

6.2 Land Use and Mineral Resources

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This section describes land use and mineral resources in the vicinity of the Upper North Fork Feather River Hydroelectric Project (UNFFR Project) and evaluates whether operation of the UNFFR Project under a new Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) license would conflict with nearby land uses or applicable land use plans, policies, or regulations or result in the loss of availability of mineral resources. The following related topics are not discussed further for the reasons noted:

- **Agriculture:** Neither the Proposed UNFFR Project nor the two alternatives include farmland or land used for agriculture. A portion of the Caribou intakes activity area¹ is in Plumas County's (County's) Timberland Production Zone (TMZ), but none of these alternatives would affect the ability to grow and harvest timber in this zone.
- **Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan Consistency:** No habitat conservation plans or natural community conservation plans have been adopted for land within the UNFFR Project boundary (Figure 1-1, Vicinity Map).
- **Physical Division of an Established Community:** Neither the Proposed UNFFR Project nor the two alternatives would involve substantial physical changes that would physically divide an established community.
- **Displacement of People or Housing:** Neither the Proposed UNFFR Project nor the two alternatives would displace people or housing.

The potential impacts of the Proposed UNFFR Project were evaluated in the *Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Upper North Fork Feather River Project* issued by FERC. As allowed for under Section 15150 of the CEQA Guidelines, the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) incorporates, by reference, certain sections of Chapter 3.3.6 of the FERC EIS that analyze the impacts of UNFFR Project operations on land use and mineral resources. All sections of the FERC EIS regarding the UNFFR Project operations and its compliance with the policies and regulations applicable to land use and mineral resources are incorporated into this environmental impact report (EIR). Since neither Alternative 1 or Alternative 2 nor the supporting analyses were included in the FERC EIS, they are discussed in this section of the EIR with respect to land use and mineral resources.

6.2.1 Environmental Setting

Land Ownership and Management

The UNFFR Project area encompasses approximately 30,920 acres, including a 30-mile reach of the North Fork Feather River and four miles of Butt Creek. Federal lands within this area are managed by the United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and the United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service (USFS). Most of the private lands within this area are owned by the Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E). The Lassen

¹ Activity areas encompass areas surrounding and portions of Lake Almanor, Butt Valley reservoir, Belden Forebay, the North Fork Feather River, and Butt Creek where construction and ground-disturbing activities have the potential to occur.

National Forest manages approximately 568 acres, while the Plumas National Forest manages approximately 418 acres. Public lands managed by BLM total approximately 38 acres. Most of the remaining 29,896 acres are owned by PG&E. Additional lands in the UNFFR Project vicinity include roads and rights-of-way maintained by the County and the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), other private lands, and lands in the Lassen and Plumas National Forests.

Under its current annual license, PG&E oversees facilities and activities associated with its operation and maintenance of hydroelectric facilities, administrative sites (including offices and residences), and recreational sites on lands it owns, or on lands subject to USFS special use permits. The USFS is responsible for authorization and management of activities on its lands, including issuance of permits for certain activities and maintaining or improving facilities not maintained by PG&E or others. The County is responsible for ensuring private lands are managed consistent with the Plumas County General Plan (General Plan). The County is also responsible for the security and protection of private lands in the UNFFR Project vicinity as well as maintaining or improving County roads. Caltrans maintains State Routes (SRs) 36, 70, 89, and 147.

Regional Planning Strategies and Policies

This section of the EIR discusses two types of planning processes: federal resource management plans that apply to the management of USFS and BLM lands and a general plan that applies to private lands in Plumas County.

BLM's Eagle Lake Field Office Resource Management Plan

The Eagle Lake Field Office Resource Management Plan provides management direction and standards and guidelines for two parcels of land within the boundary of the UNFFR Project managed by the BLM. Neither of these parcels is subject to actions in the three activity areas (Figure 4-1). Therefore, these parcels are not discussed further in this EIR.

Lassen National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan

The Lassen National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP) identifies management prescriptions based on the desired use of the land and provides management direction and standards and guidelines for each Management Area (MA) within the national forest (United States Forest Service 1993). Parts of the UNFFR Project area are within the Prattville MA, which is administered by the Almanor Ranger District. Applicable management prescriptions for the Prattville MA include developed recreation, late successional forest, timber, and view/timber. Management direction and standards and guidelines applicable to the UNFFR Project include:

- maintaining a near-natural setting along the shoreline at Lake Almanor;
- protecting sensitive plants and their habitat;
- maintaining visual quality commensurate with other resource needs;
- meeting visual quality objectives;
- assisting in recovery efforts for threatened and endangered species;
- maintaining or increasing species diversity;
- managing habitat for sensitive wildlife species;
- maintaining habitat for nesting ospreys and Canada geese within one-half mile of Lake Almanor and near small wetlands; and

- protecting and enhancing nesting habitat capability for bald eagles at the Rocky Point and Prattville territories.

Plumas National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan

The Plumas National Forest LRMP provides management direction and standards and guidelines for each MA in the national forest (United States Forest Service 1988). Parts of the UNFFR Project area within the North Fork, Rich, Butt Lake, and Indian Valley MAs are administered by the Greenville and Quincy Ranger Districts. Management direction and standards and guidelines applicable to the UNFFR Project include:

- maintaining pleasing visual corridors;
- protecting water quality;
- providing for recreational gold panning and digging; and
- maintaining or enhancing bald eagle habitat suitability at Canyon dam.

Sierra Nevada Forest Plan Amendment

The Sierra Nevada Forest Plan Amendment (Forest Plan Amendment) describes desired conditions, provides management direction, and identifies objectives for allocated uses within the Plumas and Lassen National Forests and amends both of these national forests' LRMPs (United States Forest Service 2004). The Forest Plan Amendment places particular emphasis on protecting, increasing, and perpetuating desired conditions of old forest ecosystems; maintaining the structure and function of general forest; protecting and restoring desired conditions of aquatic, riparian, and meadow ecosystems; reducing the threat of wildland fires and improving defensibility from wildland fires along the urban interface; maintaining Protected Activity Centers for the California spotted owl so that the forests continue to provide habitat conditions that support successful reproduction of California spotted owls; and reducing the spread of invasive exotic plant species, containing existing weed populations, and eradicating them where possible.

Allocated uses within the region include old forest emphasis areas; general forest with wildland-urban interface threat and defense zones; aquatic, riparian, and meadow habitat; and California spotted owl Protected Activity Centers overlaid in some areas.

Plumas County General Plan and Zoning Ordinances

The use of non-federal land in Plumas County is guided by the Plumas County General Plan (General Plan). The General Plan is a comprehensive, long-range plan that provides guidance for the physical development of land within the County. The General Plan land use map was adopted in 1983 and the most recent update was adopted in December 2013 (Plumas County 2013). The General Plan land use map establishes resource areas and development areas within the County. The General Plan designates most of the land in the three activity areas as Lake and as Resort and Recreation but does not define the types of land uses allowed within these designations. Rather, allowed uses are defined in the zoning code, as discussed further below. None of the activity areas, as shown on Figure 4-1, are located within zoned Mining (M) areas in the General Plan.

The General Plan contains goals, diagram directives, and land use management strategies relating to the protection and use of resources, development consistent with service levels, and constraints to development based on localized situations. Goals and management strategies applicable to the UNFFR Project include:

- identifying and protecting commercially viable resource production areas with safeguards for the surrounding land and environment;
- encouraging use of water for hydroelectric generation;
- managing stormwater runoff and controlling erosion;
- protecting important wildlife habitat, migration routes, and wetlands;
- preserving the basic visual aspects of the environment that maintain the rural character of the County; and
- protecting and preserving historic and prehistoric sites, structures, and objects.

The County zoning ordinances implement the General Plan by providing a precise delineation of permitted land uses, precluding land use conflicts, and establishing general site development standards (Plumas County 1973).

None of the activity areas discussed below are located in an M zone identified in the General Plan. The purpose of the M zone is to provide for the use of commercially viable prime mining resources and to prevent permitting uses that may preclude the extraction of materials.

Prattville Intake Activity Area

In the Prattville intake activity area, Lake Almanor is zoned Lake (L) and the adjacent upland area is zoned Recreation 1 (Rec-1). The purpose of the L zone is to provide for the use and management of water resources. Hydroelectric generation, water impoundments, and docks are allowed uses within the L zone. In addition, boat ramps, marinas, and recreation facilities are permitted subject to the issuance of a special use permit.

The Rec-1 zone provides for multiple uses of prime recreation sites in a manner supportive of recreational uses. Allowed uses within this zone include recreation facilities, campgrounds, boat ramps and services, and several other uses described in the County zoning ordinances. Public utility facilities are permitted subject to the issuance of a special use permit. Public utility facilities are defined as uses necessary for the provision, distribution, or conveyance of utilities to the public.

Canyon Dam Intake² Activity Area

In the Canyon dam intake activity area, Lake Almanor is zoned L and the adjacent upland area is zoned Recreation 3 (Rec-3). The L zone and portions of the Rec-3 zone within this activity area also have Special Plan (SP) Combining zones to protect the scenic quality of lake views from SR 89, Canyon dam, and the shoreline of Lake Almanor. These SP zones include an SP Combining Scenic Road (SP-ScR) zone along SR 89 and an SP Combining Scenic Area (SP-ScA) zone north of SR 89, including Lake Almanor. No physical aspect of a private parcel subject to a SP zone may be altered without review and approval by the County. Lake Almanor is also included in the Flood Plain (FP) Combining zone. The purpose of the FP Combining zone is to regulate development to achieve reasonable safety from flood hazards.

² Canyon dam “intake” and Canyon dam “outlet” are synonymous.

Caribou Intake Activity Area

In the Caribou intakes activity area, Butt Valley reservoir is zoned L with an FP Combining zone and the adjacent upland area is subject to both the timber production zone (TPZ) and Rural (R-10) zone. The purpose of the TPZ is to encourage protection of immature trees and restrict the use of timberland to the production of timber products and compatible uses. Allowed uses in the TPZ include management for the use of other natural resources where less than three acres of land is converted to non-timberland use; hydroelectric generation within the TPZ is subject to site development review and approval by the County. The purpose of the R-10 zone is to provide for dwelling units at a ratio of 10 to 20 acres per dwelling unit, with provisions for compatible uses. Public utility facilities, recreation facilities, and limited electrical generation are permitted subject to the issuance of a special use permit by the County.

Land Uses

Land uses in the UNFFR Project region include open space with scattered rural residences; small communities, such as Chester, Seneca, Belden, and Lake Almanor West; occasional recreational facilities; and industrial developments associated with the hydroelectric facilities. Much of the open space is forested lands consisting of conifer and mixed conifer forests in upland areas and riparian woodlands along the water bodies. Higher density residential uses occur in Chester and around portions of Lake Almanor, with lower density residential uses in established communities along the North Fork Feather River. Recreational facilities occur primarily at Lake Almanor, with additional facilities scattered along the North Fork Feather River and the eastern shore of Butt Valley reservoir. Hydroelectric facilities occur along the major water bodies in the region and on adjacent lands. Mineral extraction is another use associated with water bodies and certain geologic formations at upland locations throughout the region. A variety of entities throughout the area have mineral rights associated with either mining claims or private lands.

Lake Almanor

In addition to providing a storage reservoir for the UNFFR Project, Lake Almanor is used for a variety of recreational uses and provides scenic views for residents and visitors. A number of designated and dispersed campgrounds, boat launch sites, and day use areas are available around the lake (see Section 6.8, Recreation, for additional details). Boating, swimming, fishing, hiking, and wildlife viewing are common recreational activities associated with Lake Almanor. Residential and commercial uses also exist around the lake in established communities or at scattered locations adjacent to shoreline of the lake. SRs 36, 89, and 147 provide primary highway access to Lake Almanor and associated developments.

The Prattville intake is located several hundred yards off the western shore of Lake Almanor near the Marvin Alexander Beach day use area and an adjacent PG&E maintenance yard. Nearby land uses include commercial marinas along the shoreline and residential uses to the south. The Canyon dam intake structure is located several hundred feet from the southern shore of Lake Almanor in the general vicinity of several recreational facilities: Canyon dam boat launch facility, Rocky Point campground (formerly Lake Almanor campground), Camp Conery group campground, Canyon dam day use area, Almanor scenic overlook, and the Eastshore picnic area. PG&E administrative facilities are located just west of SR 89 and Canyon dam.

Seneca Reach of North Fork Feather River

The Seneca reach of the North Fork Feather River flows through a steep narrow canyon, primarily on lands managed by the Plumas National Forest. There is little development along this reach due to minimal access either by road or trail. The community of Seneca lies along the North Fork Feather River several miles downstream of Canyon dam, and there are some residences in the surrounding area. Recreational uses are not as common along this reach as at Lake Almanor, but fishing and whitewater rafting do occur seasonally. Some of the USFS lands along the Seneca reach have active mining claims. Placer and, to a lesser extent, lode mining activities occur in some areas along the North Fork Feather River (Federal Energy Regulatory Commission 2005). The Seneca reach has limited access along Seneca Road and unpaved spur roads. Parking is available at pullouts along Seneca Road, and river access is by foot trails in most areas. The Seneca reach terminates at the upstream limit of Belden forebay.

Butt Valley Reservoir

Butt Valley reservoir is an UNFFR Project facility located on land owned by PG&E. Most of the surrounding lands are managed by the Plumas National Forest. PG&E operates two designated campgrounds, Ponderosa Flat and Cool Springs, and one day use area, Alder Creek, along the east shore of Butt Valley reservoir. Most of the reservoir is accessible for day use recreation, such as boating, fishing, and wildlife viewing; however, speed limits are in place, and boats are excluded from the southern end of Butt Valley reservoir near the Caribou intakes for safety reasons. No residential uses exist around Butt Valley reservoir because most of the land is managed by the Plumas National Forest. Prattville-Butt Valley Reservoir Road, which is unpaved, provides primary access from Lake Almanor to the north and from Seneca Road to the south.

The Caribou intakes are in the southwest portion of the reservoir just north of Butt Valley dam. Nearby uses include open space (National Forest lands), the dam, and the reservoir.

Upper Butt Creek flows into Butt Valley reservoir near the Butt Valley powerhouse. Butt Valley reservoir does not release flows into the historic channel of lower Butt Creek; instead, flow in lower Butt Creek comes from a series of springs downstream of the reservoir. Lower Butt Creek is a perennial stream that flows into the Seneca reach above Belden forebay.

Belden Reach of the North Fork Feather River

The Belden reach of the North Fork Feather River is downstream (south) of the Caribou powerhouses; the Belden reach provides limited recreational opportunities with scattered residential uses in the vicinity. There are no designated communities along the Belden reach. Three designated campgrounds—Queen Lily, North Fork, and Gansner Bar—are at the southern end of the Belden Reach. A number of undeveloped trails provide recreation access to undesignated day use areas along the river. Caribou Road, which is unpaved, provides primary access along the Belden reach.

State Route 70 and 89 Corridors

The state highways in the general vicinity of the UNFFR Project provide access for the various uses in the area and offer parking areas and access to designated campgrounds and day use areas along the highway corridors. Several communities exist along these highways, and the Bucks Lake Wilderness area, part of the Plumas National Forest, is on the south side of SR 70 near Belden.

Mines and Mineral Resources

The North Fork Feather River and its tributaries have been subject to gold mining since the mid-1800s. Approximately 70 lode and placer claims have been documented on USFS lands in the vicinity of the Seneca reach and its tributaries (United States Bureau of Land Management 2010). Lode claims include rock-in-place bearing veins, or lodes, of valuable minerals having well-defined boundaries (Federal Energy Regulatory Commission 2005). Placer claims generally consist of unconsolidated materials such as sand and gravel containing free gold or other minerals. Most of the mining claims along the North Fork Feather River are placer claims. The maximum size of a placer claim is 20 acres, and most of the claims in the region are 20-acre claims. A few lode mines are also located on private lands in the Seneca area. The North Fork Feather River is a popular spot for recreational gold panning.

The County does not have any areas designated as mineral resource zones by the California State Geologist under the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act, although several small aggregate mines are located throughout the County (California Department of Conservation 2006).

6.2.2 Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Methodology

The Proposed UNFFR Project and each alternative were compared with the applicable General Plan land use designations, goals, and management strategies; the County zoning designations; and the management direction and standards and guidelines of the Plumas and Lassen National Forest LRMPs as amended by the Forest Plan Amendment to analyze consistency with applicable land use plans, policies, and zoning regulations. The results of the analyses in other sections of this EIR were used to evaluate overall land use compatibility. Active mining claims along the North Fork Feather River were qualitatively evaluated to determine whether the Proposed UNFFR Project or either alternative would inhibit the ability to prospect or mine gold and/or other locatable minerals.

Thresholds of Significance

Impacts on land uses or mineral resources would be significant if the Proposed UNFFR Project or alternatives would:

- result in major conflicts with nearby land uses;
- conflict with applicable land use plans, policies, ordinances, or regulations that were adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect; or
- result in the loss of availability of an important mineral resource.

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

This section discusses the anticipated impacts of the Proposed UNFFR Project and the alternatives on land uses and mineral resources and identifies mitigation measures for significant impacts. Table 6.2-1 compares the final level of significance for each impact (with incorporation of mitigation measures if appropriate).

Table 6.2-1. Summary of Land Use (LU) and Mineral Resources Impacts

IMPACT	PROPOSED UNFFR PROJECT	ALTERNATIVE 1	ALTERNATIVE 2
Impact LU-1: Construction activities associated with the UNFFR Project could disrupt other land uses in or near the activity areas.	Less than significant	Less than significant	Less than significant
Impact LU-2: Implementation of the UNFFR Project could conflict with adjacent land uses.	No impact	Less than significant with mitigation	Less than significant with mitigation
Impact LU-3: The UNFFR Project could be inconsistent with the goals, policies, and objectives of the Plumas County General Plan, County Zoning Ordinances, or the Lassen and Plumas National Forest LRMPs.	Less than significant	Less than significant	Less than significant
Impact LU-4: Implementation of the UNFFR Project could disrupt locatable mining activities in the North Fork Feather River — Seneca and Belden Reaches.	Less than significant	Less than significant	Less than significant

Impact LU-1: Construction activities associated with the UNFFR Project could disrupt other land uses in or near the activity areas.

Proposed UNFFR Project and Alternatives 1 and 2

Construction activities associated with the Proposed UNFFR Project and either alternative would involve ground disturbance, periodic construction traffic, and use of large equipment and trucks that would generate fugitive dust, tailpipe emissions, and noise that would periodically and temporarily affect visual quality. These activities could impair the peaceful enjoyment of nearby residential, commercial, and recreational land uses, including nearby campgrounds, day use areas, and marinas, at Lake Almanor and Butt Valley reservoir. No construction impacts would occur as a result of changes in flow releases to the Seneca and Belden reaches. Disruption of recreational land uses resulting from construction at Lake Almanor and Butt Valley reservoir would be especially pronounced during the recreation season (see section 6.8, Recreation, for additional discussions of recreation impacts). The temporary disturbances during construction could discourage uses in close proximity to the three activity areas, but other recreational areas would continue to be available and the public would be informed about the construction schedule and anticipated disturbances in advance by PG&E and/or other agencies and organizations. The temporary construction impacts at each activity area would not substantially disrupt nearby land uses; therefore, the impacts would be **less than significant**.

Impact LU-2: Implementation of the UNFFR Project could conflict with adjacent land uses.

Proposed UNFFR Project

Implementation of the Proposed UNFFR Project would not conflict with adjacent land uses; therefore, **there would be no impact**.

Alternatives 1 and 2

Installation of a thermal curtain around the Prattville intake at Lake Almanor would reduce the amount of lake area available for recreational uses on the water by about 16 acres (Figure 4-2), but it would not conflict with the nearby residential and commercial uses. The curtain would be entirely under water, with buoys and floatable tanks (with signs and safety lights) visible on the surface and bin walls connecting it to the shore. The location of the curtain and associated structures would obstruct current activities along the shoreline adjacent to the Prattville intake and recreational uses at the Marvin Alexander Beach day use area would be eliminated due to safety concerns.

Contact and non-contact water recreational activities would be excluded from the area immediately surrounding the thermal curtain and related facilities, which would be signed and marked to prevent accidents. The reduced lake area (approximately 16 acres, which equals 0.06 percent of total surface area), however, would not be substantial in proportion to the amount of lake area available for boating on Lake Almanor. Also, the thermal curtain is not expected to substantially impair the use of the commercial marinas near the Prattville intake because boaters using these facilities would have adequate lake surface area to safely use the facilities under variable climatic conditions (e.g., wind direction).

The thermal curtain around the Caribou intakes would not affect land uses at Butt Valley reservoir or from the adjacent shoreline in the vicinity of Butt Valley dam. Boating access is currently limited in this activity area, and boats are excluded from the southern end of the reservoir where the Caribou intakes are located. There is minimal recreational use in the vicinity of the dam; the primary use in the upland portion of this activity area is open space.

Modifications to the Canyon dam intake structure under Alternative 1 would not permanently alter or conflict with nearby land uses. The modifications would be entirely under water and would not involve new or expanded permanent facilities on the land or near existing recreational uses in the vicinity of Canyon dam. Periodic, temporary closures of the Canyon dam boat ramp and adjacent shoreline access would occur, but construction schedules will be developed to ensure that alternative launch and access locations are available for recreational users.

The increase in flow releases to the Seneca and Belden reaches could make pedestrian access to localized areas more challenging along these reaches, especially from June to September when 250 cubic feet per second (cfs) is released from Canyon dam under Alternative 1.

Due to the conflict with the established land uses at the Marvin Alexander Beach day use area, the impacts associated with the Prattville thermal curtain would be **significant without mitigation**.

Mitigation Measure

Mitigation Measure LU-2 (Alternatives 1 and 2): Relocation of the Marvin Alexander Beach Day Use Area

PG&E shall relocate the Marvin Alexander Beach day use area prior to initiating activities within the Prattville Intake activity area. PG&E shall work with the State Water Board, stakeholders, and signatories of the 2004 Settlement Agreement to identify an appropriate location at which to relocate the Marvin Alexander Beach day use area. The new site shall be required to provide the same level of access to Lake Almanor and must be equipped with the same amenities. Construction activities associated with the relocation of the Marvin Alexander Beach day use

area would be subject to Mitigation Measures Geology, Geomorphology, and Soils (GGS)-1 and Water Quality (WQ)-8, as described in Sections 6.3.2 and 6.5.2, respectively, to prevent erosion and sedimentation and ensure the protection of water quality resources.

Significance after Mitigation

Implementation of Mitigation Measure LU-2 would maintain the same level of land activities and recreational uses that exist at and around Lake Almanor. Although the location of the Marvin Alexander Beach day use area would change, it would still provide the same recreational activities and access to Lake Almanor. Implementation of this mitigation measure would reduce the impact to a **less than significant** level.

Impact LU-3: The UNFFR Project could be inconsistent with the goals, policies, and objectives of the General Plan, County Zoning Ordinances, or the Lassen and Plumas National Forest LRMPs.

Proposed UNFFR Project

The Proposed UNFFR Project area falls within the jurisdiction of Plumas County and both the Lassen and Plumas National Forests and is subject to their respective plans. The analysis of this impact as it relates to this alternative is discussed in detail under Land Management Plans in section 3.3.6.1 of the Final FERC EIS and is hereby incorporated by reference. Compliance with these plans will ensure that any impacts to adjacent land uses would be **less than significant**.

Alternatives 1 and 2

A thermal curtain at the Prattville intake would change the use of about 16 acres of Lake Almanor available for recreational uses. Around the Prattville intake, the lake is zoned L and the adjacent upland area is zoned Rec-1. The purpose of the L zone is to provide for the use and management of water resources. Hydroelectric generation is an allowed use within the L zone. Public utility facilities are permitted in the Rec-1 zone subject to the issuance of a county special use permit. A thermal curtain would be consistent with the land use and zoning designations. FERC could require PG&E to obtain a special use permit from the County for facilities (such as the bin walls) in the Rec-1 zone on the shore.

Modifications to the Canyon dam intake structure under Alternative 1 would not require any changes to that portion of the structure above the water surface or the use of the dam or result in changes to surrounding land uses. The function and character of the intake structure would remain consistent with the goals, policies, and objectives of the General Plan and County zoning ordinances. Short-term construction activities in the vicinity of the Canyon dam boat ramp would be consistent with zones L and Rec-1. Changes in flow releases to the Seneca and Belden reaches under either alternative would be consistent with the General Plan.

No activities would occur at Canyon dam under Alternative 2.

Around the Caribou intakes, Butt Valley reservoir is zoned L with an FP Combining zone, and the adjacent upland area is zoned TPZ and R-10. Hydroelectric generation is an allowed use within the L zone. A thermal curtain would not conflict with the purpose of the FP Combining zone of regulating development to achieve reasonable safety from flood hazards. No changes in land use would occur within the TPZ. Within the R-10 zone, public utility facilities and limited electrical generation are permitted subject to the issuance of a special use permit. A thermal

curtain would be consistent with the land use and zoning designations, but FERC could require PG&E to obtain a special use permit from the County for facilities (such as the bin walls) in the R-10 zone on the shore.

Both Alternatives 1 and 2 would result in a **less than significant** impact related to consistency with the goals, policies, and objectives of the General Plan, County Zoning Ordinances, and the Lassen and Plumas National Forests' LRMPs.

Impact LU-4: Implementation of the UNFFR Project could disrupt locatable mining activities in the North Fork Feather River – Seneca and Belden Reaches.

Proposed UNFFR Project and Alternatives 1 and 2

The Proposed UNFFR Project and either alternative would result in increased releases into the Seneca and Belden reaches, and Alternative 1 would include additional releases of up to 250 cfs through Canyon dam into the Seneca reach during mid-June through mid-September. Increased flows would raise water levels in the Seneca and Belden reaches during certain periods of the year and could disrupt placer mining activities at some of the active mining locations along these reaches. Higher water levels and flow rates could impair the ability of some miners to access and mine these sites along the reaches. Some miners may need to adjust their mining schedules to avoid the periods of increased releases. However, increases in flows may result in beneficial conditions for certain types of placer mining activities.

Occasional disruption of mining along the Seneca and Belden reaches would not result in the loss of availability of an important mineral resource because very few active mining properties would be negatively affected, the disruptions would be short term, and the mineral resource would still be available during lower flow periods. Both Alternatives 1 and 2 would result in a **less than significant** impact on the availability of important mineral resources.