

POTENTIAL RESOURCE ISSUE:

Reduce the spread or introduction of noxious weeds.

PROJECT NEXUS:

Project maintenance activities and potential Project betterments could result in the spread or introduction of noxious weeds.

POTENTIAL LICENSE CONDITION:

- Vegetation and Integrated Pest Management Plan

STUDY OBJECTIVE:

- Document noxious weed populations at Project facilities, roads, trails, and recreation facilities, and dispersed concentrated use areas.
- Document noxious weed populations at potential Project betterments, including new facilities, roads, and trails; staging and disposal sites; as well as new inundation areas.

EXTENT OF STUDY AREA:

The study area includes the following buffer areas around Project facilities, roads, trails, recreation facilities, and dispersed concentrated use areas (Project Description Table 5-1 and REC1–Recreation Use and Facilities Assessment Technical Study Plan Table REC1-1).

- 15 feet around the perimeter of the large reservoirs, medium reservoirs and diversion pools;
- 15 feet outside the perimeter fence of powerhouses, switchyards, and substations;
- 60 feet around gate houses, shafts, surge chambers, and adits;
- 60 feet around microwave reflectors;
- 20 feet on either side of penstocks;
- 20 feet on either side of communication lines;
- 35 feet on either side of powerlines;
- 15 feet on either side of roads;
- 150 feet around recreation facilities and dispersed concentrated use areas;
- 10 feet on either side of trails;
- 10 feet around dams; and
- 20 feet around Project support buildings.

The study area will be expanded to include buffer areas (100 feet) around potential Project betterments (Project Description Table 6-1).

STUDY APPROACH:

An invasive plant is defined as an exotic species that is new to a region, persists without human intervention, and has serious impacts on its environment. A noxious weed is defined by the State of California as any invasive plant species that is, or is liable to be, troublesome, aggressive, intrusive, detrimental, or destructive to agriculture, silviculture, or important native species, and difficult to control or eradicate. Noxious weeds are designated by the director of the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA).

- Identify and map known occurrences of noxious weeds based on agency consultation and a review of existing information. Preliminary information is presented in the *Middle Fork American River Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2079) Draft Existing Resource Information Report, First Series* (PCWA 2006).
- Develop a list of noxious weeds of highest concern in the Eldorado and Tahoe National Forest based on agency consultation.
- Conduct focused noxious weed surveys in conjunction with special-status plant surveys, based on Section 2083 of the *Forest Service Manual, Information and Reporting Guidelines for Noxious Weeds* (USDA-FS 1995). Results of the survey will include reporting acres infested by noxious weeds, by species and location. Levels of infestation will be reported as follows: low (<6% cover); moderate (6–25% cover), and high (>25% cover). Areas that have been surveyed and found to be weed-free will also be identified.
- Develop a GIS map of noxious weeds and overlay information on Project facilities, roads, trails, recreation facilities, and Project-related dispersed concentrated use areas.
- Overlay noxious weed GIS information on potential Project betterments.

SCHEDULE:

To be developed in early 2007.

REFERENCES:

- 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). 1995. Section 2083, Information and Reporting Guidelines for Noxious Weeds. In: Forest Service Manual, Section 2080.