

POTENTIAL RESOURCE ISSUE:

Reduce the spread or introduction of invasive plants and noxious weeds.

PROJECT NEXUS:

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

POTENTIAL LICENSE CONDITION:

- Vegetation and Integrated Pest Management Plan

STUDY OBJECTIVE:

- Document the occurrence of invasive plants and noxious weed populations at Project facilities, roads, trails, and recreation facilities.
- Document the occurrence of invasive plant and noxious weed populations at potential Project betterment construction, staging and disposal sites, and new inundation areas.

EXTENT OF STUDY AREA:

The study area includes the following buffer areas around Project facilities, roads, trails and recreation facilities (Existing Project Facilities, Roads, Trails, and Recreation Facilities Table).

- 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;
- 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 around potential Project betterment construction, staging and disposal sites, and new inundation areas (Potential Project Betterment Facilities Table, to be available at a later date). These include:

Invasive Plants and Noxious Weeds Technical Study Plan

- 15 feet around the potential inundation area of large reservoirs where Project betterments are proposed;
- 300 feet around construction areas;
- 100 feet around staging areas; and
- 100 feet around disposal sites.

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 invasive plants and 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).
- 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 invasive plants and 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 invasive plants and noxious weeds and overlay information on Project facilities, roads, trails, and recreation facilities.
- Overlay invasive plants and noxious weed GIS information on potential Project betterment construction, staging and disposal sites, and new inundation areas.

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.