

State Water Resources Control Board

NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF A DRAFT SUBSEQUENT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR THE MCCLLOUD-PIT HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT RELICENSING FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION PROJECT NO. 2106

To: Interested Parties and Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation

Notice is hereby given that a *Draft Subsequent Environmental Impact Report for the McCloud-Pit Hydroelectric Project Relicensing* (Draft SEIR) is available for public review and comment.

Background

On July 15, 2009, Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) filed an application with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to request relicensing of the McCloud-Pit Hydroelectric Project (Proposed Project). The original FERC license for the McCloud-Pit Hydroelectric Project (Hydroelectric Project) expired on July 31, 2011. Since then, the Hydroelectric Project has operated under annual licenses issued by FERC. As part of its relicensing process, PG&E filed an application for a water quality certification (certification) under section 401 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. § 1341) with the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board).

When the State Water Board considers issuing a certification for a project, it evaluates whether the project will comply with applicable water quality standards and other applicable requirements of state law and determines conditions necessary to protect water quality. In California, water quality standards are established in regional water quality control plans (basin plans). Regional Water Quality Control Boards prepare basin plans that designate the beneficial uses of waters to be protected and establish the water quality objectives necessary to protect those uses, as required under section 303 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. § 1313) and sections 13240 and 13241 of the California Water Code.

Additionally, in issuing a certification, the State Water Board must comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). (Pub. Resources Code, § 21000 et seq.) PG&E applied to the State Water Board for a certification on November 9, 2018. (33 U.S.C. § 1341.) The State Water Board, as CEQA lead agency, prepared an initial study and negative declaration for the Proposed Project to inform and support its decision regarding PG&E's certification application for the Hydroelectric Project's relicensing. The State Water Board issued a [final initial study and negative declaration](https://waterboards.ca.gov/waterrights/water_issues/programs/water_quality_cert/docs/mccloud_ceqa.pdf)¹

¹ https://waterboards.ca.gov/waterrights/water_issues/programs/water_quality_cert/docs/mccloud_ceqa.pdf

(IS/ND) on November 8, 2019. Additionally, on November 8, 2019, the Executive Director issued a certification for the Proposed Project.

On December 6, 2019, PG&E (separately) and the Winnemem Wintu Tribe and North Coast Rivers Alliance (NCRA) (jointly) filed with the State Water Board petitions for reconsideration (petitions) of the certification for the Hydroelectric Project's relicensing. Each petition requests modification of the certification, and the Winnemem Wintu Tribe and NCRA's petition additionally challenges the CEQA analysis prepared for the certification issued for the Hydroelectric Project's relicensing. In response to the petitions, the State Water Board's Executive Director directed staff to reinitiate consultation with the Winnemem Wintu Tribe to inform whether, and if so, what additional CEQA work may be necessary ([Order WQ 2020-0041-EXEC](#)²). As part of the reinitiated consultation with the Winnemem Wintu Tribe, staff determined that preparation of a subsequent environmental impact report would be appropriate to analyze impacts to tribal cultural resources that were unknown during the original CEQA process. A [Notice of Preparation](#)³ for the Subsequent Environmental Impact Report was issued on March 10, 2022.

The following information is provided in satisfaction of the formal written notice requirements for the public review of the Draft SEIR (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15087).

Applicant: PG&E
Proposed Project Name: McCloud-Pit Hydroelectric Project Relicensing
Proposed Project Location: Shasta and Siskiyou Counties, California

Proposed Project Description

The Hydroelectric Project is owned and operated by PG&E. The Hydroelectric Project is located on the McCloud River, Iron Canyon Creek, and Pit River, in Shasta and Siskiyou Counties, California. The 368-megawatt Hydroelectric Project consists of three power-generating developments that include two storage reservoirs (McCloud and Iron Canyon), two regulating reservoirs (Pit 6 and Pit 7), one afterbay (Pit 7), three powerhouses (James B. Black, Pit 6, and Pit 7), five dams (Pit 6, Pit 7, Pit 7 Afterbay, Iron Canyon, and McCloud), three recreation areas (Tarantula Gulch Boat Launch and Day Use Area, Deadlun Creek Campground, Hawkins Landing Campground and Boat Launch), two tunnels, and associated equipment and transmission facilities.

The Proposed Project includes relicensing (continued operations) of the Hydroelectric Project with changes, including: (1) revised minimum instream flows; (2) recreation facility construction and improvements; and (3) implementation of new environmental management plans and measures. Additional information on Hydroelectric Project facilities and the Proposed Project can be found on the [State Water Board's Hydroelectric Project webpage](#)⁴.

² https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/board_decisions/adopted_orders/water_quality/2020/wqo2020_0041_exec.pdf

³ https://waterboards.ca.gov/waterrights/water_issues/programs/water_quality_cert/docs/2022/mccloud-pit-nop.pdf

⁴ https://waterboards.ca.gov/waterrights/water_issues/programs/water_quality_cert/mccloudpit_ferc2106.html

Overview of Draft SEIR

The Draft SEIR evaluates the Proposed Project as well as three alternatives: (1) No Project; (2) Whitewater Boater Flows; and (3) Salmon Flows below McCloud Dam. The alternatives are described in detail in Chapter 5 of the Draft SEIR.

The Draft SEIR identifies significant impacts for the following resources, for which there are mitigation measures that will be implemented to prevent or avoid significant environmental impacts:

- Biological Resources
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Tribal Cultural Resources

The Draft SEIR identifies significant and unavoidable impacts for the following resources:

- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Cumulative Impacts – Tribal Cultural Resources

Public Review Period

The comment period for the Draft SEIR is from the date of this notice until Friday, May 22, 2026. **Comments on the Draft SEIR must be received by 12:00 p.m. on Friday, May 22, 2026**, and can be submitted electronically or by mail as follows:

Email (preferred):

WR401Program@waterboards.ca.gov

or

Mail:

Ms. Savannah Downey
State Water Resources Control Board
Division of Water Rights – Water Quality Certification Program
P.O. Box 2000
Sacramento, CA 95812-2000

The Draft SEIR and associated appendices, along with additional information regarding the State Water Board's certification process are available on the [Hydroelectric Project webpage](#)⁵. The Draft SEIR relies on and incorporates by reference portions of the Final IS/MND issued by the Board in November 2019 and the Final Environmental Impact Statement issued by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission in February 2011 for the Hydroelectric Project relicensing, which are also available on the Hydroelectric Project's webpage.

Document Availability

If you cannot access the documents online, you can review electronic copies of the Draft SEIR and associated appendices at the following locations. Please note the days

⁵ https://waterboards.ca.gov/waterrights/water_issues/programs/water_quality_cert/mccloudpit_ferc2106.html

the locations are open are provided for convenience; locations may be closed on the indicated days for holidays or other reasons.

State Water Resources Control Board

1001 I Street
2nd Floor, Room 2-114
Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 341-5300
Open Monday to Friday
9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Appointment preferred. Schedule an
appointment by emailing:
dwr@waterboards.ca.gov

Redding Library
1100 Parkview Avenue
Redding, CA 96001
(530) 245-7250
Open Monday to Thursday
10:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.
Open Friday to Sunday
10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

McCloud Library
300 E. Columbero Drive
McCloud, CA 96057
(530) 964-2169
Open Monday,
Wednesday, and Friday
12:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Public Comment Meeting

On May 6, 2026, State Water Board staff will host an online public forum to receive oral comments on the Draft SEIR as follows:

May 6, 2026
Starting at 3:30 p.m.

Registration Link: <https://waterboards.zoom.us/meeting/register/s7UKSTQiT-a14Hyxoc5smA>

The forum will conclude after all interested persons have provided their comments.

You must register to attend the virtual meeting. Once you register, you will receive an email with a meeting invite.

KEEP INFORMED OF PROPOSED PROJECT MILESTONES

To receive emails related to the Hydroelectric Project and other projects pursuing certifications managed by the Division of Water Rights, interested persons should enroll in the "Water Rights Water Quality Certification" e-mail notification service. Instructions on how to sign up for the State Water Board's Email Subscription List are outlined below:

1. Visit the State Water Board's [State Water Board's Email Subscription webpage](#).⁶
2. Provide your name and email in the required fields.
3. In the categories below the email and name fields, select "Water Rights," then "Water Rights Water Quality Certification".
4. Click the "Subscribe" button.
5. An email will be sent to you. You must respond to the email message to confirm your membership on the selected list(s).

By enrolling in this email list, you will receive notices for other current projects in the Division of Water Rights' Water Quality Certification Program, including the Hydroelectric Project. If you do not have internet access or do not wish to participate in the email subscription list, you may contact Savannah Downey by phone call to: (916) 322-1585 and leave a message to request to receive notices by mail. You can enroll or un-enroll from the email subscription service at any time.

If you have questions regarding this notice, please contact Ms. Savannah Downey by phone call to: (916) 322-1585 or by email to: Savannah.Downey@waterboards.ca.gov.

Parker Thaler

Parker Thaler
Water Quality Certification Program Manager
Division of Water Rights

4/7/26

Date

⁶ https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/resources/email_subscriptions/