



State Water Resources Control Board

May 23, 2024

Mr. Kenneth Borngrebe, Director of Environmental Services
Southern California Edison Company
2244 Walnut Grove Avenue
Rosemead, CA 91770

Sent via email: Kenneth.Borngrebe@sce.com

NOTICE OF APPLICABILITY, CLEAN WATER ACT SECTION 401 GENERAL WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION FOR SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA EDISON COMPANY'S HUNTINGTON LAKE DAM NO. 1 AUXILIARY SPILLWAY REPAIRS PROJECT, FRESNO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

Dear Mr. Borngrebe:

On April 19, 2024, the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) received Southern California Edison Company's (SCE) Notice of Intent (NOI) to enroll the Huntington Lake Dam No. 1 Auxiliary Spillway Repairs Project (Project) under the *General Order for Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification Action, Order No. WQ-2021-0048-DWQ* for State Water Board Certification and Denial of the Corps' Nationwide Permits ([General Order WQ-2021-0048-DWQ](#), General Order)¹. SCE's NOI notes that the Project would be covered by United States Army Corps of Engineers' (USACE) Nationwide Permit (NWP) No. 3(a) – Maintenance.

State Water Board staff reviewed SCE's NOI and supplemental information provided via emails on April 19 and 22, 2024, and find the Project meets the requirements of the General Order. The Project is hereby enrolled under the General Order and SCE may proceed with the Project in accordance with the requirements contained in this Notice of Applicability (NOA) and the attached General Order following any additional federal and/or state approvals such as USACE notification of coverage under NWP No. 3(a).

SCE is responsible for complying with all applicable General Order requirements. Failure to comply with the General Order constitutes a violation of the California Water Code and may result in enforcement action or termination of enrollment under the General Order.

¹ https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/cwa401/docs/2021/certification-denial-corps-nationwide-permit-project-general-order-10122021.pdf

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Project is located on Huntington Lake Dam No. 1 (Dam No. 1) which impounds water to form Huntington Lake. Water from Huntington Lake is released into Big Creek, a tributary to the South Fork San Joaquin River. The Project is located approximately 75 miles northeast of the city of Fresno in Fresno County. Dam No. 1 is part of the Big Creek Hydroelectric Project Nos. 1 and 2 (Federal Energy Regulatory Commission [FERC] Project No. 2175) and is one of three concrete gravity dams that impound water in Huntington Lake. Dam No. 1 is composed of two spillways that release flow into Big Creek. The Project will take place along the 312-foot Auxiliary Spillway (Spillway) which releases water through 15 manually operated vertical-lift slide gates. The purpose of the Project is to repair and resurface damaged concrete areas along the Spillway to address leakage concerns identified by FERC's Division of Dam Safety in 2021 and 2022 inspection reports. Project activities are anticipated to occur in summer 2024 during dry work conditions when Huntington Lake is drawn down (typically around Labor Day). The Project is located on Sierra National Forest land that is managed by the United States Forest Service.

The Project involves four main activities: (1) the hydro-demolition² and manual removal³ of concrete surfaces along the Spillway; (2) concrete surface repairs; (3) toe repairs on the downstream side of the Spillway; and (4) expansion joint repairs along the crest of the Spillway. Prior to concrete removal activities, SCE will install sandbag check dams and layered visqueen sheeting along the toe of the Spillway to contain water used during the hydro-demolition process. Three tanks will be placed on the dry bed of Huntington Lake to store water: (1) two frac tanks to store potable or treated water; and (2) a steel Connex tank to store contaminated water. Potable water will be pumped over the Spillway crest and used for the hydro-demolition process. The contained contaminated water will be pumped back over the spillway into the steel Connex tank for treatment⁴. Treated water will then be pumped into the other frac tank for re-use. After existing deteriorated concrete has been removed, SCE will identify and repair cracks and spalls along the Spillway using shotcrete. Following concrete surface repairs, SCE will install reinforced toe blocks on the downstream side of the Spillway to prevent leakage. Expansion joint repairs along the crest of the Spillway will be completed using hand tools. Equipment and construction materials will be removed from the work area each night during Project activities and stored in designated upland staging areas. All disturbed areas will be restored to pre-Project contours.

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT

The certification of projects under NWP No. 3(a) is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Proposed Project activities are not expected to have a significant effect on the environment and the State Water Board has determined that the Project is categorically exempt from CEQA under California Code of

² Hydro-demolition is a concrete removal technique that uses high-pressure water to remove deteriorated concrete.

³ Localized cracks and spalls on the Spillway face below the hydro-demolition limits will be manually removed to an approximate depth of two inches via saw-cutting, chipping, or bush hammering.

⁴ SCE will use a combination of CO₂ (carbon dioxide) injection (to reduce pH) and flocculants/coagulants (to remove solid waste) to treat the contaminated water.

Regulations, title 14, section 15301 (Existing Facilities). Additionally, the State Water Board finds that no exceptions to these exemptions apply to the Project activities approved by this NOA.

The State Water Board will file a Notice of Exemption with the Office of Planning and Research within five days of issuance of this NOA. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15062.)

PROJECT FEE

An application fee of \$2,985 was received electronically on March 22, 2024. The 2023-2024 Application Fee for a Category A: *Fill and Excavation*⁵ Discharges is \$2,985, with no additional Project Fee because the Project size is less than the area that requires discharge area fees. Accordingly, the total fee associated with this NOA is \$2,985. No additional payment is needed at this time. Annual fees may apply if implementation of the Project, including any required monitoring or reporting, exceeds 12 months from this NOA. Annual fees will continue to be charged until a Notice of Project Complete Letter is issued by the Deputy Director for the Division of Water Rights (Deputy Director). Failure to notify the State Water Board of Project completion may result in continued billing of annual fees.

AUTHORIZED IMPACTS

Excavation and fill activities authorized by this NOA are limited to 0.001 acres/30 linear feet of temporary impacts⁶ to a streambed and 0.0024 acres/0.5 linear feet of permanent impacts⁷ to a stream channel.

PROJECT SPECIFIC AVOIDANCE AND MINIMIZATION MEASURES

SCE shall implement the Avoidance and Minimization and Best Management Practices listed in Section 6, Attachment C, and Attachment E of its April 19, 2024 NOI.

REQUIREMENTS

SCE shall comply with all applicable conditions of the General Order, including but not limited to the following:

- Pursuant to section VI.B.15.d.v of the General Order, SCE shall ensure all equipment is fueled, maintained, and/or parked overnight in an upland area at least 100 feet from any delineated waters of the state.
- Pursuant to section VI.B.15.d.vi of the General Order, SCE shall store hazardous materials including chemicals, fuels, and lubricating oils at least 100 feet away

⁵ "Excavation" refers to removing sediment or soil in shallow waters or under no flow conditions, typically for purposes other than navigation. Examples include, but are not limited to, trenching for utility lines; other earthwork preliminary to discharge; removing sediment to increase channel capacity; and other flood control and drainage maintenance activities (e.g., debris removal, vegetation management and removal, detention basin maintenance and erosion control of slopes along open channels and other drainage facilities). (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 23, § 2200.)

⁶ Temporary disturbances would result from temporary excavation and fill during the Spillway toe and expansion joint repairs.

⁷ Permanent fill consists of concrete associated with the construction of the toe block.

from any delineated waters of the state and shall store such materials in appropriate containers with appropriate secondary containment.

- Pursuant to section VI.B.15.d.x of the General Order, SCE shall ensure all equipment and vehicle fueling and storage occur at least 100 feet from any waters of the state, in a location where fluids or accidental discharges cannot flow into waters of the state.
- Pursuant to section VI.D.4 of the General Order, SCE shall implement the Project in conformance with the information provided in the April 19, 2024 NOI and supplemental information provided via emails on April 19 and 22, 2024. Any proposed changes to the Project design described in the NOI must be submitted to and approved by the Deputy Director prior to implementation.
- Pursuant to section VI.E.3.a of the General Order, SCE shall submit a Commencement of Construction notification to the Deputy Director at least seven days prior to start of initial ground disturbance activities.
- Pursuant to section VI.E.3.b of the General Order, SCE shall submit a Request for Notice of Project Complete letter to the Deputy Director within 30 days following completion of all Project activities. Upon approval of the request, the Deputy Director will issue a Notice of Project Complete Letter to SCE. Annual fees will be terminated concurrent with the date the Notice of Project Complete Letter is issued by the Deputy Director.

If you have questions about this NOA, please contact Bryan Muro by email at: Bryan.Muro@waterboards.ca.gov or phone call to: (916) 327-8702. Written correspondence should be mailed to:

State Water Resources Control Board
Division of Water Rights – Water Quality Certification Program
Attn: Bryan Muro
P.O. Box 2000
Sacramento, CA 95812-2000.

Sincerely,



Chief Deputy Director, on behalf of

Eric Oppenheimer
Executive Director

Enclosure: General Order for Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification Action, Order No. WQ 2021-0048-DWQ

ec: Ms. Debbie-Ann Reese, Acting Secretary
Federal Regulatory Energy Commission
**Via e-filing to FERC Docket for Big Creek Hydroelectric Project Nos. 1 and 2
FERC Project No. 2175**

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