



State of California – Natural Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
Region 1 – Northern
601 Locust Street
Redding, CA 96001
www.wildlife.ca.gov

EDMUND G. BROWN JR., Governor
CHARLTON H. BONHAM, Director



March 25, 2014

Ms. Diane Barr, Compliance Manager
Brookfield Renewable Energy Group
15509 70th Street
Mojave, CA 93501

Subject: Muck Valley Hydroelectric Project FERC-8296 Minimum Flow Variance Request

Dear Ms. Barr:

This is in response to Brookfield Renewable Energy Group's (Licensee) March 24, 2014, letter to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) requesting concurrence with a proposal for a temporary reduction in project bypass flows in accordance with Article 402 of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) license for the Muck Valley Hydroelectric Project (Project), FERC No. 8296.

The Licensee proposes to reduce the bypass flow at the Project diversion from 50 cubic feet per second (cfs) to 25 cfs with flows above 25 cfs being diverted to Collett Lake. When flows drop below 25 cfs at the diversion, the Licensee will release Collett stored water at a 1 cfs of stored water for 1 cfs of natural flow. This would provide a continuous 25 cfs in the Pit River below the powerhouse as long as there is available storage in Collett Lake. You indicate in your letter that this stretch of the Pit River is subject to extreme fluctuations from upstream irrigation projects and natural flashy conditions that often render it with little to no river flow. It has also been documented that in the early 90's the Pit River at the project intake dried up during the summer months three years in a row. This variance should shorten the period when the Pit River is not flowing. In addition to the flow variance, the Licensee also proposes to "collect flow measurements from the powerhouse discharge tables, and collect temperature monitoring below the afterbay discharge daily, and logged at the powerhouse".

In consideration of the severe drought, and the ability of the Project to retain water for later release to maintain flows in the Pit River, CDFW believes that any possible adverse impact of the proposed flow reduction from the Project diversion will be more than offset by the increase in river flow below the afterbay later in the year. We therefore concur with the flow variance with the following conditions:

1. Flow data collected as proposed and submitted to CDFW by December 31, 2014;
2. Temperature data collected as proposed below the afterbay discharge, but at hourly increments not daily increments. Additionally, CDFW requires hourly

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temperature data be collected in the bypass reach just above the afterbay discharge point and all data submitted to CDFW by December 31, 2014;

3. The Licensee will at a minimum ramp down from 50 cfs to 25 cfs with at least one ramp down over a two hour period to be more than 10 cfs, but less than 20 cfs. The final ramp down would then go down to the 25 cfs minimum instream flow; and
4. This concurrence with a bypass flow reduction is from the date of this letter through November 1, 2014, and reflects a one-time-only accommodation of the drought. Any future consideration of flow variation will be considered on the basis of environmental conditions and impact mitigation potential at that time.

If you have any question regarding this concurrence letter, please contact Senior Environmental Scientist Specialist Mr. Matt Myers at 530-225-3846 or matt.myers@wildlife.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



For **NEIL MANJI**, Regional Manager
Region 1 – Northern
California Department of Fish & Wildlife

Attachment

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