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Summary Form for Electronic Document Submittal

Form F

Lead agencies may include 15 hardcopies of this document when submitting electronic copies of Environmental Impact Reports, Negative Declarations, Mitigated Negative Declarations, or Notices of Preparation to the State Clearinghouse (SCH). The SCH also accepts other summaries, such as EIR Executive Summaries prepared pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15123. Please include one copy of the Notice of Completion Form (NOC) with your submission and attach the summary to each electronic copy of the document.

SCH #: 2024101277

Project Title: Yuba River Development Project and the Narrows Hydroelectric Project FERC Relicensings

Lead Agency: Yuba County Water Agency

Contact Name: John James, Director of Resource Planning

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Project Location: Yuba, Sierra, and Nevada Counties, California

City *County*

Project Description (Proposed actions, location, and/or consequences).

The YRDP is located in Yuba, Sierra and Nevada Counties, on the main stems of the Yuba River, the North Yuba River and the Middle Yuba River, and on Oregon Creek, a tributary to the Middle Yuba River. The Narrows Project is located near Englebright Dam in unincorporated Nevada County. Yuba Water has applied for relicensing of both the YRDP and the Narrows Project to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), each for a 50-year term, that would allow for the continued operations and maintenance of the existing YRDP and Narrows Project hydropower facilities. As part of the new license, the YRDP proposes to construct a new Tailwater Depression System at the New Colgate Powerhouse, install outlet pipes at the Our House and Log Cabin Diversion Dams, and replace an existing gate at the Lohman Ridge Diversion Tunnel connecting the two diversion dams. The YRDP also proposes to improve existing recreation facilities at New Bullards Bar Reservoir, plus add two new campground areas, a picnic site, and a trail. Yuba Water does not propose any changes to the existing Narrows Project works or facilities, and no new facilities are proposed. Both projects would have changes to license conditions affecting issues such as biological resources and cultural resources.

Identify the project's significant or potentially significant effects and briefly describe any proposed mitigation measures that would reduce or avoid that effect.

Potentially significant impacts have been identified for air quality, noise, visual resources, biological resources, and wildfire. Mitigation measures have been described in the EIR that would reduce these impacts. EIR Chapter describes 16 mitigation measures to reduce impacts on biological resources, mainly on special-status species and their habitat. Mitigation measures for air quality and noise would reduce impacts associated with construction activities, as would mitigation for visual resources associated with light and glare. Mitigation for wildfire would require preparing and implementing a plan for people unable to evacuate. While these mitigations would reduce impacts to a less-than-significant level, impacts would be significant and unavoidable for air quality (campfire smoke), greenhouse gas emissions, and transportation (VMT), as no feasible mitigation measures could be identified to reduce these impacts to a level that would be less than significant.

If applicable, describe any of the project's areas of controversy known to the Lead Agency, including issues raised by agencies and the public.

Areas of controversy identified as part of the FERC relicensing process for the YRDP and through comments provided during CEQA scoping processes included the following. All these issues pertain to the YRDP; no areas of controversy were identified for the Narrows Project.

Alternatives Analysis – A total of ten alternatives were suggested by various parties, along with requests to evaluate each of these alternatives in the DEIR. In a number of cases, the suggested alternative was found to be (1) not feasible; (2) not warranted or justifiable under the FPA; (3) not protective or beneficial to fisheries resources; or (4) incongruous with Yuba Water's mission and because it would not achieve most of Yuba Water's project objectives.

Clean Water Act Section 401 Compliance Issues - The uncertainty of future CWA regulatory constraints imposed by the SWRCB's WQC Conditions that will be issued for the YRDP and the Narrows Project is an issue of concern with respect to potential changes to YRDP operations.

Bay-Delta Water Quality Control Plan Update - The uncertainty of future regulatory constraints associated with the SWRCB's Updates to the Water Quality Control Plan for the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Estuary.

Suggested Mitigation Measures - These included YRDP impacts related to Large Woody Material (LWM) and sediment management on the North Yuba River below New Bullards Bar Dam, and implementation of lower Yuba River floodplain restoration activities to accompany the riparian vegetation planning that was recommended by FERC in the 2019 FEIS.

Provide a list of the responsible or trustee agencies for the project.

California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Region 2
California Department of Water Resources
California State Water Resources Control Board
Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Valley Region
State Office of Historic Preservation
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection