



HELL HOLE RESERVOIR SPILLWAY



# Project Betterments/ Improvements

IN PREPARATION FOR THE RELICENSING OF THE MFP, PCWA conducted an assessment to identify potential modifications or additions (betterments) to existing Project facilities that would improve operations or maintenance of the Project, and result in an increase in net or peaking generation. As a result of this assessment, PCWA is including the following three potential Project betterments in the PAD:

- Hell Hole Reservoir Seasonal Storage Increase
- French Meadows Powerhouse Capacity Upgrade
- Ralston Powerhouse Capacity Upgrade

PCWA intends to further evaluate these potential betterments during relicensing with respect to their engineering and economic feasibility and the potential protection, mitigation, or enhancement measures that may be necessary to address potential effects on environmental and cultural resources. The specific Project betterments to be included in the License Application will be determined after reviewing the results of on-going engineering, economic, cultural, and environmental studies in relation to potential future license conditions.

## HELL HOLE RESERVOIR SEASONAL STORAGE INCREASE

The purpose of this betterment would be to seasonally increase the storage capacity of Hell Hole Reservoir. The betterment would utilize a portion of the existing flood control pool, above the present normal maximum operating water level, to store additional water during the spring and summer after the peak of the runoff period. An approximate ~~9,750 ac-ft to 12,000 ac-ft~~ increase in seasonal storage in the reservoir would be achieved by installing ~~8-10 foot high crest gates~~ on the existing dam spillway. The crest gates would be raised when needed to increase reservoir storage. Operation of the crest gates would also seasonally increase the reservoir's inundation area within the existing flood pool by approximately 37 acres.



Installation of spillway gates on Hell Hole Reservoir will increase seasonal storage and power generation.

In years when either French Meadows or Hell Hole reservoirs would have spilled, this betterment would allow the MFP to capture additional water in storage in Hell Hole Reservoir which can later be used to increase net annual energy generation. In all but the driest years, the betterment would also allow the MFP to shift the timing of some generation from the spring run-off period to the summer peak energy demand period. While the shift in the timing of the generation will not increase total annual MFP generation, it will increase the benefit of the Project by increasing generation during the peak energy demand period. This betterment would require a new water right to allow for additional storage at Hell Hole Reservoir.

This betterment would require the following modifications to existing Project facilities:

7,600

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- Hell Hole Dam Spillway - install ~~8-10~~ foot-high crest gates on the existing concrete spillway
- Hell Hole Dam - install ~~2 foot high parapet walls on each end of the existing dam to maintain minimum freeboard requirements, if 10 foot high crest gates are installed~~
- French Meadow Powerhouse - install ~~4 foot-high parapet wall at the powerhouse to avoid inundation from wave action when the reservoir is at its maximum water surface elevation~~
- Hell Hole - Middle Fork Tunnel Gatehouse - install ~~4 foot high parapet wall around the gatehouse to avoid inundation from wave action~~
- South Fork Long Canyon Diversion Dam - install ~~3 foot-high crest gates on the diversion dam or a check valve at the drop inlet to avoid the backflow of water from the Hell Hole - Middle Fork Tunnel into South Fork Long Canyon Creek when Middle Fork Powerhouse is not operating~~

The betterment would also require construction of ~~three~~ **two** new Project facilities including:

- Hell Hole Dam Spillway Crest Gates Control Building - construct a small control building adjacent to the spillway to provide power to operate the spillway crest gates
- Hell Hole Dam Spillway Crest Gates Control Building Powerline - construct a short spur line (approximately 525 feet) from the control building to an existing powerline to provide power for spillway crest gate operations
- ~~South Fork Long Canyon Diversion Dam Generator Building - construct a control building with a generator to provide power to operate the crest gate~~

## FRENCH MEADOWS POWERHOUSE CAPACITY UPGRADE

The purpose of this betterment would be to increase the generating capacity of the existing French Meadows Powerhouse from 15.3 MW to approximately 30 MW. Generating capacity would be increased by adding a second powerhouse immediately adjacent to the existing powerhouse. The existing French Meadows Powerhouse is only able to utilize approximately one-half of the maximum hydraulic capacity of the French Meadows - Hell Hole Tunnel. The addition





**FRENCH MEADOWS POWERHOUSE**  
**The addition of a second French Meadows Powerhouse will allow PCWA to increase peaking generation.**

of a second unit would allow the maximum hydraulic capacity of the tunnel to be used to transport more water over a shorter period of time from French Meadows Reservoir to Hell Hole Reservoir, thereby increasing the MFP's peaking generation capabilities. This betterment would require a new water right to allow for an increase in the permitted direct diversion rate from French Meadows Reservoir to Hell Hole Reservoir.

The new powerhouse would also increase the capability of the MFP to supply electrical grid support services. The new generating unit could be operated simultaneously or independently of the existing generating unit. The existing PG&E 60-kV French Meadows - Middle Fork Transmission Line will be used to interconnect the new powerhouse with the PG&E transmission system.

This betterment would require the following modifications to existing Project facilities:

- French Meadows - Hell Hole Tunnel Intake Trash Rack - possible replacement of the existing cylindrical trash rack with a larger trash rack to reduce head losses and allow greater volume of water to flow into the tunnel
- French Meadows Powerhouse Switchyard - expand the existing switchyard to include additional buswork, transformers, and electrical switching equipment necessary to convey the additional power generated at the new powerhouse
- Middle Fork Powerhouse Upper Switchyard - upgrade the transformers and switchgear at the existing 60kV substation at Middle Fork Interbay to handle the additional power transfer

This betterment would also require construction of the following new Project facilities:

- French Meadows Powerhouse - construct a second powerhouse with installed generating capacity of approximately 15 MW immediately adjacent to existing powerhouse
- French Meadows Powerhouse Penstock - construct a second penstock, parallel to the existing penstock, to provide water to the new powerhouse
- Additional Surge Capacity Facility - develop additional surge capacity through construction of a surge shaft, surge shaft and tank, or surge pipeline located above the French Meadows - Hell Hole Tunnel Portal, or installation of a bypass valve in the new powerhouse
- French Meadows - Hell Hole Tunnel Surge Shaft or Pipeline Access Road - construct a new Project road from an existing Forest Service road to the surge shaft or pipeline and temporarily improve the existing Forest Service road

#### **RALSTON POWERHOUSE CAPACITY UPGRADE**

The purpose of this betterment is to improve the operating efficiency of the Middle Fork - Ralston system by increasing the hydraulic capacity of Ralston Powerhouse to match Middle Fork Powerhouse throughput, plus accretions at Middle Fork Interbay. This betterment would allow the MFP to maximize peaking generation during periods of high energy demand, thereby increasing the overall benefit of the MFP. This betterment would only require upgrades to electrical and mechanical equipment within the Ralston Powerhouse. This betterment may result in the ability of Ralston Powerhouse to utilize more than 1,000 cfs, in which case a new water right will be needed.



**RALSTON POWERHOUSE**  
**The Ralston Powerhouse upgrade will increase peaking generation opportunities.**