

Pit 1 Hydroelectric Project 401 Water Quality Certification Amendment Public Scoping Meetings

June 11, 2013

Redding & McArthur, California
State Water Resources Control Board
Division of Water Rights



Meeting Set-Up

- Sign-in sheet and speaker cards
 - Fill out a speaker card if you wish to comment
- Comments may be limited to a set amount of time depending upon number of people wishing to speak
- Meeting is not intended to discuss comments
 - Staff will answer general questions
 - No decisions will be made today
- Please respect all speakers
 - All points of view are valid



Presentation Outline

- Background
 - State Water Board's Mission
 - Pit 1 Water Quality Certification (WQC)
 - PG&E's Request for WQC Amendment
 - CEQA and State Water Board's Role
- CEQA Process
- Public Input
- Next Steps



State Water Board Mission Statement

To preserve, enhance, and restore the quality of California's water resources, and ensure their proper allocation and efficient use for the benefit of present and future generations

More information can be found at:
<http://www.waterboards.ca.gov>



State Water Board

- Joint authority over water rights and water quality in order to provide protection of California's waters
- Protect, enforce, and balance many beneficial uses of water including, but not limited to:
 - Irrigation
 - Power
 - Recreation
 - Municipal
 - Fish and Wildlife Preservation or Enhancement
- Prevent waste and unreasonable use of water



Background: Pit 1 WQC

- WQC Issued: December 4, 2001
- Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC)
License Issued to PG&E: March 19, 2003



Pit 1 WQC: Condition 13

- Requires PG&E to release flushing flows through Fall River Pond for two consecutive days (Saturday and Sunday), three times per year
 - Once in May or June, July and August
- Flushing flows to control aquatic vegetation and mosquito production in Fall River Pond



Pit 1 WQC: Condition 14

- Requires monitoring of effectiveness of flushing flows in controlling aquatic vegetation and mosquito production at Fall River Pond
- Initial monitoring required for five years after the issuance of a new license
- After 5-year monitoring report, State Water Board may modify or terminate flushing flow monitoring program



Request for WQC Amendment

- On May 21, 2009, State Water Board received a letter from United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) requesting suspension of flushing flows due to concerns that flows were contributing to decline of Shasta crayfish
 - Shasta crayfish listed as endangered under both California and Federal Endangered Species Acts in 1988



Request for Amendment to WQC

- On June 14, 2009, PG&E submitted request to State Water Board to amend Pit 1 WQC to remove Conditions 13 and 14
 - Request based on monitoring results, which indicate higher base flow of 150 cubic feet per second may be more effective in controlling aquatic vegetation and mosquito production than flushing flows



CEQA and State Water Board's Role

- As part of this WQC amendment, State Water Board must comply with CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act)
- Although flushing flows provided an incidental whitewater recreational opportunity, State Water Board temporarily suspended flushing flows out of an abundance of caution for endangered species protection while CEQA process is completed



CEQA

- Amendment of WQC to eliminate or modify flushing flows is a discretionary action
- Since PG&E is not a public agency, the State Water Board is the CEQA lead agency
 - Determines type of document
 - Must represent State Water Board's independent judgment



CEQA Objectives*

- Disclose significant environmental effects of proposed activities
- Identify ways to avoid or reduce environmental damage
- Prevent environmental damage by requiring implementation of feasible alternatives or mitigation
- Disclose reasons for agency approval of projects with significant environmental effects
- Foster interagency coordination in review of projects
- Enhance public participation in planning process

*From the CEQA Deskbook, 3rd Ed., Bass, Bogdan, Rivasplata



CEQA Process

- State Water Board decided to prepare an environmental impact report (EIR)
- EIR is designed to identify significant impacts, and mitigation measures to reduce significant impacts
- Alternatives will be evaluated with regards to how they meet project objectives and overall feasibility
- Final feasibility of alternatives will be determined when State Water Board adopts the findings, based on final EIR



Development of CEQA Documents

- State Water Board entered a three party Memorandum of Understanding with PG&E and Cardno ENTRIX
 - Cardno ENTRIX develops environmental documents under the sole direction of State Water Board
 - Cardno ENTRIX is compensated for its work by PG&E



Public Input

- Comments regarding Notice of Preparation due by NOON (12:00pm) on June 24, 2013
- Draft EIR will also be released for public review and comment



Additional Information

For additional information please visit the State Water Board's Pit 1 Hydroelectric Project WQC website at:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/waterrights/water_issues/programs/water_quality_cert/ceqa_projects.shtml#ferc2687



Future Updates

- To receive future updates, please sign up to receive emails online at:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/resources/email_subscriptions/

- Select “State Water Resources Control Board”
- Enter email address and full name
- Under Categories, select “Water Rights”
- Select Box for “Water Rights Water Quality Certification”
- Click “Subscribe” button at the top



General Questions???

Following general questions we will proceed with
public comment period



Public Comments

- Please state and spell your name for the recorder prior to stating your comment