
State Water Resources Control Board

**PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD FOR
INITIAL STUDY AND PROPOSED MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION
AND DRAFT WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION**

**FIRE MOUNTAIN LODGE HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT,
FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION PROJECT NO. 1992**

To: Interested Parties

Mr. Ken Willis (Applicant) filed an application with the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) for water quality certification under Section 401 of the Clean Water Act for the Fire Mountain Lodge Hydroelectric Project (Project) on August 16, 2012. Mr. Willis applied to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) for a Project license renewal. The Project is located on an Unnamed Creek (locally referred to as "Fern Springs Creek"), which is a tributary to Gurnsey Creek, a tributary to Deer Creek. The Project is located in the Deer Creek watershed in Tehama County.

The Project impounds water that originates from an Unnamed Spring known locally as "Fern Springs" and a second Unnamed Spring. The Project dam and reservoir are located on United States Forest Service land in the Lassen Volcanic National Forest and on private land owned by Collins Pine Company. The Project is located near Fire Mountain Lodge, a private resort that is south of Lassen Volcanic National Park, northwest of Plumas National Forest and west of Lake Almanor.

The existing Project consists of: (1) a 265-foot long earth and concrete filled dam; (2) a 0.8-acre reservoir; (3) a 38-inch intake tower; (4) a 1,540-foot penstock; (5) a powerhouse with an installed capacity of 60-kilowatts; (6) a 1,000-foot transmission line; and (7) appurtenant facilities. The power generated by the Project is used for commercial and residential purposes solely by the owners of the Fire Mountain Lodge, a self-provider of electricity. The Applicant proposes to continue to operate the Project as it has historically been operated, with proposed improvements to the dam and stabilization of the Project road.

In the past, pipes used to pass water through the dam and to the penstock became plugged and the dam overtopped, eroding the crest and partially washing out the dam. Overtopping and dam failure events led to uncontrolled flows and earthen dam material being carried to Fern Springs Creek below the dam. Sediment from these events can be transported down to Gurnsey Creek, a tributary to Deer Creek, which supports anadromous fish populations. Modifications and improvements to the existing dam and installation of a concrete-lined open channel spillway are needed to prevent future dam breaches and protect against sediment releases.

The State Water Board is the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and prepared an Initial Study and Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/Proposed MND) for the Project. **This serves as notice of intent to adopt a MND for issuance of the Project's water quality certification.**

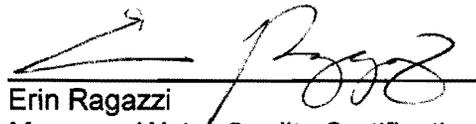
State Water Board staff prepared a draft water quality certification to be circulated with the IS/Proposed MND for the Project. Although not required, the State Water Board will also accept comments on the draft water quality certification. **Comments on the IS/Proposed MND and the draft water quality certification must be received by Noon (12:00 PM) on January 11, 2013.** Comments can be submitted electronically or by mail to:

Michelle Lobo
State Water Resources Control Board
Division of Water Rights
Water Quality Certification Program
P.O. Box 2000
Sacramento, CA 95812-2000
Email: MLobo@waterboards.ca.gov

The IS/Proposed MND and draft water quality certification are located on the Division of Water Rights (Division) web site at:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/waterrights/water_issues/programs/water_quality_cert/eqa_projects.shtml. If you cannot access the documents online, you may request a paper copy by contacting Michelle Lobo by phone at (916) 327-3117 or via email at MLobo@waterboards.ca.gov. Please make your request promptly to allow enough time to receive and review the document within the comment period.

A copy of the IS/Proposed MND and draft water quality certification will also be available at the State Water Board's office in the Cal/EPA Building, by visiting the Division's Records Unit, located at: 1001 I Street, 2nd Floor, Room 114, Sacramento, CA 95814.


Erin Ragazzi
Manager, Water Quality Certification
and Public Trust Section

DEC 06 2012

Date

**FIRE MOUNTAIN LODGE HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT
INTERESTED PARTIES LIST**

Mr. Jason Vine, P.E.
Project Manager
Trigon Engineers, Inc.
225 Locust Street, Suite 206
Redding, CA 96001

Mr. Tristan Leong
Hydroelectric Coordinator,
Shasta-Trinity S.O.
U. S. Forest Service
3644 Avtech Parkway
Redding, CA 96002

Mr. William Foster, M.S.
Senior Fishery Biologist
NOAA's National Marine
Fisheries Service
650 Capitol Mall, Suite 5-100
Sacramento, CA 95814-4706

Mr. Scott Zaitz
Regional Water Quality Control Board
Central Valley (R5)
Redding Office
364 Knollcrest Drive, Suite 205
Redding, CA 96002

Mr. Matt Myers
FERC Coordinator
California Department of Fish and Game
601 Locust Street
Redding, CA 96001

Mr. Matt Buhyoff
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
888 First Street, N.E. Mailstop: PJ-11.7
Washington, DC 20426

Ms. Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
888 First Street, N.E.
Washington, DC 20426