



EDMUND G. BROWN JR.
GOVERNOR

MATTHEW RODRIGUEZ
SECRETARY FOR
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

State Water Resources Control Board

MAY 17 2016

To: FERC Service List P-2687

NOTICE OF REQUEST TO EXTEND THE TEMPORARY SUSPENSION FLUSHING FLOWS, PIT 1 HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT, FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION PROJECT NO. 2687; SHASTA COUNTY

On March 31, 2016, Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) submitted a letter requesting an extension of the suspension of flushing flows for one additional year for the Pit 1 Hydroelectric Project (Project), Federal Energy Regulatory Commission Project No. 2687. The extension request is to facilitate completion of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) analysis. If approved, this request would continue the suspension of flushing flows in the Pit 1 Bypass Reach for a limited amount of time while the CEQA analysis is completed.

On June 24, 2009, PG&E submitted a request to the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) to amend the Project water quality certification to remove Conditions 13 (flushing flows) and 14 (flushing flow effectiveness monitoring). Condition 13 of the water quality certification requires PG&E to release flushing flows during three weekends in May or June, July, and August. The flows are designed to reduce nuisance vegetation and control mosquito populations in Fall River Pond. By letter dated August 28, 2009, State Water Board staff notified PG&E that before an amendment of the water quality certification can be considered, the State Water Board must comply with CEQA. In a letter dated December 17, 2009, USFWS staff stated that flushing flows are likely resulting in take and are facilitating the decline of the endangered Shasta crayfish in the Pit 1 Bypass Reach.

On April 15, 2010, the State Water Board received a request from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (Commission) to temporarily suspend the flushing flow requirements in the Project's water quality certification, issued on December 4, 2001. The water quality certification conditions are incorporated into the license issued by the Commission on March 19, 2003. On July 6, 2010, the State Water Board issued Order WQ 2010-0009-EXEC, which temporarily amended the water quality certification to suspend flushing flows for two years (i.e., for 2010 and 2011).

On March 22, 2012, PG&E submitted a letter requesting an extension of the suspension of flushing flows for one additional year for the Project to allow for implementation of the Shasta crayfish study plan and completion of the CEQA analysis. On June 14, 2012, the State Water Board issued Order WQ 2012-0008-EXEC approving the temporary suspension of flushing flow requirements through 2012. PG&E issued the final Pit 1 Hydroelectric Project Shasta Crayfish Study Report on January 31, 2013.

FELICIA MARCUS, CHAIR | THOMAS HOWARD, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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State Water Board staff's work on the CEQA document has been delayed during California's historic drought. On March 28, 2013, April 21, 2014, and March 19, 2015, PG&E submitted letters requesting additional one-year extensions to the suspension of Project flushing flows to allow for the completion of the draft environmental impact report (EIR) required by CEQA. USFWS provided letters of support on May 17, 2013, April 21, 2014, and March 19, 2015 respectively. On June 20, 2013, June 12, 2014, and June 23, 2015, respectively, the State Water Board issued Orders WQ 2013-0024-EXEC, WQ 2014-0023-EXEC and WQ 2015-0076-EXEC approving the temporary suspension of flushing flow requirements through 2013, 2014 and 2015. Additional information on this Project including copies of the requests and letters can be found on the Project webpage, which is available at http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/waterrights/water_issues/programs/water_quality_cert/pit1_ferc2687.shtml.

California Code of Regulations, title 23, section 3838 authorizes the Executive Director for the State Water Board to take all actions connected with applications for water quality certification. This letter serves as notice that pursuant to the California Code of Regulations, title 23, section 3858, the State Water Board is taking action on the request to extend the temporary suspension of the flushing flow requirements.

If you have questions regarding this letter, please contact Meiling Roddam at (916) 341-5369 or by email at Meiling.Roddam@waterboards.ca.gov. Written correspondence can be directed as follows:

State Water Resources Control Board
Division of Water Rights
Water Quality Certification Program
Attn: Meiling Roddam
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Sincerely,



Meiling Roddam
Environmental Scientist
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Enclosure: Pit 1 (FERC No. 2687) Interested Parties Mailing List (May 16, 2016)

cc's on following page

MAY 17 2016

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