

POTENTIAL RESOURCE ISSUE:

Protection of vegetation communities and associated wildlife habitats.

PROJECT NEXUS:

- Project maintenance activities and potential Project betterments could result in direct loss of vegetation communities and wildlife habitats (including communities afforded special recognition by state and federal agencies (e.g., riparian, jurisdictional wetlands).
- Project maintenance activities and potential Project betterments could result in indirect effects on special-status plant and wildlife species by affecting vegetation communities and wildlife habitats.

POTENTIAL LICENSE CONDITION:

- Vegetation and Integrated Pest Management Plan

STUDY OBJECTIVE:

- Document vegetation communities and wildlife habitats adjacent to Project facilities, roads, trails, recreation facilities, and Project-related dispersed concentrated use areas.
- Document vegetation communities and wildlife habitats adjacent to potential Project betterments.

EXTENT OF STUDY AREA:

The study area is ¼ mile around Project facilities, roads, trails, recreation facilities, and Project-related dispersed concentrated use areas. Refer to Project Description Table 5-1 and REC1–Recreation Use and Facilities Assessment Technical Study Plan Table REC1-1.

The study area is expanded to include ¼ mile around potential Project betterments, including new facilities, roads, and trails; staging and disposal sites; as well as new inundation areas. Refer to the Project Description Table 6-1.

STUDY APPROACH:

- Develop vegetation community maps of the study area using the most current available CalVeg data (USDA-FS 2000). This information is presented in the *Middle Fork American River Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2079) Draft Existing Resource Information Report, First Series* (PCWA 2006).
- Verify the accuracy of CalVeg data using existing aerial photographs and the Project video.
- Conduct ground-truthing of 20% of vegetation communities, concentrating in areas where concerns about vegetation community identification or boundaries arise from review of aerial photographs and the Project video. Inaccessible areas will not be ground-truthed.

- Cross-reference CalVeg vegetation communities with California Wildlife Habitat Relationship (CWHR) designations (Mayer and Laudenslayer 1988) and develop maps of wildlife habitats in the study area.
- Develop a Geographic Information System (GIS) map of vegetation communities and CWHR and overlay information on Project facilities, roads, trails, recreation facilities.
- Overlay vegetation communities and CWHR GIS information on potential Project betterments.

SCHEDULE:

To be developed in early 2007.

REFERENCES:

Mayer, K.E., and W.F. Laudenslayer. 1988. A Guide to Wildlife Habitats of California. State of California, Department of Fish and Game. Sacramento, CA.

Placer County Water Agency (PCWA). 2006. Middle Fork American River Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2079) Draft Existing Resource Information Report, *First Series*. June 2006.

U.S. Department of Agriculture-Forest Service (USDA-FS). 2000. CalVeg data for California Region 5. Accessed August 2006 at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r5/rsl/projects/frdb/>.