



United States Department of the Interior



In Reply Refer to:
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FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Sacramento Fish and Wildlife Office
2800 Cottage Way, Suite W-2605
Sacramento, California 95825-1846

MAY 28 2019

Neil Wong
Supervisor, Hydro Licensing
Pacific Gas and Electric Company
PG&E Power Generation
245 Market Street
San Francisco, California 94105

Subject: Informal Section 7 Consultation for the Temporary Suspension of the Flushing Flow Requirement at the Pit No. 1 Hydroelectric Project (FERC Project No. 2687), Shasta County, California

Dear Mr. Wong:

This letter is in response to Pacific Gas and Electric's (PG&E) February 4, 2019, request to initiate informal consultation on the proposed Temporary Suspension of the Flushing Flow Requirement in 2019 at the Pit No. 1 Hydroelectric Project (proposed project), in Shasta County, California. Your request was received by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (Service) Sacramento Field Office on February 4, 2019. At issue are the proposed project's effects on the federally-endangered Shasta crayfish (*Pacifastacus fortis*). In a letter dated December 9, 2009, to the Service, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) designated PG&E as their non-federal representative for the purpose of informal consultation for the Pit No. 1 Hydroelectric Project (FERC Project No. 2687). This response is provided under the authority of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) (Act).

The Service has concurred with PG&E's and FERC's not likely to adversely affect determination for the temporary suspension of flushing flows in 2010 and 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, and 2018 with letters dated May 3, 2010, July 19, 2012, May 16, 2013, April 18, 2014, March 19, 2015, June 9, 2016, June 13, 2017, and March 26, 2018, respectively. PG&E is proposing to add another year to the temporary suspension of flushing flows to facilitate completion of the California State Water Resources Control Board's California Environmental Quality Act analysis. The Service's concerns regarding the implementation of the flushing flows remain the same. Because the only change to the proposed project is to continue the suspension of flushing flows for 2019, the Service concurs that the action is not likely to adversely affect the Shasta crayfish. We base this concurrence on the best available science that has shown the flushing flows create detrimental effects to this species' habitat and potentially creates a favorable environment for non-native crayfish. Therefore, unless new information reveals effects of the temporary suspension of flushing flows that may affect federally listed species or critical habitat in a manner not identified to date, or if a new species is listed or critical habitat is designated that may be affected by the proposed action, no further action pursuant to the Act is necessary.

If you have any questions regarding this response, please contact Josh Hull, Listing and Recovery Division Chief (josh_hull@fws.gov) or Amber Aguilera, Senior Fish and Wildlife Biologist (amber_aguilera@fws.gov) at the letterhead address or telephone (916) 414-6742.

Sincerely,



Eric Tattersall
Assistant Field Supervisor

cc:

Erik Ekdahl, State Water Resources Control Board, Sacramento, California
Meiling Colombano, State Water Resources Control Board, Sacramento, California
Matt Meyers, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Redding, California
Steve Baumgartner, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Redding, California
Maria Ellis, Spring Rivers Ecological Sciences LLC, Cassel, California