

**FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION**  
**Office of Energy Projects**  
**Division of Dam Safety and Inspections - San Francisco Regional Office**  
**901 Market Street, Suite 350, San Francisco, California 94103**  
**(415) 369-3300 Office (415) 369-3322 Facsimile**

December 14, 2004

In reply, refer to:  
Project No. 2079-CA  
NATDAM No. CA00859

Stephen J. Jones, Power System Manager  
Placer County Water Agency  
24625 Harrison St  
P.O. Box 667  
Forest Hill, CA 95631

Re: Gate Opening Incident that could have affected Public Safety at Ralston Afterbay Dam, FERC Project No. 2079

Dear Mr. Jones:

We have received your letter dated November 5, 2004 that transmitted the results of a test performed on the gate control equipment at the Ralston Afterbay Dam, FERC Project No. 2079.

We noted that in the sixth paragraph on page 2 of your letter that during the test the leads to the gate hoist motors were lifted so that there was no possibility of the float controllers causing a gate to open. Your tests indicated that application of generator power and subjecting the controllers to rapid variations in input voltage caused the reservoir elevation analog output signals to the controllers to give falsely high reservoir levels.

Your report includes many valuable recommendations that may help prevent a similar accidental gate opening from occurring in the future on the Ralston Afterbay Dam and we agree with your recommendations. As you stated in your letter, the recommendations proposed in your letter should not be implemented until the independent electrical engineers report on the gate incident is received and evaluated.

If you have any comments or questions, please contact Mr. John Onderdonk at (415) 369-3339 or at [john.underdonk@ferc.gov](mailto:john.underdonk@ferc.gov). Your continued cooperation on all dam safety issues is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

TAKESHI YAMASHITA

Takeshi Yamashita, P.E.  
Regional Engineer

cc: Mr. Dave Gutierrez, Acting Chief  
Division of Safety of Dams  
California Department of Water Resources  
P.O. Box 942836  
Sacramento, CA 94236-0001