

INFORMATION SHEET

ORDER R5-2015-XXXX
PACIFIC GAS AND ELECTRIC COMPANY
KERCKHOFF DAM LOW LEVEL OUTLET GATE REPLACEMENT PROJECT
MADERA COUNTY

On 12 March 2015, Pacific Gas and Electric Company (Discharger) submitted a Report of Waste Discharge for a proposed dredging project necessary to complete a dam maintenance project on Kerckhoff Dam on the San Joaquin River. The project includes replacing three 72" low level outlets (outlet) at the base of the dam and re-lining the outlet tunnels through the dam. The dredging is necessary to access the dam's upstream slide gates that need to be replaced. Due to site inaccessibility, dredging (approximately 600 cubic yards) will be done from a floating barge using a crane with a clamshell dredge. Dredged material will be loaded into water-tight sediment transport barges and moved approximately 1.8 miles upstream in the reservoir to an unloading area at a public campground. Additional Project activities include dewatering the plunge pool downstream of the dam using pumps to lower the water level about 5 feet to expose the outlets, transporting the 72" diameter by 30-foot steel liners by barge to the site, craning work barges and the liners over the dam to the plunge pool, installing the liners, pumping cement grout over the dam and into the liners, and replacing the slide gates and trash rack.

The Army Corps of Engineers' "incidental fallback rule" allows dredging using suction or clamshell dredging to be done without a Clean Water Act (CWA) section 404 permit as long as the dredge material is removed from the waterbody. Because the Army Corps of Engineers is not requiring a CWA section 404 permit for this Project, a CWA section 401 water quality certification from the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Central Valley Water Board) is not required. In-lieu of issuing a water quality certification, these Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs) are being issued to ensure the Project meets Basin Plan water quality objectives and beneficial uses are protected. The WDRs require monitoring and reporting for the Project. Additionally, the WDRs require the Discharger to prepare an emergency spill and containment plan, an erosion and sedimentation control plan, a grout containment plan, a plunge pool dewatering plan, and a water quality monitoring plan to address various potential threats to water quality in Kerckhoff Reservoir and the San Joaquin River that may occur during a project of this magnitude.

The prohibitions in this Order are largely based on prohibitions in the Water Quality Control Plan for the San Joaquin River Basin, Fourth Edition, revised October 2011 (Basin Plan) or parts of the California Code of Regulations and California Water Code that restrict discharges to those proposed by the Discharger and evaluated by and authorized by the Central Valley Water Board. Discharge specifications, receiving water limitations, and provisions in this Order are largely designed to ensure discharges meet the water quality objectives listed in the Basin Plan or to ensure the Discharger implements measures it proposed and/or are necessary to protect water quality.