

136 FERC ¶ 62,184
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION

United Water Conservation District

Project No. 2153-028

ORDER AMENDING GEOMORPHIC EFFECTS PLAN UNDER ARTICLE 401(A)

(Issued September 1, 2011)

1. On August 10, 2011, United Water Conservation District (licensee) filed a request with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (Commission) to amend its Geomorphic Effects Plan, pursuant to article 401(a) of the project license¹ for the Santa Felicia Hydroelectric Project No. 2153. The project is located on Piru Creek in Ventura County, California.

2. License article 401(a) requires that the licensee file various plans for the Commission's approval, as required by the National Marine Fisheries Service's (NMFS) reasonable and prudent alternatives (RPA), contained in the final biological opinion for the project. RPA 1(a) requires that the licensee develop a plan to quantify the type, amount, and extent of geomorphic effects of Santa Felicia Dam and its operations on the quality and quantity of steelhead habitat in Piru Creek downstream of the dam. The licensee filed its Geomorphic Effects Plan with the Commission on October 13, 2010, and it was modified and approved by Commission order dated October 26, 2010.² The plan, in part, requires the licensee to divide up its study area into three geomorphic reaches, consisting of an upper, middle, and lower reach, located at various river miles (RM). The upper reach is situated between RM 3.0 and 6.0, the middle reach between RM 1.7 and 3.0, and the lower reach between RM 0 and 1.7. The licensee is required to conduct monitoring at one pool and one riffle per study area.

3. The licensee is proposing to modify the reach delineations of the plan, as well as shift the locations of two study sites, and add a fourth study site to the plan. The licensee would reclassify the three stream reaches and locations to include a release reach,

¹ See Order Issuing New License, issued September 12, 2008 (124 FERC ¶ 62,193).

² See 133 FERC ¶ 62,086 (2010).

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transition reach and a migration reach. The licensee would also relocate its study sites to include one site within the release reach and two sites within the transition reach.

Finally, the licensee proposes to add an additional study site to the transition reach, for a total of four study sites. The licensee states that the proposed modification would more accurately reflect existing site conditions and provide more useful data. The licensee's filing also includes a figure of the three new reach delineations and the locations of each of the four study sites.

4. On July 18, 2011, the licensee requested NMFS's concurrence on its proposal to modify the Geomorphic Effects Plan to reflect the new delineations and study locations. By letter dated August 6, 2011, NMFS concurred with the licensee's request to modify the plan.

5. The licensee is proposing to modify the monitoring sites and reach delineations of its Geomorphic Effects Plan. The modification should refine the potential study results and be approved without modification.

The Director orders:

(A) United Water Conservation District's (licensee) request to amend its Geomorphic Effects Plan, filed with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission on August 10, 2011, pursuant to Article 401(a) of the project license, is approved.

(B) This order constitutes final agency action. Any party may file a request for rehearing of this order within 30 days from the date of its issuance, as provided in section 313(a) of the Federal Power Act, 16 U.S.C. § 8251 (2006), and the Commission's regulations at 18 C.F.R. § 385.713 (2011). The filing of a request for rehearing does not operate as a stay of the effective date of this order, or of any other date specified in this order. The licensee's failure to file a request for rehearing shall constitute acceptance of this order.

Thomas J. LoVullo
Chief, Aquatic Resources Branch
Division of Hydropower Administration
and Compliance

Document Content(s)

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