

FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION
Washington, D. C. 20426

OFFICE OF ENERGY PROJECTS

Project No. 803--California
DeSabra-Centerville Project
Pacific Gas and Electric Company

Mr. Randal S. Livingston
Pacific Gas and Electric Company
Mail Code: N11E
P.O. Box 770000
San Francisco, CA 94177-0001

FEB 18 2011.

Subject: Report of turbid water release

Dear Mr. Livingston:

We received a report of a turbid water release that occurred on or around February 9, 2011, at the Desabra-Centerville Project (FERC No. 803). The report and associated video documentation¹ suggests that sediment laden water was released into Butte Creek from the Centerville Powerhouse bypass spill channel during efforts to activate a generating unit at the Centerville powerhouse.

Further, we are in receipt of email correspondence directed to staff of the Commission's Division of Dam Safety and Inspections-San Francisco Regional Office regarding the incident. The emails state that a turbidity deviation occurred on February 8, 2011, during unit 1 start-up testing at the Centerville powerhouse. The correspondence also indicated that the turbidity release may have had a negative effect on aquatic organisms in Butte Creek.

Ordering paragraph (D) of your project license² requires compliance with the standard license articles set forth in Form L-1. Standard license article 19 requires that you take reasonable measures to prevent, soil erosion on lands adjacent to streams or other waters, stream sedimentation, and any form of water or air pollution.

¹ See www.youtube.com/watch?v=BLziEKZ4WdU

² See 11 FERC ¶ 62,207. Order Issuing New License (Major) (Issued June 12, 1980).

So that we may further review the events surrounding this incident and your compliance with the requirements of your project license, please file a report with the Commission that includes the following information:

- a detailed chronology of events leading up to and including the turbid water release, including the date(s) of the incident, applicable flow records, the results of any water quality monitoring conducted during the incident, and any corrective actions taken in response to the incident;
- an account of any environmental impacts that may have occurred during the period of elevated turbidity levels and any actions that were taken to prevent or mitigate for adverse effects to aquatic organisms;
- documentation of any advance coordination and/or subsequent correspondence with the natural resource agencies, including the California State Water Resources Control Board, National Marine Fisheries Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and California Department of Fish and Game; and
- a summary of your current procedures for bypassing flows around the Centerville powerhouse, and for coordinating in advance with the resource agencies and preparing any needed turbidity control plan. Please also include a proposal for avoiding similar incidents in the future.

We remind you that a report of any deviations from the requirements of your project license, including the one referenced above should be filed with the Commission Secretary. Please file the information requested above as soon as possible, but no later than **7 days from the date of this letter**. The Commission strongly encourages electronic filings via the Internet. For guidance, see 18 CFR 385.2001(a)(1)(iii) and the instructions on the Commission's website at www.ferc.gov/docs-filing/efiling.asp. Alternatively, an original and eight copies of all documents may be mailed to:

The Secretary
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
888 First Street, N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20426.

By copy of this letter, we are also requesting any comments on the reported turbid water release from the copied resource agencies. If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact Mr. John Aedo at (415) 369-3335.

Sincerely,



Thomas J. LoVullo
Acting Chief, Aquatic Resources Branch
Division of Hydropower Administration
and Compliance

c: Ms. Susan Moore, Field Supervisor
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Sacramento Fish and Wildlife Office
2800 Cottage Way, Room W-2605
Sacramento, CA 95825

Mr. Russ Kanz
State Water Resources Control Board
P.O. Box 2000
Sacramento, CA 95812-2000

Ms. Annie Manji
FERC Coordinator
CA Dept. of Fish and Game
830 S Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Mr. Steven Edmondson
Regional Director
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