

FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION
Washington, D. C. 20426

OFFICE OF ENERGY PROJECTS

FERC No. 2079
Middle Fork American River Project
Placer County Water Agency

Mr. Steve Jones
Power Systems Manager
Placer County Water Agency
P. O. Box 667
Foresthill, CA 95631

AUG 16 2005

Subject: Environmental Inspection Follow-Up Matters

Dear Mr. Jones:

Philip Scordelis, staff fishery biologist, completed an Environmental Inspection of the Middle Fork American River Project on July 21, 2005. He noted several items that require your attention.

Hell Hole Reservoir

Several of the stones used to construct the stairs at the Hell Hole Reservoir Overlook were loose and posed a tripping hazard.; these stones should be grouted back into place. Additionally, the material used to effect earlier repairs to the stairs, which appears to be a caulking compound, creates a harsh contrast to the original mortar; this should be removed and replaced with a material similar to the original grout. Please provide us with your schedule to complete this work.

The panoramic display at the overlook has weathered and is no longer fully legible. A schedule to replace the display is needed.

Those campsites at the Big Meadow Campground located within the archaeological area have not been upgraded, although you reported the required survey has been funded. Information on the cause of the delay and the schedule to complete the upgrades is required.

Grass has grown around the fire ring at the Hell Hole Family Campground site closest to the lake (site number not observed). The grass should be cut immediately to eliminate the potential for a wildfire.

French Meadows Reservoir

The planks that provide a crossing of the ephemeral stream at the French Meadows Day-Use Area are worn, out of position, and have several large protruding nails. A plan and schedule to improve this crossing is required.

The abandoned information kiosk at the new RV sanitary dump poses both a health and safety hazard. A plan and schedule to remove this facility is needed if there are no plans to refurbish it.

Snow loading has damaged the gate that prevents vehicles from entering the prohibited area at the Prairie Wolf Group Campsite. A schedule to repair or replace this gate is needed.

Grass has grown around the fire ring at Site 37 in the Lewis Family Campground. This grass should also be cut immediately.

Not all sites at the Lewis Family Campground have bear-proof food lockers. A camper reported that a bear had entered their vehicle to access to food in an ice chest. A schedule to provide bear-proof food lockers at sites in this campground is required.

The McGuire Point Day-Use Area continues to be a concern, as problems noted during the 2000 Environmental Inspection persist. Trails to access the individual day-use sites are either non-existent or severely overgrown, the legs of one picnic table had sunk into the ground, the informational sign at one entrance was demolished and lying on the ground, multiple piles of cleared brush have been left lying on the ground throughout the area, and vegetation around the cooking stoves is tall enough to pose a wildfire threat, should anyone attempt to use the area. This day-use area must receive immediate attention to bring it up to standards typical for Commission-approved facilities. You must notify us by the due date described below that:

- The area has been brushed so that trails to all day-use sites are clearly delineated, and that all vegetation near the cooking stoves has been cleared.
- All picnic tables are properly set, with table tops at the correct height and all tables level.
- The informational sign has been replaced.
- All brush piles have been burned in place or physically removed from the area.

You mentioned the possible conversion of this day-use area to a group campground. Before any conversion is undertaken you must file to amend the approved Recreation Plan, but the above deficiencies must be completed first, as required recreation facilities must be adequately maintained and available for public use until the amendment is approved. Your application should include the following:

- Use data that show the need for another group campground at French Meadows Reservoir.
- Design drawings for the proposed group campground.
- Evidence of consultation with the U. S. Forest Service and the California State Historic Preservation Officer.

Within 60 days of the date of this letter, send an original and seven copies of your responses to these matters to:

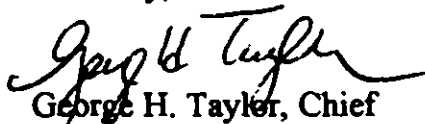
Office of the Secretary
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
888 First Street, Northeast
Washington, D. C. 20426

A copy of your response should be sent under separate cover to:

Mr. Philip Scordelis
FERC, DHAC
901 Market Street, Suite 350
San Francisco, CA 94103

The inspection report should be available at the Commission's website (e-Library at <http://elibrary.ferc.gov>) in approximately 45 days. If you have any additional information or questions about these matters, contact Mr. Scordelis at (415) 369-3335.

Sincerely,



George H. Taylor, Chief
Biological Resources Branch
Division of Hydropower Administration
and Compliance