
State Water Resources Control Board

NOTICE OF PROPOSED NEGATIVE DECLARATION Pursuant to Section 21092 – Public Resources Code

State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) staff prepared a Negative Declaration setting forth the findings that the following proposed action will have a less-than-significant effect on the environment.

PROJECT TITLE: Revised McArthur Swamp Management Plan – Implementation of the Waterfowl Restoration Project.

APPLICANT: Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E)
3600 Meadowview Drive
Redding, CA 96001

PROJECT LOCATION:

The Revised McArthur Swamp Management Plan – Implementation of the Waterfowl Restoration Project (McArthur Swamp Waterfowl Restoration Project or Project) is located approximately 5 miles north of McArthur, California in Shasta County within U.S Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5 - minute Fall River Mills Quadrangle; Township 38N; Range 5E; Sections 21, 27, 28, 29, 30 and 32.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The Project proposes the flooding of Ash Field, Rat Farm Pond, and a portion of Hollenbeak Field. The primary water supply for the Project will come directly from Big Lake. A portable water pump will be used annually to pump water into the three sites as described below. To control water levels, two new water control structures will be built: one in Central Drain and a second structure in Ash Field. Fencing will be installed to control cattle access to the drains and canals. A rotational grazing plan was originally proposed; however, due to the many cattle leases this element is no longer part of the plan. Instead, PG&E will continue to work with the local cattle ranchers who lease the property for grazing to ensure they conduct their grazing operations to minimize environmental disturbance.

The Project area encompasses approximately 475 acres. To help distribute water in the fields during flood-up, approximately 133 acres of meandering swales will be constructed. In addition to swales, approximately 18 acres of elevated mounds will be created. Swale construction will generate approximately 67,500 cubic yards of soil, of which 41,700 cubic yards will be used to create elevated mounds for cover habitat and 1,067 cubic yards for new berm construction. Remaining spoils will be used to reinforce segments of the existing Big Lake levee (spoils will be deposited in upland habitat) and to reshape the existing Rat Farm Pond levee. Construction of

the swales (133 acres), elevated mounds less than 24 inches high (12 acres), temporary road and equipment staging areas (2.94 acres), re-grading of the Central Drain (1.8 acres), and the reshaping of the existing Rat Farm Pond levee (1.38 acres) will result in the temporary impacts to approximately 152 acres of jurisdictional wetlands. Construction of two water control structures (0.04 acres), two rocked swale crossings (0.11 acres), a new section of berm (0.22 acres), and the creation of mounds greater than or equal to 24 inches in height (5.97 acres) will result in a permanent impact to 6.34 acres of jurisdictional wetlands.

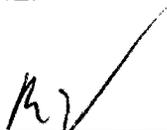
DETERMINATION:

The State Water Board has determined that the above-described Project will have a less-than-significant effect on the environment for the reasons specified in the Initial Study prepared for this Project.

COMMENT SUBMITTAL:

The Proposed Negative Declaration and the Initial Study in support of the Proposed Negative Declaration are available on the Division of Water Rights website at: http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/waterrights/water_issues/programs/water_quality_cert/ceqa_projects.shtml. A hard copy of these documents or additional information concerning the proposed action may be obtained by writing to State Water Resources Control Board, Division of Water Rights, Attn: Mr. Peter Barnes, P.O. Box 2000, Sacramento, CA 95812-2000, by email at: pbarnes@waterboards.ca.gov, or by phone at (916) 445-9989.

Persons who disagree with the conclusions set forth in the Negative Declaration or who disagree with the information contained therein are invited to furnish written comments to Mr. Peter Barnes at the address in the paragraph above. The comments should summarize the specific substantive and factual basis for disagreement. Comments are due by NOON on July 26, 2012.



Barbara Evoy, Deputy Director
Division of Water Rights

Dated: JUN 26 2012