

# Public Meeting for Kerckhoff Hydroelectric Project Relicensing Draft Environmental Impact Report

Division of Water Rights Presented by:  
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April 30, 2026

# Presentation Outline

**Background on  
State Water  
Board and Water  
Quality  
Certifications**

**California  
Environmental  
Quality Act  
(CEQA)**

**Background on  
the Kerckhoff  
Hydroelectric  
Project**

**The Proposed  
Project and CEQA  
Alternatives**

**Verbal  
Comment  
Period**

**Next Steps**

# Meeting Logistics & Ground Rules



Please remain on mute



Please respect all speakers and their points of view



Please save all comments until the end of the presentation



Presentation and meeting transcript will be available on the Project webpage

# State Water Resources Control Board

Provide protection of California's waters with authority over water rights and water quality, including:

- Protect and enforce many water uses including the needs of industry, agriculture, municipal districts, and the environment
- Establishing conditions for federally licensed projects via issuance of water quality certifications (Section 401 of Clean Water Act)

## **Mission Statement:**

*To preserve, enhance, and restore the quality of California's water resources and drinking water for the protection of the environment, public health, and all beneficial uses, and to ensure proper water resource allocation and efficient use, for the benefit of present and future generations.*

# Water Quality Certifications



- Water quality certifications become a mandatory part of the license issued by Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC)
- Water quality certifications ensure that a project will comply with the applicable water quality control plans (basin plans) and policies
- State Water Board must comply with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) in issuing a water quality certification

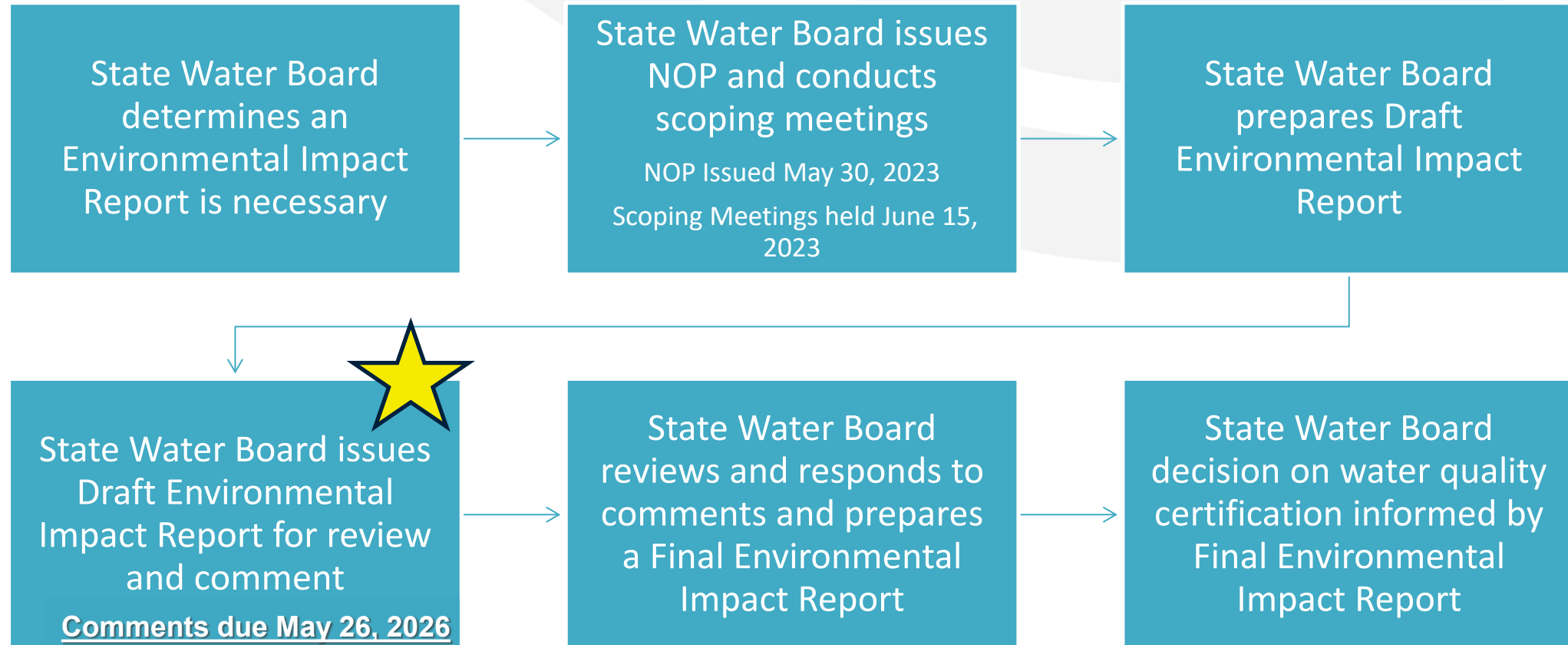
# California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

- CEQA informs State Water Board and public about the Proposed Project's potentially significant environmental effects and ways to avoid, minimize, or mitigate those impacts
- The State Water Board is lead agency for CEQA



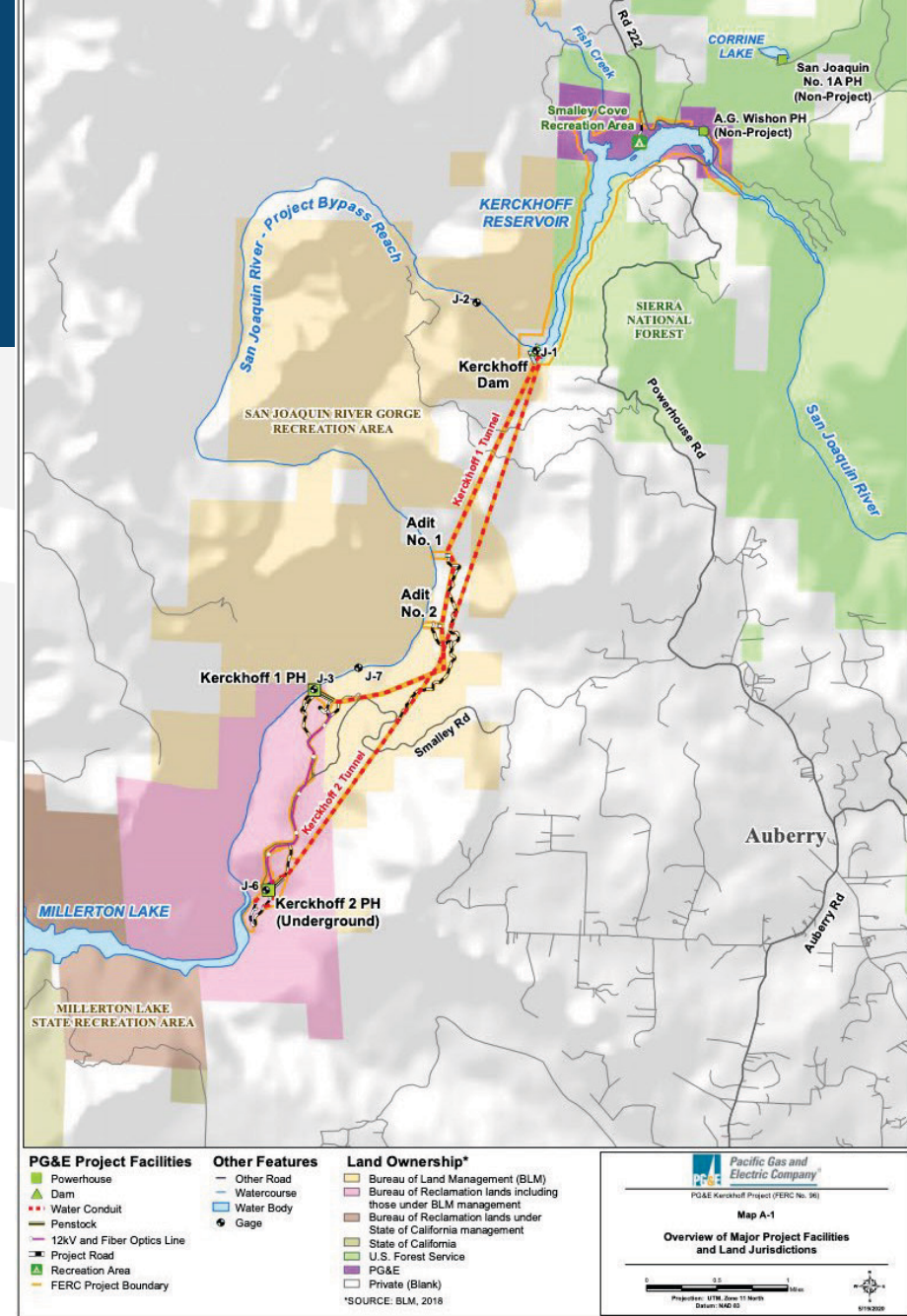
Photo taken by SWRCB staff

# State Water Board's CEQA Process



# Kerckhoff Hydroelectric Project Overview

- Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E)
- Location: San Joaquin River in Fresno and Medera Counties
- Project Features Include:
  - Kerckhoff Dam
  - K1 and K2 Powerhouse
  - Kerckhoff Reservoir
  - Smalley Cove Recreation Area
  - Landowners within and near the Project boundary include PG&E, the U.S Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the Bureau of Reclamation, the State of California, and private.



# Kerckhoff Project Overview Cont.

- PG&E's Proposed Project includes continued operations with the following changes:
  - Proposed Project Boundary Updates
  - Proposed Updates to Project Facilities
  - Development of New Recreation Area (Vista Day Use Area)
  - 16 New Environmental Management Measures and Plans



# Kerckhoff Proposed Plans and Measures

- Proposed Retirement Plan for Kerckhoff 1 Powerhouse and Associated Facilities
- Development of the Vista Day Use Area
- San Joaquin River Above Kerckhoff Reservoir Inflow Gage Measure
- American Shad Spawning Season Flow Release Regime Measure
- Water Temperature Measure
- End-of-Spill Flow Recession and Whitewater Flow Releases Measure
- Subsequent Spill Ramp Down Measure
- Spill Season Flow Measure
- Planned Outage Measure
- Modification of Infrastructure and Procedures Measure
- Whitewater Notification and Access Measure
- Flow Notification Measure
- Aquatic Resources Plan
- Wildlife Management Plan
- Vegetation Management and Pest Control Plan
- Project Road and Trail Maintenance Plan
- Recreation Management Plan
- Historic Properties Management Plan

# CEQA Alternatives

## Alternative 1: Proposed Project with Alternative Spill Recession and Flow Ramping

Comprised of two components that replace ramping operations of the Proposed Project

- Implementation of September 2024 BLM 4(e) Condition No. 4 (Down Ramping Operations)
- Implementation of a 1 ft./hr. ramp up rate (Alternative 1 Ramp up Measure)



# CEQA Alternatives

## Alternative 2: Proposed Project with BLM Revised 4(e) Conditions

Comprised of slightly modified version of the Proposed Project's Ramping Operations that were developed during trail-type hearing negotiations between PG&E and BLM/DOI (May 2025)



# Potentially Significant Resource Impacts

Potentially significant impacts (Mitigated to less than Significant) for the following resource areas from the Proposed Project, Alternative 1, and Alternative 2:

- Biological Resources - Aquatics
- Geology and Soils
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality



# Significant and Unavoidable Impacts

If impacts are not mitigated then the following resource areas may result in at least 1 significant and unavoidable impacts from the Proposed Project, Alternative 1, and Alternative 2:

- Air Quality
- Biological Resources - Terrestrial
- Hydrology and Water Quality



# Next Steps of CEQA Process

State Water Board reviews and responds to comments and prepares a Final Environmental Impact Report



State Water Board issues the Final Environmental Impact Report

# Public Input

## Public Comment:

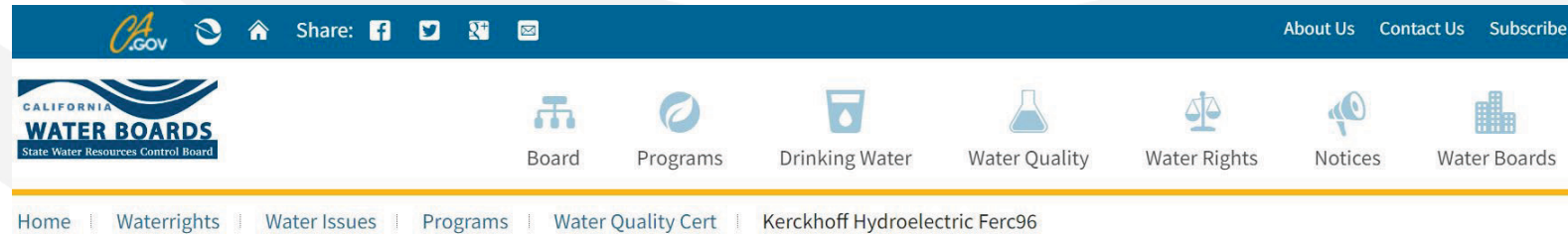
- Use the “Raise Hand” feature to indicate you would like to provide your comment verbally
- Please wait to be called on and then unmute your microphone
  - Introduce yourself (name and affiliation) prior to speaking
- Respect time limits and follow ground rules



# How to Stay Informed

- Kerckhoff Hydroelectric Project Webpage:

<https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/waterrights/waterissues/programs/waterqualitycert/kerckhoffhydroelectricferc96.html>



## Kerckhoff Hydroelectric Project

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) Project No. 96



**Applicant:** Pacific Gas and Electric Company, Inc. (PG&E)  
**County:** Fresno and Madera  
**License Expiration Date:** November 30, 2022  
**Water Quality Certification Status:** Awaiting Application  
**Waterbody:** San Joaquin River  
**FERC Licensing Process:** Integrated Licensing Process

- Draft EIR
  - Appendices
  - Notice of Availability

- California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)
  - Notice of Availability – April 10, 2026
  - Draft Environmental Impact Report – April 10, 2026
  - Draft Environmental Impact Report Appendices – April 10, 2026



# Next Steps

- Accepting written comments until 5:00 pm (Pacific Standard time) on May 26, 2026
- Send comments to: Chase McCormick
  - Email: [WR401Program@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:WR401Program@waterboards.ca.gov)
  - Mail: State Water Resources Control Board  
Division of Water Rights  
Water Quality Certification Program  
Attn: Chase McCormick  
P.O. Box 2000  
Sacramento, CA 95812-2000