

May 18, 2016

**Public Notice for Water Quality Certification and/or Waste
Discharge Requirements (Dredge/Fill Projects)**

**Pacific Gas and Electric Company
Humboldt Bay Power Plant Final Site Restoration Plan Implementation
40.741, -124.213¹
ECM PIN CW-816482, WDID No. 1B15086WNHU**

Humboldt County

On July 8, 2015, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from Pacific Gas and Electric Company (Applicant), requesting Federal Clean Water Act, section 401, Water Quality Certification (certification) for activities related to the proposed Humboldt Bay Power Plant (HBPP) Final Site Restoration Plan Implementation Project (Project).

Project Description

The Applicant is currently decommissioning three separate, defunct power generating units, and has already constructed one new active generating facility at 1000 King Salmon Ave., in the City of Eureka. The three defunct generating units were components of the "Humboldt Bay Power Plant." The new power generating facility is referred to as the "Humboldt Bay Generating Station."

Decommissioning activities have resulted in requirements to restore previously disturbed areas and implement mitigation to compensate for development impacts to jurisdictional resources. The purpose of the Project is to implement site restoration activities that are required as a component of formally decommissioning the HBPP units. Requirements associated with site restoration activities include restoring the lands formerly occupied by the defunct units, implementing mitigation requirements for impacts to jurisdictional waters, and installing permanent storm water treatment controls.

The Project involves the on-site reuse of low-level radioactive soils. This certification does not authorize or provide criteria for any cleanup or reuse of contaminated soils. Cleanup and reuse of contaminated soils are subject to the Applicant's License Termination Plan as approved by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Impacts and mitigation associated with construction of the Humboldt Bay Generating Station are addressed in a separate 401 water quality certification issued to the Applicant on October 10, 2008. Another separate 401 water quality certification was issued to the

¹ WGS84 datum

Applicant on April 18, 2014, to address impacts to jurisdictional water associated with the Intake/Discharge Canal Remediation Project (Canal Remediation certification).

The Applicant has divided the Project site into the following twelve functional areas to facilitate the Project description:

- Buhne Point;
- Independent Spent Fuel Storage Installation (ISFSI) and ISFSI Support Area;
- Trailer City;
- HBPP Core;
- Intake Canal;
- Buhne Point Wetland Preserve;
- Buhne Slough Salt Marsh.
- Bayview Heights;
- Duck Pond;
- HBGS/60 kV Substation;
- Assembly Building Area;
- Contractor Parking Lot #1; and

A map showing the Project functional areas is included at the end of this Public Notice.

Project elements within nine of the twelve functional areas include, but are not limited to:

Buhne Point

- Abandonment of Charlie Road, restoration of wetlands, and construction of a new road to access the ISFSI area;

ISFSI and ISFSI Support Area

- Creation of new wetlands in a portion of the existing Contractor Parking Area #1;
- Construction of a new culvert beneath the new ISFSI access road to connect a bio-detention basin in the Core area with a detention basin in the ISFSI area;
- Remediation of an area of contamination associated with the former Liquid Fuel Tank #2 (formerly at the site of the Count Room) in the Frog Pond area;
- Reconfiguration of the Frog Pond as part of the ISFSI "Support Stormwater Detention Basin;"
- Construction of a bio-detention basin;
- Restoration of the western portion of Contractor Parking Lot #2 to pre-project conditions;

Bayview Heights

- Excavation, grading, and possible on-site reuse of soil that may contain low levels of radioactivity;
- Soil excavation and testing to confirm the presence of lead and other potential contamination and remediation as appropriate;
- After the ongoing Canal Remediation Project is complete, up to 55,000 cubic yards of clean soils from on-site would be placed into the Discharge Canal, graded, and planted with coastal bluff scrub vegetation. Before then, the excavated canal would be used as a basin for interim storage of soils excavated during the Reactor Vessel Caisson/Spent Fuel Pool Removal Decommissioning Project;

- Stabilization of slopes exceeding 3:1 (H:V);
- Building demolition and construction trailer removal;

Trailer City

- Creation of the “Shoreline Wetlands Mitigation Area.” The created wetlands would connect with the existing brackish marsh wetland (i.e., the Duck Pond);
- Grading of the area to pre-development elevations, including removal and characterization of approximately 30,000 cubic yards of earthen material, which is proposed for on-site reuse;
- Creation of a bioretention basin at the southern edge of Trailer City, to treat storm water runoff from the Bayview Heights and HBPP Core areas. The basin would outlet to the Shoreline Wetlands Mitigation Area;
- Removal of remnant hazardous waste surface impoundment structures. The Department of Toxic Substances Control approved a clean closure of the impoundments in 1997;
- Soil investigation to confirm presence of lead and define volume of soil to be removed;
- Soil characterization would be performed to determine whether there is any radiological contamination;
- Removal of sanitary sewer piping, sewer lift station, fire and domestic water lines, and communication lines;

HBPP Core

- Construction of a bioretention basin to pre-treat storm water runoff from the site before being conveyed to the Assembly Building storm water detention basin;

Intake Canal

- Modification of the intersection of Alpha Road and King Salmon Avenue to meet at a 90-degree intersection angle and conform with Humboldt County specifications;
- Replacement of the existing culvert beneath Alpha Road that connects an intermittent drainage with Buhne Slough;
- Removal of a 105-foot-long by 10-foot-wide intake canal pedestrian bridge and its concrete foundations;
- The Alpha Road Parking Lot would be removed and excavated and joined with the Intake Canal to create mitigation required by the Canal Remediation certification;
- Two small, leveled and open parking areas along the south side of Alpha Road would be restored to Coastal bluff scrub vegetation;

Assembly Building Area

- Restoration of the Assembly Building parking area to natural conditions;
- Improvement and repaving of Bravo Road;
- Creation of a storm water pre-treatment area and bio-detention basin to treat storm water;

- Construction of a storm water detention basin to collect and treat storm water from Buhne Point Hill, the ISFSI area, and the Waste Management Building area, before being released to the Buhne Point Wetland Preserve. The basin would be located in portions of the former Assembly Building parking lot area and the existing Frog Pond;

Contractor Parking Lot #1

- Removal of the existing graveled parking area and conversion of the site to freshwater wetlands.

Buhne Point Wetland Preserve

The Buhne Point Wetland Preserve (Preserve) includes coastal salt marsh and freshwater wetlands, and was established in 2008 to mitigate for impacts to wetlands resulting from of the HBGS and HBPP decommissioning. Tidal flow is maintained to the salt water portion of the Preserve via an inflow-outflow pipe to the HBPP intake canal. Proposed activities at the Preserve include:

- Replace the existing culvert beneath Bravo Road that connects the HBPP intake canal with the Buhne Pointe Wetland Preserve;
- Replace the existing culvert beneath Bravo Road that connects the HBPP intake canal with the Frog Pond;
- Restoration of the Preserve fringe with native species;
- Replacement of selected non-native trees with native ones and planting of native shrubs and herbaceous species;
- Removal of the contractor pedestrian trail and restoration of the area; and
- Restore contractor parking lot #2 to natural vegetation.

Impacts

Project implementation would result in approximately 0.312 acres of permanent and 0.465 acres of temporary impacts to jurisdictional estuarine and freshwater wetlands.

Permanent and temporary impacts are summarized in the below tables.

Table 1: Permanent Impacts to Jurisdictional Wetlands

Activity	Functional Area	Water Body	Permanent Impact Area (acres)
Grading, storm water treatment	ISFSI and ISFSI Support Area	Frog Pond	0.295
Alpha Road realignment	Intake Canal	Buhne Slough	0.001
Biodetention basin construction	Trailer City	Drainage to Shoreline Wetlands Mitigation Area	0.023
Grading	Bayview Heights	Remnant drainage ditch and perched seasonally flooded low area	0.112
<i>Total:</i>			0.434 acres

Table 2: Temporary Impacts to Jurisdictional Wetlands

Activity	Functional Area	Water Body	Temporary Impact Area (acres)
Alpha Road realignment, construction access	Intake Canal	Buhne Slough	0.050
Mitigation wetland grading	Trailer City	Duck Pond	0.100
Construction access for culvert replacement	Buhne Point Wetland Preserve	Buhne Point Wetlands	0.018
Mitigation wetland grading	Contractor Parking Lot #1	King Salmon Ave. roadside wetland	0.063
Culvert replacement and bridge footing removal	Intake Canal	Intake canal	0.036
Construction access for culvert replacement	Intake Canal	Drainage to Buhne Slough from Alpha parking lot	0.005
Wetland enhancement	Trailer City	Drainage to Shoreline Wetlands Mitigation Area	0.016
<i>Total:</i>			0.261 acres

Mitigation for Project Impacts

To mitigate for permanent impacts to 0.434 acres of jurisdictional wetlands, the Applicant proposes to:

- Create no less than 0.638 acres of wetlands at the Shoreline Wetlands Mitigation Area, at the current location of Trailer City. These wetlands would be hydraulically connected to the existing Duck Pond; and
- Create no less than 0.234 acres of wetland adjacent King Salmon Ave., in the existing Contractor Parking Lot #1 area.

The above mitigation acreages would be a portion of total wetland creation in the respective areas, as additional creation would be implemented to satisfy other regulatory permit requirements.

To mitigate for temporary impacts to 0.261 acres of jurisdictional wetlands, the Applicant proposes to restore all temporarily impacted areas with native species and remove invasive species in existing wetlands.

The Applicant has prepared an Eelgrass Mitigation and Monitoring Plan that provides eelgrass avoidance measures and mitigation measures in the event of unintended eelgrass impacts during work in the Intake Canal.

Other Agency Permits

The Applicant has applied to the United States Army Corps of Engineers for coverage under Nationwide Permit Nos. 3, *Maintenance*, 18, *Minor Discharges*, 38, *Cleanup of Hazardous and Toxic Wastes*, and 43, *Stormwater Management Facilities*, pursuant to section 404 of the

Clean Water Act. The applicant is consulting with the United States (U.S.) Fish and Wildlife Service and the U.S. National Marine Fisheries Service to determine whether Project implementation may result in impacts to special-status species. The Applicant has also applied for a Coastal Development Permit from the California Coastal Commission.

CEQA

As lead agency, the Humboldt Bay Harbor Recreation and Conservation District prepared a Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Project (SCH no. 2015062028). The Applicant signed a Notice of Determination adopting the Mitigated Negative Declarations on August 27, 2015, in order to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act.

Public Comments

Regional Water Board staff are proposing to regulate this Project pursuant to Section 401 of the Clean Water Act (33 USC 1341) and/or Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act authority. In addition, staff will consider all phone calls and comments submitted in writing and received within a 21-day comment period that begins on the first date of issuance of this notice and ends at 5:00 p.m. on the last day of the comment period. If you have any questions or comments, please contact staff member Brendan Thompson at (707) 576-2699 or Brendan.Thompson@waterboards.ca.gov within 21 days of the posting of this notice.

The information contained in this public notice is only a summary of the applicant's proposed activities. The Regional Water Board's Project file includes the application for certification and additional details of the proposed Project, including maps and design drawings. Project documents and any comments received are on file and may be reviewed or copied at the Regional Water Board office, 5550 Skylane Boulevard, Suite A, Santa Rosa, California. Appointments are recommended for document review. Appointments can be made by calling (707) 576-2220.

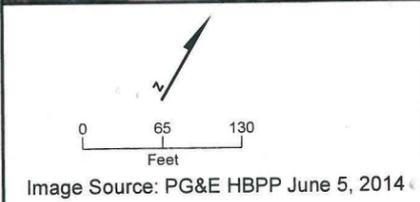


Image Source: PG&E HBPP June 5, 2014

FIGURE 1-2
HBPP Site Features
 HBPP Final Site Restoration Plan
 PG&E Humboldt Bay Power Plant, Eureka, California