Notice of Preparation

From: Turlock Irrigation District and Modesto Irrigation District

Subject: Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report

Project Title: Don Pedro Hydroelectric Project FERC Relicensing and La Grange Hydroelectric Project FERC Licensing

Project Location: Tuolumne and Stanislaus Counties, California

Public Review Date: January 30, 2026 – February 28, 2026

Public Scoping Meeting (Online): February 10, 2026, 4PM-5:30PM

Login Link: https://hdrinc.zoom.us/j/86226284805 | **Dial-In:** 253-205-0468

Webinar ID: 862 2628 4805

Passcode: 921067

Turlock Irrigation District (TID), the Lead Agency, with Modesto Irrigation District (MID) as a Responsible Agency, collectively referred to as the Districts, will prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the continued operation and maintenance of the hydropower works associated with the Districts' Don Pedro Hydroelectric Project (Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) Project Number 2299) under a new license to be issued by FERC and continued operation and maintenance of the hydropower works associated with TID's La Grange Hydroelectric Project (FERC Project Number 14581) under an original license to be issued by FERC. These two actions are collectively referred to as the Proposed Project. The projects are located in the western foothills of the Sierra Nevada in Central California on the mainstem of the Tuolumne River in Tuolumne and Stanislaus counties. Responsible, trustee agencies, and other interested agencies, organizations and individuals, are invited to provide written comments on the scope and content of the Draft EIR.

As a multi-purpose project, the Don Pedro Project provides water storage within Don Pedro Reservoir for irrigation and domestic use as well as renewable energy production through the Don Pedro Powerhouse. The Don Pedro Project operations also benefit fish, wildlife, and recreation resources, as well as providing flood control benefits in compliance with the requirements of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The multi-purpose La Grange Project is located downstream of the Don Pedro Project and allows for the diversion of water to TID's and MID's water supply canal systems and renewable energy production through the La Grange Powerhouse.

The description, location, and the potential environmental effects of the Proposed Project are described in the attached materials. Additional project information and this Notice of Preparation (NOP) can be found on the projects' websites at https://donpedro-relicensing.com and https://lagrange-licensing.com. Written comments regarding the scope and content of the EIR are encouraged to be submitted at the earliest possible date and must be sent to TID no later than February 28, 2026, due to the time limits mandated by State law. For e-mailed comments, please include the project title in the subject line and include the commenter's name and U.S. Postal Service mailing address and indicate whether you would like to receive further information about the Proposed Project.

Please send or e-mail your comments to:

Michael Cooke
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micooke@tid.org

Michael Cooke
Director of Water Resources and Regulatory Affairs | TID

January 30, 2026

Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report - Don Pedro Hydroelectric Project FERC Relicensing and La Grange Hydroelectric Project FERC Licensing

1.0 Introduction

Turlock Irrigation District (TID) with Modesto Irrigation District (MID), collectively referred to as the Districts, intend to prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the continued operation and maintenance of the hydropower works associated with the Districts' Don Pedro Hydroelectric Project (Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) Project Number 2299) under a new license to be issued by FERC and for the continued operation and maintenance of the hydropower works associated with TID's La Grange Hydroelectric Project (FERC Project Number 14581) under an original license to be issued by FERC. These two actions collectively are referred to as the Proposed Project. The Districts anticipate the licensing will result in FERC issuing to the Districts licenses with terms of up to 50 years. The EIR will identify and evaluate possible environmental impacts of the Proposed Project, and alternatives, and will develop measures to avoid, reduce, or compensate for any significant impacts related to implementation of the Proposed Project and alternatives.

In June 2025, the Districts released a Draft California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Supplemental Analysis (State Clearinghouse No. 2024090634) to the 2020 FERC Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) in an Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) format. Based on public and agency comments received on the June 2025 Draft CEQA Supplemental Analysis IS/MND, TID, as the CEQA Lead Agency, and MID, as a Responsible Agency under CEQA, have decided to prepare an EIR to meet their CEQA obligations and provide ample opportunity for public disclosure and participation in the planning and decision-making process. Therefore, this NOP as required under CEQA Guidelines California Code of Regulations (CCR) Section (§) 15082 initiates the EIR process and includes the following:

1) provides background information that is relevant to the Proposed Project;
2) describes the location of the existing projects;
3) describes the scope of the EIR;
4) lists resource areas to be analyzed in the EIR;
5) describes the EIR review process, including opportunities for responsible agencies and public involvement; and
6) provides contact information for the Lead Agency, TID.

Pending the outcome of the CEQA process, the Proposed Project and EIR will be submitted to the TID Board of Directors for its consideration and potential approval and to the MID Board of Directors for its certification that it reviewed and considered the information contained in the EIR. This process is aimed at providing the public and decision-makers with a clear understanding of the activities, elements, and methods involved should the Proposed Project be approved and implemented.

FERC is an independent agency that, among other responsibilities, regulates the interstate transmission of electricity, natural gas, and oil, and licenses hydroelectric projects. FERC, as a federal agency, does not lead or participate in the CEQA process.

2.0 Background

On March 10, 1964, FERC issued to the Districts an original license with a term ending April 30, 2016, for the Don Pedro Project. In anticipation of the original license's expiration, on April 29, 2014, the Districts filed with FERC an application for a new license for the Don Pedro Project and amended their application on October 11, 2017. TID filed with FERC an application for an original license for the La Grange Project on October 11, 2017. **Figure 1** below shows the general vicinity of the existing Don Pedro Project and La Grange Project, the major facilities, and the current FERC Project Boundary for the Don Pedro Project.

In conformance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and FERC regulations (Title 18 Code of Federal Regulations Part 380), FERC issued a Draft EIS on February 11, 2019, and a Final EIS for the projects on July 7, 2020. Until FERC completes its licensing process, the Districts operate and maintain the hydropower works associated with the Don Pedro Project under an annual FERC license that contains the same terms and conditions as those in the original license.

As stated above, in June 2025, the Districts released a Draft CEQA Supplemental Analysis to the 2020 FERC Final EIS in an IS/MND format to supplement analysis from 2020 where necessary and focus on topics where the Proposed Project could have potentially significant or significant impacts under CEQA. After receiving public and agency input on the Draft IS/MND, the Districts decided to prepare a full EIR for the Proposed Project in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15081.

3.0 Objectives of Proposed Project

The Districts' overall goal is to continue to operate and maintain the hydropower works associated with the Districts' Don Pedro Hydroelectric Project and La Grange Project under licenses issued by FERC while offering a reliable and economic source of irrigation and municipal water, providing environmental flows, enhancing environmental and recreational conditions, providing flood control benefits along the Tuolumne and San Joaquin rivers, and continuing to generate clean energy regionally and statewide and to support the reliability of the California Electric Grid.

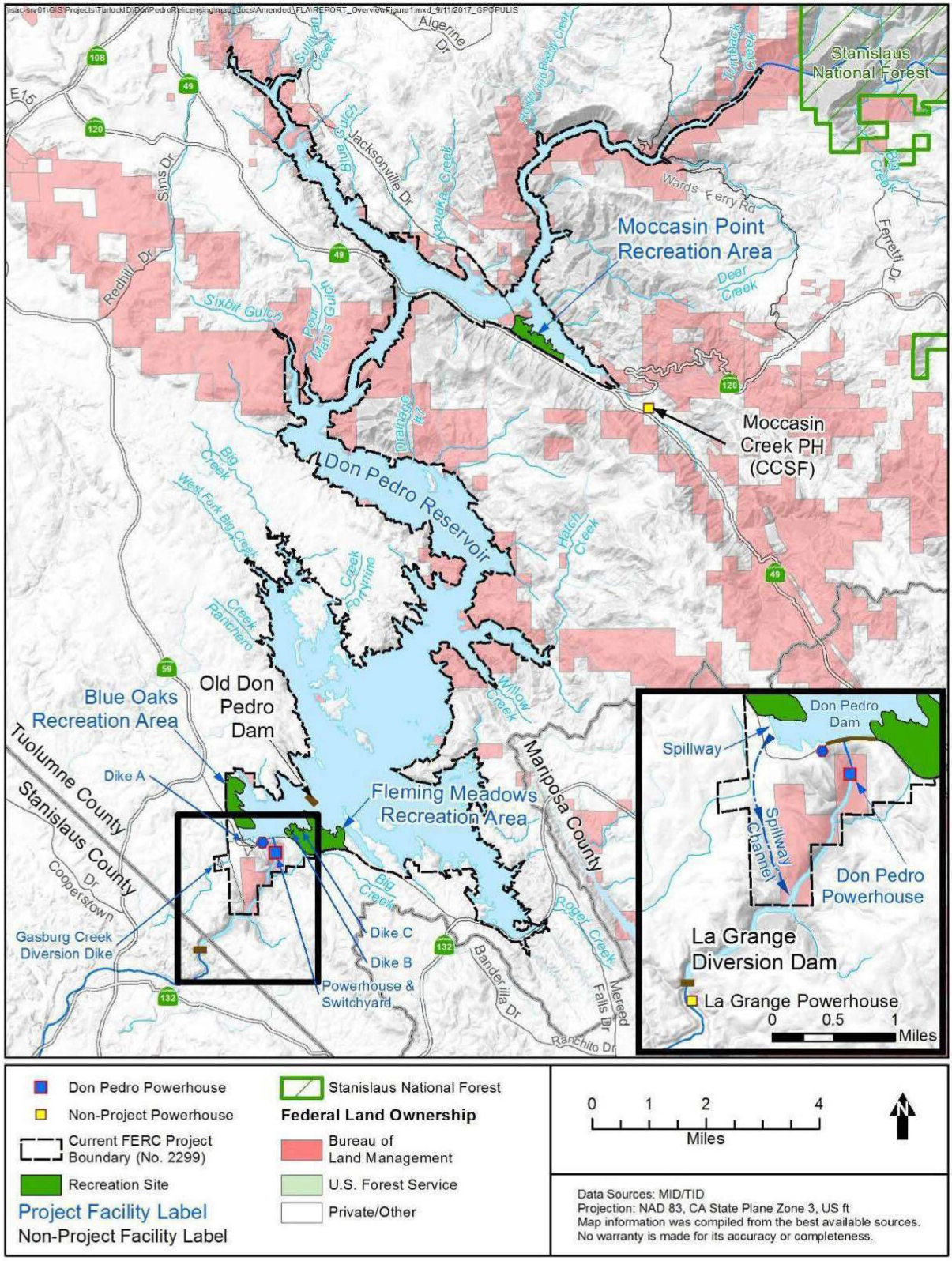
4.0 Scope of the EIR

The Districts' EIR will assess the Proposed Project's effects on the environment, identify significant impacts, and identify feasible measures to reduce or eliminate potentially significant environmental impacts. The EIR will also include an analysis of alternatives to the Proposed Project. The Districts will review comments received on this NOP and may modify or add to the scope of environmental issues evaluated in the EIR.

4.1 Alternatives to the Project

The EIR will identify and evaluate feasible alternatives to the Proposed Project that might reasonably be assumed to reduce significant impacts and will include at a minimum a "No Project" alternative. Additional alternatives are under consideration at this time and feedback is encouraged regarding the range of alternatives that should be analyzed in the Draft EIR.

Figure 1. Location of the Don Pedro Project and La Grange Project



4.2 Resource Areas to be Analyzed in the EIR

Currently identified environmental issues to be evaluated in the EIR include:

Aesthetics	Agriculture & Forestry	Air Quality
Biological Resources	Cultural Resources	Energy
Geology and Soils	Greenhouse Gas Emissions	Hazards & Hazardous Materials
Hydrology and Water Quality	Land Use and Planning	Mineral Resources
Noise	Population and Housing	Public Services
Recreation	Transportation	Tribal Cultural Resources
Utilities and Service Systems	Wildfire	

4.3 Cumulative Impacts

The EIR will identify environmental impacts of the Proposed Project that may be individually limited but cumulatively considerable (i.e., the incremental effects of the Proposed Project are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of other projects). The cumulative impact analysis of the EIR will establish an appropriate cumulative setting that includes areas, watersheds, and other hydroelectric operations that in combination may be affected by the operation of the projects.

4.4 Other Required Sections of the EIR

The EIR will also include other sections that provide information required for an EIR, including the following:

1) Growth Inducing Impacts;
2) Significant, Unavoidable Impacts;
3) Significant Irreversible Environmental Changes;

5.0 Environmental Review Procedures

This NOP initiates the EIR process through which the Districts will refine the range of issues and alternatives to be addressed in the EIR. Written comments regarding the scope and content of the EIR are encouraged to be submitted during the scoping period from January 30, 2026, through February 28, 2026. A virtual scoping meeting will be held on February 10, 2026, to provide opportunities for public and agency comments. After the scoping period for the NOP is complete, the Districts will prepare a Draft EIR in accordance with CEQA (Public Resources Code § 21000 et seq.) and the State CEQA Guidelines (CCR § 15000 et seq.).

Once the Draft EIR is completed, the Districts will make it available for at least a 45-day public review and comment period. A Notice of Availability and how to review the Draft EIR will be sent directly to Responsible and Trustee Agencies and those agencies that commented on the NOP. Information

about availability of the Draft EIR will also be posted on the projects' websites at https://donpedro-relicensing.com and https://lagrange-licensing.com.

6.0 Contact Information

For further information regarding the NOP and to provide comments, contact:

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