOPING**

Scoping is the process used to identify issues, concerns, and opportunities for enhancement or mitigation associated with a proposed action. In general, scoping should be conducted during the early planning stages of a project. The purposes of the scoping process are as follows:

- invite participation of federal, state and local resource agencies, Indian tribes, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and the public to identify significant environmental and socioeconomic issues related to the proposed project;
- determine the resource issues, depth of analysis, and significance of issues to be addressed in the EA;
- identify how the project would or would not contribute to cumulative effects in the project area;
- identify reasonable alternatives to the proposed action that should be evaluated in the EA;
- solicit, from participants, available information on the resources at issue; and
- determine the resource areas and potential issues that do not require detailed analysis during review of the project.

Commission staff does not anticipate holding a formal public or agency scoping meeting. Consequently, interested entities are requested to file with the Commission any data and information concerning environmental and socioeconomic issues in the project area and the project's impacts to the aforementioned.

Following the scoping comment period, Commission staff will evaluate the information provided to determine the level of analysis needed in the EA for each



potential environmental and land use issue. If comments provided indicate that one or several potential issues raised in this scoping document have little potential for causing significant effects, the issue or issues will be identified and the reasons for not providing a more detailed analysis will be given in the EA. Commission staff will revise this SD1, if necessary, to reflect comments received during the comment period.

## 2.2 SCOPING COMMENTS

During the preparation of the EA, there will be several opportunities for the resource agencies, Indian tribes, NGOs, and the public to provide input. The opportunities occur:

- during the public scoping process when we solicit written comments regarding scope of the issues and analysis for the EA;
- in response to the Commission's ready for environmental analysis notice; and
- after issuance of the EA when we solicit written comments on the EA.

We invite all interested agencies, Indian tribes, NGOs, and individuals to file written comments to assist staff in identifying the scope of environmental issues that should be analyzed in the EA. See section 5.0, *Request for Information*, for instructions on filing written comments and information with the Commission.

Following the scoping comment period, all issues raised will be reviewed and decisions made as to the level of analysis needed. If we receive no substantive comments on SD1, we will not prepare a Scoping Document 2 (SD2). Otherwise, a SD2 addressing substantive comments received will be issued for informational use only by all participants or interested persons; no responses will be required. The EA will address recommendations and input received during the scoping process.

### 3.0 PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

In accordance with NEPA, the environmental analysis will consider the following alternatives, at a minimum: (1) the no-action alternative, (2) the applicant's proposed action, and (3) alternatives to the proposed action.

#### 3.1 NO-ACTION ALTERNATIVE

Under the no-action alternative, the Camp Far West Hydroelectric Project would continue to operate as required by the current project license (i.e., there would be no change to the existing environment). No new environmental protection, mitigation, or enhancement measures would be implemented. We use this alternative to establish baseline environmental conditions for comparison with other alternatives.

##### 3.1.1 Existing Project Facilities<sup>5</sup>

The existing project consists of one development that includes: one main dam; one powerhouse with an associated switchyard with a capacity of 6.8 megawatts (MW); and appurtenant facilities and structures, including recreation facilities and gages. The project has no transmission facilities. The project includes:

- a 185-foot-high, 40-foot-wide, 2,070-foot-long earth-filled dam;
- a 45-foot-high, 20-foot-wide, 1,060-foot-long earth-filled south wing dam;
- a 25-foot-high, 20-foot-wide, 1,460-foot-long, earth-filled north wing dam;
- a 15-foot-high, 20-foot-wide, 1,450-foot-long earth-filled north dike;
- a 2,020-acre reservoir with a storage volume of 104,000 acre-feet at the normal maximum water surface elevation (NMWSE) of 300 feet;<sup>6</sup>
- a spillway with a maximum design capacity of 106,500 cubic feet per second (cfs) at a reservoir elevation of 320 feet with a 15-foot-wide concrete approach apron with the invert at 290 feet, a crest elevation of 300 feet, a 300-foot-long ungated, ogee-type concrete structure, a 77-foot-long downstream concrete chute with concrete sidewalls, and a 302.5-foot single span steel-truss bridge across the spillway crest;
- a 1,200-foot-long, unlined, rock channel that carries spill downstream to the Bear River;
- a 22-foot-high power intake structure with a reinforced concrete ungated vertical

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<sup>5</sup> A non-project, 38-foot-high, diversion dam is located approximately 1.3 miles downstream of the project dam, where water is diverted into three non-project canals (about 510 cfs total).

<sup>6</sup> Based on recent topographic and bathymetric surveys, South Sutter determined the reservoir has a maximum surface area of 1,886 acres with a gross storage capacity of about 93,737 acre-feet at NMWSE of 300 feet.

tower intake with openings on three sides, two 10-foot-wide by 14-foot-high and one 10-foot-wide by 10-foot-high, each of which is protected by steel trashracks on 6-inches center;

- a 25-foot-4-inch-high, concrete, ungated vertical intake tower with 7-foot-wide by 8-foot-high openings on three sides, each of which is protected by steel trashracks on 6-inches centers that receives water for the outlet works;
- a 760-foot-long, 8-foot-diameter concrete tunnel through the left abutment of the main dam that conveys water from the power intake to the powerhouse;
- an above ground steel-reinforced, concrete powerhouse with a 6.8-MW, vertical-shaft, Francis-type turbine generator, which discharges to the Bear River at the base of the main dam;
- a 350-foot-long, 48-inch-diameter steel pipe that conveys water from the intake structure to a valve chamber for the outlet works;
- a 400-foot-long, 7.5-foot-diameter concrete-lined horseshoe tunnel that connects the valve chamber to a 48-inch-diameter Howell Bunger outlet valve with a capacity of 500 cfs that discharges directly into the Bear River;
- a fenced switchyard adjacent to the powerhouse;
- two recreation areas with campgrounds, day-use areas, boat ramps, restrooms, and sewage holding ponds; and
- a recreational water system that includes two pumps in the reservoir that deliver water to a treatment facility that is piped to a 60,000-gallon storage tank to supply water to recreation facilities.

### **3.1.2 Existing Project Recreation Facilities**

There are two developed project recreational areas on the Camp Far West Reservoir, both are owned by South Sutter and operated by a private concessionaire. The North Shore Recreation Area (NSRA) is located off of Camp Far West Road in the town of Wheatland, California and open year-round. The South Shore Recreation Area (SSRA) is located off of McCourtney Road in the unincorporated town of Lincoln, California, and is only open from mid-May until September. Both the NSRA and SSRA include family and group campgrounds, day-use and picnic areas, restrooms, boat ramps, water system facilities, entrance stations and stores, roads, and dispersed-use areas.

### **3.1.3 Existing Project Operation**

The existing project provides water to South Sutter's and Camp Far West Irrigation District's (CFWID) service districts. However, South Sutter also operates the project to meet Bear River streamflow requirements and to generate power. South Sutter has historically leased the power generating facilities to the Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD), which has operated the powerhouse and the switchyard.

The reservoir has a gross storage capacity of 93,737 acre-feet (i.e., storage at NMWSE of 300 feet) and no regulatory minimum pool. The reservoir's usable capacity is 91,237 acre-feet, which is the volume of water in the reservoir between the NMWSE and the reservoir's operational deadpool level, which is at a storage level of 2,500 acre-feet. Releases from the reservoir are made through: (1) the power intake to the powerhouse at the base of the dam; (2) the dam's low-level intake to a 48-inch-diameter outlet valve at the base of the dam; and (3) through an ungated spillway.

The project operates to fill the reservoir early in the season as sufficient water becomes available and spills any excess flows over the existing spillway. Because the reservoir is primarily fed by rainfall-produced runoff, it is difficult to predict the amount of inflow anticipated before the end of the season; therefore, South Sutter retains within the reservoir all of the inflow until the beginning of the irrigation season, except flows required to meet instream flow releases. In most years, the reservoir reaches NMWSE in January when the river basin produces its heaviest runoff, and then NMWSE starts to decline in April or May as releases for irrigation increase. The reservoir reaches its lowest point in mid-October when irrigation deliveries end. The project does not have any dedicated flood control space or associated flood control rules.

The project generates power during the winter and early-spring months when the reservoir is spilling and during the spring and summer months when releases are being made for irrigation and to meet instream flow requirements. Because of the generating unit's operating characteristics, power can only be generated when the elevation of the reservoir's water surface is at or above 236 feet and when reservoir outflow is greater than 130 cfs. If these two criteria cannot be met, water is released through the low-level outlet. This condition normally occurs each year starting in September and continuing into the fall until such time that surplus inflows are available to be passed through the powerhouse.

During the irrigation season, a maximum of 530 cfs passes through the powerhouse in conformance with downstream irrigation and instream requirements. However, during the heavy-runoff period when spilling from the reservoir occurs, a greater quantity of water is routed through the powerhouse up to its maximum hydraulic capacity of 725 cfs. When the reservoir water surface is high enough to send flows over the spillway, all flows up to approximately the physical capacity of the turbine are diverted through the power tunnel. The balance of any flows greater than turbine capacity are passed over the existing spillway.

During normal reservoir releases for furnishing irrigation water, all releases are utilized for power production except under those conditions as described above when the combination of head and flow are outside the operating characteristics of the turbine. During dry periods outside of the irrigation season, reservoir releases can be limited to minimum instream flow requirements, which are at times controlled by inflow per the

existing license. Inflow from the Bear River is measured during the low-flow season by South Sutter in the Bear River immediately upstream of Camp Far West Reservoir.

Operation of the powerhouse is automatic except for start-up, which is done manually. A powerhouse shutdown activates an alarm at SMUD's dispatch center, which requires sending personnel to the site to determine the problem and restart the powerhouse. SMUD receives Renewable Energy Credits for power generated at Camp Far West Powerhouse through the California Energy Commission.

In addition to providing power and downstream water supply, South Sutter pumps water directly from the reservoir to supply water to the project recreation facilities' water treatment plant for project recreation uses and to non-project residences and buildings utilized by the concessionaire's staff. Pumping averages approximately 15.3 acre-feet per year.

## **3.2 APPLICANT'S PROPOSAL**

### **3.2.1 Proposed Project Facilities<sup>7</sup>**

South Sutter proposes to maintain all existing facilities with the following modifications:

- (1) raise the NMWSE of the project reservoir by 5 feet from an elevation of 300 feet to an elevation of 305 feet;
- (2) raise the crest of the existing overflow spillway from an elevation of 300 feet to an elevation of 305 feet to accommodate the proposed pool raise;
- (3) replace and restore several recreation facilities;
- (4) add an existing 0.25-mile-long road as a primary project road to access the powerhouse and switchyard; and
- (5) modify the project boundary to account for the removal of the 1.9-mile-long transmission line from the license in 1991, corrections based on current project operation and maintenance, and changes under the category of a contour 20 feet above the 300-foot NMWSE or proximity of 200-horizontal-feet from the 300-foot NMWSE.

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<sup>7</sup> South Sutter anticipates filing an application for amending its existing license for the project in October 2020, which will include a proposal to construct an auxiliary spillway adjacent to the existing overflow spillway. Although described in the license application filed in July 2019, please note that the proposed auxiliary spillway is being considered under a process separate from this relicense and coordinated through the Commission's Division of Hydropower Administration and Compliance and the Division of Dam Safety and Inspections. Therefore, any comments related to the proposed auxiliary spillway will not be considered during this scoping process.

### **3.2.2 Proposed Project Operations**

The proposed pool raise would increase the project's reservoir storage by 9,836 acre-feet to a capacity of 103,573 acre-feet at the reservoir's new NMWSE of 305 feet. Typical reservoir operations are largely unaffected by the increase in available storage under the proposed project. When the pool raise is complete, the proposed auxiliary spillway (see footnote 7 above) in combination with the modified existing spillway will have a combined capacity of 126,600 cfs at a water surface elevation of 318.5 feet. The resulting additional storage in the reservoir would potentially be delivered for water supply in the year when it is stored or carried over for water supply and downstream demand in future years.

The proposed project would not affect the existing powerhouse capability curve, or the powerhouse tailwater-rating curve. There is a slightly greater probability of higher flows in most months, as compared to the No Action Alternative. Average annual project power generation would increase by 443 megawatt hours, with the largest increases occurring in Wet Water Years.

### **3.2.3 Proposed Environmental Measures**

South Sutter proposes the following environmental measures:

#### **Geologic and Soil Resources**

- There are no proposed protection, mitigation, and enhancement (PM&E) measures related to geologic and soil resources for the Camp Far West Hydroelectric Project. The potential need for PM&E measures will be evaluated during the relicensing process.

#### **Aquatic and Fisheries Resources**

- Determine Water Year (WY) type and use the determination to implement articles and conditions of the license that are dependent on WY type.
- Maintain the seasonal minimum streamflows based on water-year type in the Bear River downstream of the project dam and powerhouse.
- Provide the following fall and spring pulse flows for the Bear River downstream of the project dam and powerhouse:

- Fall pulse flows would occur in each wet, above normal, and below normal water years in mid-November for a period of three days. In wet water years, a second pulse flow would occur in early December. Fall pulse flows would not occur in in dry and critically dry water years.
- Spring pulse flows would occur over a 6-day period in April except in wet and above normal water years.
- Implement seasonal target ramping rates when the average hourly release from the project dam is less than 725 cfs from November through May in the Bear River downstream of the project dam.
- Implement target ramping rates during springtime installation of flashboards at non-project diversion dam located immediately downstream of the project dam.
- Conduct fish stranding surveys in the reach downstream of the non-project diversion dam during the first two years of implementation of the targeted ramping rates when flows are reduced for the installation of the flashboards on the non-project diversion dam.
- Implement Best Management Practices (BMP) for project operations and maintenance (O&M) activities to minimize the introduction and spread of non-native, invasive species (aquatic and terrestrial) including cleaning equipment prior to arriving to work sites.<sup>8</sup>

### **Terrestrial Resources**

- Conduct nest surveys and establish buffer zones around identified, active nests if any vegetation management requires removal of vegetation during the nesting season for birds.
- Implement its Bald Eagle Management Plan that includes provisions to:

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<sup>8</sup> In its license application, South Sutter discusses environmental measures (section 3.3.3.2) and BMPs (section 3.3.4.4.2) to control non-native, invasive species. However, it's unclear if South Sutter proposes to include these measures and BMPs as part of its application as they are not included in Appendix E2 *South Sutter's Proposed Measures*. In addition, it's unclear as to which specific BMPs are proposed.

- conduct eagle nest surveys by boat in the project reservoir in the first calendar year after license issuance and every 10 years during the term of the new license;
  - establish 0.25-mile-radius buffer zones with limited operating periods for project activities from January 1 to August 31 around active eagle nests; and
  - placement of signs and barriers to designate and prohibit access (pedestrian, watercraft, etc.) to buffer zones.
- Implement its Great Blue Heron Rookery Management Plan that would include establishing a 500-foot-radius buffer zone around the existing heron rookery on the south shore of the project reservoir with limited operating periods from March 15 to July 31 each year and designating the buffer zone using barriers to discourage access and signs.

### **Threatened and Endangered Species Resources**

- There are no proposed PM&E measures related to threatened and endangered species for the Camp Far West Hydroelectric Project. The potential need for PM&E measures will be evaluated during the relicensing process.

### **Recreation Resources**

- Implement the Recreation Facilities Plan, within 1 year of license issuance, to maintain, rehabilitate, and upgrade existing project recreational facilities during the term of the new license.

### **Land Use and Aesthetic Resources**

- There are no proposed PM&E measures related to land use and aesthetic resources for the Camp Far West Hydroelectric Project. The potential need for PM&E measures will be evaluated during the relicensing process.

### **Cultural Resources**

- Develop and implement its final Historic Properties Management Plan, in consultation with the California State Historic Preservation Office and involved Indian tribes, that would include treatment measures for managing historic properties under the new license.



### **3.3 DAM SAFETY**

It is important to note that dam safety constraints may exist and should be taken into consideration in the development of proposals and alternatives considered in the pending proceeding. For example, proposed modifications to the dam structure, such as the addition of flashboards or fish passage facilities, could impact the integrity of the dam structure. As the proposal and alternatives are developed, the applicant must evaluate the effects and ensure that the project would meet the Commission's dam safety criteria found in Part 12 of the Commission's regulations and the Engineering Guidelines (<http://www.ferc.gov/industries/hydropower/safety/guidelines/eng-guide.asp>).

### **3.4 ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED ACTION**

Commission staff will consider and assess all alternative recommendations for operational or facility modifications, as well as protection, mitigation, and enhancement measures identified by us, the agencies, Indian tribes, NGOs, and the public.

### **3.5 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT ELIMINATED FROM DETAILED STUDY**

At present, we propose to eliminate the following alternative from detailed study in the EA.

#### **3.5.1 Project Decommissioning**

Decommissioning of the project could be accomplished with or without removal of project facilities. Either alternative would require denying the relicense application and surrender or termination of the existing license with appropriate conditions. There would be additional costs involved with decommissioning the project and/or removing any project facilities. The project would provide a viable, safe, and clean renewable source of power to the region. With decommissioning, the project would no longer be authorized to generate power.

No party has suggested that project decommissioning would be appropriate in this case, and we have no basis for recommending it. Thus, we do not consider project decommissioning a reasonable alternative to relicensing the project with appropriate environmental enhancement measures.

#### **3.5.2 Federal Government Takeover**

In accordance with § 16.14 of the Commission's regulations, a federal department or agency may file a recommendation that the United States exercise its right to take over a hydroelectric power project with a license that is subject to sections 14 and 15 of the

FPA.<sup>9</sup> We do not consider federal takeover to be a reasonable alternative. Federal takeover of the project would require congressional approval. While that fact alone would not preclude further consideration of this alternative, there is currently no evidence showing that federal takeover should be recommended to Congress. No party has suggested that federal takeover would be appropriate, and no federal agency has expressed interest in operating the project.

### **3.5.3 Non-power License**

A non-power license is a temporary license the Commission would terminate whenever it determines that another governmental agency is authorized and willing to assume regulatory authority and supervision over the lands and facilities covered by the non-power license. At this time, no governmental agency has suggested a willingness or ability to take over the project. No party has sought a non-power license, and we have no basis for concluding that the Camp Far West Hydroelectric Project should no longer be used to produce power. Thus, we do not consider a non-power license a reasonable alternative to relicensing the project.

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<sup>9</sup> 16 U.S.C. §§ 791(a)-825(r).

## **4.0 SCOPE OF CUMULATIVE EFFECTS AND SITE-SPECIFIC RESOURCE ISSUES**

### **4.1 CUMULATIVE EFFECTS**

According to the Council on Environmental Quality's regulations for implementing NEPA (40 C.F.R. 1508.7), a cumulative effect is the effect on the environment that results from the incremental effect of the action when added to other past, present and reasonably foreseeable future actions, regardless of what agency (federal or non-federal) or person undertakes such other actions. Cumulative effects can result from individually minor but collectively significant actions taking place over a period of time, including hydropower and other land and water development activities.

#### **4.1.1 Resources That Could Be Cumulatively Affected**

Based on our review of the license application and preliminary staff analysis, we have identified water, aquatic, and fisheries resources including federally listed anadromous fish species and Pacific salmon Essential Fish Habitat that could be cumulatively affected by the proposed continued operation and maintenance of the Camp Far West Hydroelectric Project in combination with upstream and downstream water projects, timber harvesting, livestock grazing, mining, and the introduction and proliferation of giant cane grass in the lower Bear River.

#### **4.1.2 Geographic Scope**

The geographic scope of the analysis defines the physical limits or boundaries of the proposed action's effect on the resources. For these resources, the geographic scope of analysis is the Camp Far West Reservoir and downstream in the Bear River to its confluence with the Feather River. We chose this geographic scope because the operation of the Camp Far West Hydroelectric Project may cumulatively affect water, fisheries, and aquatic resources associated with the Camp Far West Reservoir and Bear River.

#### **4.1.3 Temporal Scope**

The temporal scope of our cumulative effects analysis in the EA will include a discussion of past, present, and future actions and their effects on each resource that could be cumulatively affected. Based on the potential term of a new license, the temporal scope will look 30-50 years into the future, concentrating on the effect to the resources from reasonably foreseeable future actions. The historical discussion will, by necessity, be limited to the amount of available information for each resource. The quality and quantity of information, however, diminishes as we analyze resources further away in time from the present.

## **4.2 RESOURCE ISSUES**

In this section, we present a preliminary list of potential environmental issues to be addressed in the EA. We have identified these issues, which are listed by resource area, by reviewing the license application and the Commission's record for the Camp Far West Hydroelectric Project. After the scoping process is complete, we will review this list and determine any need for studies and the appropriate level of analysis needed to address each issue in the EA. Those issues identified by an asterisk (\*) will be analyzed for both cumulative and site-specific effects.

### **4.2.1 Geologic and Soil Resources**

- Effects of the proposed pool raise and continued project operations on shoreline erosion and sediment transport in the Bear River downstream of the project.

### **4.2.2 Water Resources**

- Effects of proposed operations on water quality (water temperature, dissolved oxygen) and water quantity (instream flow) in the Bear River downstream of the project. \*
- Effects of the proposed pool raise on water quality (water temperature, dissolved oxygen) and water quantity (Project storage) in Camp Far West Reservoir. \*

### **4.2.3 Aquatic and Fisheries Resources**

- Effects of the proposed pool raise on aquatic habitat and fisheries resources in Camp Far West Reservoir.
- Effects of proposed operations on aquatic habitat and fisheries resources, including anadromous fish species in the Bear River downstream of the project. \*
- Effects of continued project operation on aquatic resources, including entrainment mortality of resident fish in the Bear River at the non-project diversion dam or in Camp Far West Reservoir.
- Effects of proposed and continuing project O&M on the introduction and spread of aquatic invasive species.

#### 4.2.4 Terrestrial Resources

- Effects of proposed and continuing project O&M on botanical and wildlife resources including effects associated with vegetation management, herbicide/pesticide use, and the introduction and spread of non-native, invasive plant species.
- Effects of proposed and continuing project O&M on riparian vegetation and wildlife downstream of the project dam.
- Effects of continued project recreation activities on botanical and wildlife resources including special-status species.
- Effects of the proposed reservoir pool raise on sensitive natural communities<sup>10</sup>, wetlands, special-status plants, and wildlife habitat including effects associated with any inundation of shoreline habitat and riparian habitat in the Bear River and Rock Creek.
- Effects of continued project O&M and proposed renovations to the project recreation areas on bats and nesting birds including nesting bald eagles (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) and great blue herons (*Ardea herodias*), and other special-status species.

#### 4.2.5 Threatened and Endangered Species

- Effects of proposed project construction, continued project O&M, and recreation activities on federally listed species and critical habitat as follows.<sup>11</sup>

##### Endangered Species

- Hartweg's golden sunburst (*Pseudobahia bahiifolia*)
- Pine Hill flannelbush (*Fremontodendron decumbens*)
- Stebbins' morning-glory (*Calystegia stebbinsii*)

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<sup>10</sup> Sensitive natural communities are vegetation communities that have been evaluated using standardized methodology to calculate a conservation status rank based on knowledge of the community's distribution, rarity, trends, and threats.

<sup>11</sup> In its license application, South Sutter eliminated from further consideration: the Delta smelt, giant garter snake, and yellow-billed cuckoo because the project is located outside the ranges of these species; and the Pine Hill flannelbush, Stebbins' morning-glory, Layne's ragwort, and Conservancy fairy shrimp based on the absence of suitable habitat for these species.

- Conservancy fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta conservatio*)
- Vernal pool tadpole shrimp (*Lepidurus packardi*) and critical habitat

Threatened Species

- Layne’s ragwort (*Packera layneae*)
- Vernal pool fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta lynchi*) and critical habitat
- California red-legged frog (*Rana draytonii*) and critical habitat
- Yellow-billed cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus occidentalis*), Western U.S. Distinct Population Segment, (DPS)
- Steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*), California Central Valley DPS and critical habitat
- Delta smelt (*Hypomesus transpacificus*)
- Valley elderberry longhorn beetle (*Desmocerus californicus dimorphus*)
- Giant garter snake (*Thamnophis gigas*)
- Chinook salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*), California Central valley spring-run Evolutionarily Significant Unit and critical habitat \*
- Green sturgeon (*Acipenser medirostris*), North American Southern DPS \*

**4.2.6 Recreational Resources**

- Effects of project operation and maintenance on recreational access and use.
- Adequacy of existing recreational access and facilities to meet current and future recreational demand.

**4.2.7 Land Use and Aesthetic Resources**

- Effects of project operation and maintenance on land use in the project area.
- Effects of project operation and maintenance on visual quality of the project area.

#### **4.2.8 Cultural Resources**

- Effects of continued project operation on historic or archaeological resources, or traditional cultural properties that may be eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

#### **4.2.9 Developmental Resources**

- Effects of the proposed and alternatives, including any environmental, protection, mitigation, and enhancement measures, on project economics.

## 5.0 REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

We are asking federal, state, and local resource agencies, Indian tribes, NGOs, and the public to forward to the Commission any information that will assist us in conducting an accurate and thorough analysis of the project-specific and cumulative effects associated with relicensing the Camp Far West Hydroelectric Project. The types of information we request includes, but are not limited to:

- information, quantitative data, or professional opinions that may help define the geographic and temporal scope of the analysis (both site-specific and cumulative effects), and that helps identify significant environmental issues;
- identification of, and information from, any other EA, Environmental Impact Statement, or similar environmental study (previous, on-going, or planned) relevant to the proposed relicensing of the Camp Far West Hydroelectric Project;
- existing information and any data that would help to describe the past and present actions and effects of the project and other developmental activities on environmental and socioeconomic resources;
- information that would help characterize the existing environmental conditions and habitats;
- the identification of any federal, state, or local resource plans, and any future project proposals in the affected resource area (e.g., proposals to construct or operate water treatment facilities, recreation areas, water diversions, timber harvest activities, or fish management programs) along with any implementation schedules;
- documentation that the proposed project would or would not contribute to cumulative adverse or beneficial effects on any resources. Documentation can include, but need not be limited to, how the project would interact with other projects in the area and other developmental activities; study results; resource management policies; and reports from federal and state agencies, local agencies, Indian tribes, NGOs, and the public; and
- documentation showing why any resources should be excluded from further study or consideration.

The requested information and comments on SD1 may be filed electronically via



the Internet **no later than July 9, 2020**. See 18 C.F.R. 385.2001(a)(1)(iii) and the instructions on the Commission's website <http://www.ferc.gov/docs-filing/efiling.asp>. Commenters can submit brief comments up to 6,000 characters, without prior registration, using the eComment system at <http://www.ferc.gov/docs-filing/ecomment.asp>. You must include your name and contact information at the end of your comments. For assistance, please contact FERC Online Support at [FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov](mailto:FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov) or toll free at 1-866-208-3676, or for TTY, (202) 502-8659. Although the Commission strongly encourages electronic filing, documents may also be paper-filed. To paper-file, mail an original and five copies to: Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street, NE, Washington, D.C. 20426.

Register online at <http://www.ferc.gov/docs-filing/esubscription.asp> to be notified via email of new filings and issuances related to these or other pending projects. For assistance, please contact FERC Online Support. <mailto:ferconlinesupport@ferc.gov>

Intervenors – those on the Commission's service list for this proceeding – are reminded that if they file comments with the Commission, they must also serve a copy of their filing on each person whose name appears on the official service list. Note that the list is periodically updated. The official service list can be obtained on the Commission's web site (<http://www.ferc.gov>) – click on Documents and Filing and click on eService – or call the Office of the Secretary, Dockets Branch at (202) 502-8715. In addition, if any party files comments or documents with the Commission relating to the merits of an issue that may affect the responsibilities of a particular resource agency, they must also serve a copy of the document on the resource agency.

Any questions concerning the paper scoping process or how to file written comments with the Commission should be directed to Quinn Emmering at (202) 502-6382 or [quinn.emmering@ferc.gov](mailto:quinn.emmering@ferc.gov). Additional information about the Commission's licensing process and the Camp Far West Hydroelectric Project may be obtained from the Commission's website, [www.ferc.gov](http://www.ferc.gov).

## 6.0 EA PREPARATION SCHEDULE

The major milestones, including those for preparing the EA, are as follows:

<u>Major Milestone</u>	<u>Target Date</u>
Scoping Comments Due	July 9, 2020
Issue Request Additional Information/Studies (if needed)	August 2020
Issue Scoping Document 2 (if needed)	August 2020
Issue Ready for Environmental Analysis (REA) Notice	August 2020
Deadline for Filing Comments, Recommendations and Agency Terms and Conditions/Prescriptions	October 2020
Licensee Files Reply to REA Comments	December 2020
Commission Issues Draft EA	June 2021

If Commission staff determines that there is no need for additional information or additional studies, the issuance of the Ready for Environmental Analysis notice and subsequent milestones could occur sooner.

## 7.0 PROPOSED EA OUTLINE

The preliminary outline for the Camp Far West Hydroelectric Project EA is as follows:

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## 8.0 COMPREHENSIVE PLANS

Section 10(a)(2) of the FPA, 16 U.S.C. section 803(a)(2)(A), requires the Commission to consider the extent to which a project is consistent with federal or state comprehensive plans for improving, developing, or conserving a waterway or waterways affected by a project. The staff has preliminary identified and reviewed the plans listed below that may be relevant to the Camp Far West Hydroelectric Project. Agencies are requested to review this list and inform Commission staff of any changes. If there are other comprehensive plans that should be considered for this list that are not on file with the Commission, or if there are more recent versions of the plans already listed, they can be filed for consideration with the Commission according to 18 CFR section 2.19 of the Commission's regulations. Please follow the instructions for filing a plan at <http://www.ferc.gov/industries/hydropower/gen-info/licensing/complan.pdf>.

The following is a list of comprehensive plans currently on file with the Commission that may be relevant to the Camp Far West Hydroelectric Project.

California Department of Fish and Game. 2007. California Wildlife: Conservation Challenges, California's Wildlife Action Plan. Sacramento, California. 2007.

California Department of Fish and Game. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. National Marine Fisheries Service. Bureau of Reclamation. 1988. Cooperative agreement to implement actions to benefit winter-run Chinook salmon in the Sacramento River Basin. Sacramento, California. May 20, 1988.

California Department of Fish and Game. 1990. Central Valley Salmon and Steelhead Restoration and Enhancement Plan. Sacramento, California. April 1990.

California Department of Fish and Game. 1993. Restoring Central Valley Streams: A Plan for Action. Sacramento, California. November 1993.

California Department of Fish and Game. 1996. Steelhead Restoration and Management Plan for California. February 1996.

California Department of Fish and Wildlife. 2003. Strategic Plan for Trout Management: A Plan for 2004 and Beyond. Sacramento, California. November 2003.

California Department of Fish and Wildlife. 2008. California Aquatic Invasive Species Management Plan. Sacramento, California. January 18, 2008.

California Department of Parks and Recreation. 1998. Public Opinions and Attitudes on Outdoor Recreation in California. Sacramento, California. March 1998.

- California Department of Parks and Recreation. 1980. Recreation Outlook in Planning District 3. Sacramento, California. June 1980. 82 pp.
- California Department of Parks and Recreation. 1994. California Outdoor Recreation Plan. Sacramento, California. April 1994.
- California State Water Resources Control Board. 2018. Bay-Delta Plan: Water Quality Control Plan for the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Estuary. Sacramento, California. December 2018.
- California State Water Resources Control Board. 2018. Water Quality Control Plan for the Sacramento and San Joaquin River Basins and Appendices. Sacramento, California. May 2018.
- California - The Resources Agency. 1989. Upper Sacramento River Fisheries and Riparian Habitat Management Plan. Sacramento, California. January 1989.
- National Marine Fisheries Service. 2014. Recovery Plan for the Evolutionary Significant Units of Sacramento River Winter-run Chinook salmon and Central Valley Spring-run Chinook salmon and the Distinct Population Segment of California Central Valley steelhead. Sacramento, California. July 2014.
- National Marine Fisheries Service. 2018. Final Recovery Plan for the Southern Distinct Population of North American Green Sturgeon. Sacramento, California.
- National Marine Fisheries Service. Pacific Fishery Management Council. 1988. Fishery Management Plan for Commercial and Recreational Salmon Fisheries off the Coasts of Washington, Oregon and California Commencing in 1988. January 1988.
- National Park Service. The Nationwide Rivers Inventory. Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 1993.
- Pacific Fishery Management Council. 1988. Eighth Amendment to the Fishery Management Plan for Commercial and Recreational Salmon Fisheries off the Coasts of Washington, Oregon and California Commencing in 1978. Portland, Oregon. January 1988.
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 1990. Central Valley Habitat Joint Venture Implementation Plan: A Component of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan. February 1990.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 2001. Final Restoration Plan for the Anadromous Fish Restoration Program. Department of the Interior, Sacramento, California. January 9, 2001.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Canadian Wildlife Service. 1986. North American Waterfowl Management Plan. Department of the Interior. Environment Canada. May 1986.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. n.d. Fisheries USA: The Recreational Fisheries Policy of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Washington, D.C.

## 9.0 MAILING LIST

The list below is the Commission’s official mailing list for the Camp Far West Hydroelectric Project FERC No. 2997. If you want to receive future mailings for the Camp Far West Hydroelectric Project from the Commission and are not included in the list below, please send your request by email to [FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov](mailto:FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov) or by mail to: Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street, N.E., Room 1A, Washington, DC 20426. All written and emailed requests to be added to the Commission’s mailing list must clearly identify the following on the first page: Camp Far West Hydroelectric Project FERC No. 2997-031. You may use the same method if requesting removal from the mailing list below.

Register online at <http://www.ferc.gov/docs-filing/esubscription.asp> to be notified via email of new filings and issuances related to this or other pending projects. For assistance, please contact FERC Online Support at [FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov](mailto:FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov) or toll free at 1-866-208-3676, or for TTY, (202) 502-8659

### **Entities on the Official Mailing List for the Camp Far West Hydroelectric Project**

Steve Rothert California Director American Rivers 120 Union St. Nevada City, CA 95959	Arizona Corporation Commission 1200 W. Washington St Phoenix, AZ 85007-2927
Sarah Lose FERC Coordinator California Department of Fish and Wildlife 1701 Nimbus Rd. Rancho Cordova, CA 95670	Kevin Thomas Regional Manager California Department of Fish and Wildlife 1701 Nimbus Rd. Rancho Cordova, CA 95670
James Lankford Senator U.S. Senate 112 Hart Senate Office Bldg. Washington, DC 20510	Chairman California Public Utilities Commission 505 Van Ness Ave San Francisco, CA 94102-3214
Christopher Shutes FERC Projects Director California Sportfishing Protection Alliance 1608 Francisco St. Berkeley, CA 94703	Jordan Smith California State Water Resources Control Board 1001 I Street Sacramento, CA 95814



<p>Kerry O'Hara  Department of the Interior  Assistant Regional Solicitor  2800 Cottage Way, Rm. E-1712  Sacramento, CA 95825</p>	<p>Traci Sheehan  Coordinator  Foothills Water Network  PO Box 713  Coloma, CA 95651-0713</p>
<p>Ronald Stork  Friends of the River  1418 20th Street, Suite 100  Sacramento, CA 95811</p>	<p>Secretary  New Mexico Public Regulation  Commission  PO Box 1269  Santa Fe, NM 87501-1269</p>
<p>Thomas Holley  Hydrologist  NOAA Fisheries Service, West Coast  Region  650 Capitol Mall, Suite 5-100  Sacramento, CA 95814</p>	<p>Jacqueline T. Miller  Oklahoma Corporation Commission  2101 N. Lincoln Blvd.  Oklahoma City, OK 73105</p>
<p>Allan Eberhart  Sierra Club Mother Lode Chapter  24084 Clayton Road  Grass Valley, CA 95949</p>	<p>Brad Arnold  General Manager/Secretary  South Sutter Water District  2464 Pacific Avenue  Trowbridge, CA 95659</p>
<p>James C. Van Dyke  South Sutter Water District  2464 Pacific Ave  Trowbridge, CA 95659-9604</p>	<p>Ashley Overhouse  River Policy Manager  South Yuba River Citizens League  11693 Bourbon Hill Road  Nevada City, CA 95959</p>
<p>Director  Texas Railroad Commission (NGPA)  PO Box 12967  Austin, TX 78711-2967</p>	<p>Natalie Stauffer-Olsen  California Staff Scientist  Trout Unlimited  5950 Doyle Street, Suite 2  Emeryville, CA 94608</p>
<p>Pamela Cubbler, Chairperson  Colfax-Todds Valley Consolidated Tribe  P.O. Box 734  Auburn, CA 95604</p>	<p>Cathy Bishop, Chairperson  Strawberry Valley Rancheria  P.O. Box 984  Marysville, CA 95901</p>
<p>Judy Marks  Secretary  Colfax-Todds Valley Consolidated Tribe  1068 Silvertown Circle  Lincoln, CA 95648</p>	<p>Michelle Roper  Chairperson  Colfax-Todds Valley Miwok-Maidu  Cultural Foundation  P.O. Box 1490  Foresthill, CA 95631</p>

<p>Patty Allen Greenville Ranch Tribe of the Maidu Indians PO Box 279 140 Main St. Greenville, CA 95947</p>	<p>Kyle Self Greenville Ranch Tribe of the Maidu Indians PO Box 279 Greenville, CA 95947</p>
<p>Jason Ryberg T'Si-akim Maidu P.O. Box 634 Rough Ready, CA 95975</p>	<p>Matthew Moore, THPO United Auburn Indian Community 10720 Indian Hill Road Auburn, CA 95603</p>
<p>Eileen Moon, Vice Chairperson T'Si-akim Maidu P.O. Box 1246 Grass Valley, CA 95945</p>	<p>Melody McAdams Cultural Resources United Auburn Indian Community 10720 Indian Hill Road Auburn, CA 95603</p>
<p>Grayson Coney Cultural Director T'Si-akim Maidu P.O. Box 1316 Grass Valley, CA 95945</p>	<p>Gene Whitehouse Chairperson United Auburn Indian Community 10720 Indian Hill Road Auburn, CA 95603</p>
<p>Benjamin Clark Chairperson Mooretown Rancheria of Maidu Indians #1 Alverda Drive Oroville, CA 95966</p>	<p>Shelly Covert Secretary Nevada City Rancheria 641 S Auburn St. Grass Valley, CA 95945</p>
<p>Richard Johnson Chairperson Nevada City Rancheria PO Box 574 Grass Valley, CA 95945</p>	<p>Federal Agency Director Advisory Council on Historic Preservation 401 F Street NW, Ste. 308 Washington, DC 20001</p>
<p>Senior Fish and Wildlife Biologist U.S. Department of the Interior Fish and Wildlife Service 650 Capitol Mall Sacramento, CA 95814</p>	<p>Sacramento Valley Division Chief U.S. Department of the Interior Fish and Wildlife Service Energy and Power 2800 Cottage Way, Ste. W-2605 Sacramento, CA 95825-1846</p>
<p>External Affairs Director Federal Emergency Management Agency Regional Office 1111 Broadway, Ste. 1200 Oakland, CA 94607</p>	<p>Outdoor Recreation Planner U.S. Department of the Interior National Park Service 333 Bush Street, Suite 500 San Francisco, CA 94101-2828</p>

<p>FERC Coordinator  U.S. Department of Commerce  National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  National Marine Fisheries Service  Southwest Region  777 Sonoma Avenue, Room 325  Santa Rosa, CA 95404-6515</p>	<p>Regional Director  U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  Pacific Southwest Regional Office  75 Hawthorne Street  San Francisco, CA 94105-3922</p>
<p>Assistant Regional Administrator  U.S. Department of Commerce  National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  National Marine Fisheries Service  2800 Cottage Way  Sacramento, CA 95825-1846</p>	<p>Department of the Interior  Bureau of Land Management  Branch of Adjudication and Records  2800 Cottage Way, Suite W1834  Sacramento CA 95825-1886</p>
<p>Director  California Department of Boating and Waterways  One Capitol Mall, Ste. 500  Sacramento, CA 95814</p>	<p>Director – District 10  California Department of Transportation  1976 East Charter Way  Stockton, CA 95205</p>
<p>Manager – Region 2  California Department of Fish and Wildlife  1701 Nimbus Road, Suite A  Rancho Cordova, CA 95670-4503</p>	<p>California Department of Water Resources  1416 Ninth Street, 11th Floor  P.O. Box 942836  Sacramento, CA 95814-5511</p>
<p>California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection  Region 2 – Cascade  Nevada-Yuba-Placer Unit  13760 Lincoln Way  Auburn, CA 95603-3236</p>	<p>Executive Officer  Regional Water Quality Control Board  Central Valley Region  11020 Sun Center Drive, #200  Sacramento, CA 95670-3888</p>
<p>California Department of Parks and Recreation  Office of Historic Preservation State  Historic Preservation Office  P. O. Box 942896  Sacramento, CA 94296-0001</p>	<p>Section 401 Coordinator  State Water Resources Control Board  1001 I Street  P.O. Box 2000  Sacramento, CA 95812-2048</p>
<p>County of Nevada  950 Maidu Avenue, Ste. 170  Nevada City, CA 95959</p>	<p>County of Yuba  215 5th Street, Suite 123  Marysville, CA 95901</p>

<p>County of Placer 175 Fulweiler Avenue Auburn, CA 95603-4543</p>	<p>Nevada County Local Agency Formation Commission Executive Officer 950 Maidu Avenue Nevada City, CA 95959</p>
<p>County of Sutter Board of Supervisors 1160 Civic Center Blvd Yuba City, CA 95993</p>	<p>City of Wheatland City Manager 111 C Street Wheatland, CA 95692</p>
<p>District Director Placer County Resource Conservation 251 Auburn Ravine, Suite 107 Auburn, CA 95603-3719</p>	<p>Manager &amp; Bear River Watershed Coordinator Nevada County Resource Conservation District 113 Presley Way, Suite 1 Grass Valley, CA 95945-5846</p>
<p>Tristyn Armstrong Executive Director Sierra Nevada Conservancy 11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205 Auburn, CA 95603</p>	<p>Nevada Irrigation District 1036 West Main Street Grass Valley, CA 95945-5424</p>
<p>Commission Clerk Yuba County Local Agency Formation Commission 825 Ninth Street, Suite B Marysville, CA 95901</p>	<p>Commission Clerk Placer County Local Agency Formation Commission 110 Maple Street Auburn, CA 95603</p>
<p>Conservation District Director Yuba County Resource Center 1511 Butte House Road, Suite B Yuba City, CA 95993</p>	<p>Regional Director American Rivers California 120 Union Street Nevada City, CA 95959</p>
<p>Foothills Water Network Coordinator P.O. Box 573 Coloma, CA 95613</p>	<p>Stewardship Director American Whitewater California 4 Baroni Drive Chico, CA 95928-4314</p>
<p>Senior Policy Advocate Friends of the River Suite 100 Sacramento, CA 95811</p>	<p>Director California Hydropower Reform Coalition 370 Belmont Avenue #6 Oakland, CA 94610</p>
<p>President Natural Heritage Institute 100 Pine Street, Suite 1550 San Francisco, CA 94111</p>	<p>Alliance Director California Sportfishing Protection 1248 East Oak Avenue #D Woodland, CA 95776</p>

<p>Janet Walther  Pacific Gas and Electric Company  Mail Code N11C  P.O. Box 770000  San Francisco, CA 94177-0001</p>	<p>Executive Director  California Trout  360 Pine Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  San Francisco, CA 94104</p>
<p>Director Power Generation  Sacramento Municipal Water District  6201 S Street, MS A204  Sacramento, CA 95817</p>	<p>Camp Far West Lake Concessionaire  North and South Shore  8176 Camp Far West Road  Wheatland, CA 95692</p>
<p>Executive Committee Chair  Sierra Club, Mother Lode Chapter  909 12th Street, Suite 202  Sacramento, CA 95814-2700</p>	<p>Executive Director  Sierra Nevada Alliance  P.O. Box 7989  South Lake Tahoe, CA 96158-7989</p>
<p>Environmental Advocates  5135 Anza Street  San Francisco, CA 94121</p>	<p>Executive Director  South Yuba River Citizens League  313 Railroad Avenue  Nevada City, CA 95959</p>
<p>Environmental Defense Fund  California Legislative Headquarters  1107 Ninth Street, Suite 1070  Sacramento, CA 95814</p>	<p>CA Water Project/Director  Trout Unlimited  2239 Fifth Avenue  Berkeley, CA 94710</p>
<p>Federation of Fly Fishers  Northern California Council  P.O. Box 1017  Meadow Vista, CA 95722-1017</p>	<p>Legal Department  El Paso Natural Gas Company  8645 Railroad Dr.  El Paso, TX 79904-2218</p>