

Santa Felicia Project
FERC License No. 2153-12

Santa Felicia Whitewater Boating Access Monitoring Report
For 2014

Final
January 14, 2015

United Water Conservation District
106 North 8th Street
Santa Paula, CA 93060

BACKGROUND

On November 15, 2011, United Water Conservation District (United) filed with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) a Whitewater Boating Access Plan (Plan) for the Santa Felicia Project (FERC Project Number 2153). On February 1, 2012, FERC issued an order modifying and approving the Plan. The approved Plan requires United to prepare and file an Annual Whitewater Boating Access Monitoring Report (Annual Report). The Plan requires United to first provide the report to the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service (USFS), California Department of Parks and Recreation (CDPR), American Whitewater, and Sierra Club for review and comment, for a minimum 30-day period. Following the review and comment period, the approved Plan requires United to file with FERC the Annual Report, copies of any comments received from organizations consulted with, and United's responses to those comments, by January 15 of each year.

The required components of the Annual Report include:

- Total number of whitewater boaters (duplicated and unduplicated¹)
 - Number of boaters escorted to the put-in site
 - Number of boaters requesting portage over the dam to the put-in site
- Dates of the fall conservation water releases
- Number of days access to the put-in site was available and flow rates for those days
- Comments or feedback received from boaters

This Annual Report summarizes activities conducted in accordance with the approved Plan, for the period January 1, 2014 and December 31, 2014.

¹ Duplicated and unduplicated counts allows for a differentiation between boaters that access the put-in site only once from boaters that access the put-in site for multiple runs per access opportunity.

WHITEWATER BOATING ACTIVITY SUMMARY FOR 2014

United did not receive any requests for whitewater boating access during 2014.

Due to drought conditions, United did not conduct a fall conservation water release during 2014.

Although United did not conduct a scheduled fall conservation water release, one brief water release from the Santa Felicia Dam did occur during 2014 with a flow that exceeded 200 cubic feet per second (cfs). Between 6:15 p.m. Saturday, March 1, 2014, and 12:45 a.m. Monday, March 3, 2014, United released flows between 200 and 205 cfs. This release was done in compliance with United's FERC license, which requires the release of water for migration of the endangered southern California steelhead when specific triggers are met. This event provided the potential for one day (Sunday, May 2, 2014) of whitewater boating access. However, given the nature of the triggers for migration releases, United does not know that a release is required until the morning that a release may potentially begin and no advance notification to the boating community was possible. The one-day duration of the event and the requirement that whitewater boaters make reservations 24 hours in advance limited the feasibility of access.

On December 11, 2014, United submitted a draft Santa Felicia Whitewater Boating Access Report to USFS, CDP, American Whitewater, and Sierra Club for review and comment. Copies of letters transmitting the draft report are attached to this filing. On January 6, 2015, American Whitewater submitted the following comment (also attached to this filing).

“American Whitewater provides the following comments on the Whitewater boating access monitoring report for the Santa Felicia project, FERC license number P-2153. While the whitewater boating opportunity below Santa Felicia Dam was extremely limited in 2014—only one release occurred that exceeded 200 CFS—we believe that this example highlights important issues with access at this project. The report states that the short duration of the boating opportunity in March of 2014 did not allow enough time to provide advance notice to the paddling community, nor did it give whitewater boaters time to make the 24 hour advanced reservation to either be escorted by UWCD staff to the put-in via portage around the dam. The report should also say that boaters can be escorted directly to the put-in site, without having to portage the dam. We also recommend that the information regarding boating access, including the UWCD phone number, should be posted to the UWCD website.

There are numerous logistical hurdles for whitewater boaters to recreate on Piru Creek, creating access barriers that significantly limit the desirability of this run. We would like to explore possibilities with United Water Conservation District that

would allow for easier access to Piru Creek, particularly during short duration events such as the one that happened in 2014”.

In response to American Whitewater’s comment, United intends to update United’s website with information on whitewater boating access and appropriate contact information. United has extended an invitation to Dave Steindorf, California Stewardship Director of American Whitewater, to visit the Santa Felicia project area and discuss whitewater boating concerns.

Board of Directors
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Robert Eranio, Secretary/Treasurer
Sheldon G. Berger
Edwin T. McFadden III
Michael W. Mobley
Daniel C. Naumann



UNITED WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
“Conserving Water Since 1927”

Legal Counsel
Anthony H. Trembley

General Manager
E. Michael Solomon

December 10, 2014

Susan Exline
District Ranger
United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service
1190 East Ojai Avenue
Ojai, CA 93023

Subject: Santa Felicia Project (FERC No. 2153-12 Article 409) Whitewater
Boating Access Monitoring Report for 2014

Dear Ms. Exline:

Enclosed please find United Water Conservation District's (District) annual Santa Felicia Whitewater Boating Access Monitoring Report for 2014, for your review and comment, as per the requirements of the District's License Number 2153-12 with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC).

As you know, the District's FERC license for the Santa Felicia Dam required the District to develop a Whitewater Boating Access Plan (Plan). FERC approved the Plan in February 2012 and directed the District to begin implementation. The Plan lays out the conditions under which the District provides whitewater boaters escorted access to a put-in site on lower Piru Creek below the Santa Felicia Dam, as well as portage over the dam, whenever water releases exceed 200 cubic feet per second (cfs).

The Plan also requires the District to prepare an annual Whitewater Boating Access Monitoring Report (Annual Report), which summarizes data on the number of whitewater boaters requesting and receiving access and the dates of water releases in excess of 200 cfs. We respectfully ask that you provide your comments to the attached Annual Report by January 11, 2015.

If you have any questions, please contact me at 805-525-4431.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Clayton W. Strahan', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Clayton W. Strahan
Senior Park Services Officer

Board of Directors
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Legal Counsel
Anthony H. Trembley

General Manager
E. Michael Solomon

December 10, 2014

Jim Hines
Sierra Club Los Padres Chapter
PO Box 6058
Ventura CA 93006

Subject: Santa Felicia Project (FERC No. 2153-12 Article 409) Whitewater
Boating Access Monitoring Report for 2014

Dear Mr. Hines:

Enclosed please find United Water Conservation District's (District) annual Santa Felicia Whitewater Boating Access Monitoring Report for 2014, for your review and comment, as per the requirements of the District's License Number 2153-12 with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC).

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Anthony H. Trembley

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E. Michael Solomon

December 10, 2014

Major General Anthony L. Jackson
State Parks Director
California Department of Parks and Recreation
P.O. Box 942869
Sacramento, CA 94296

Subject: Santa Felicia Project (FERC No. 2153-12 Article 409) Whitewater
Boating Access Monitoring Report for 2014

Dear Major General Jackson:

Enclosed please find United Water Conservation District's (District) annual Santa Felicia Whitewater Boating Access Monitoring Report for 2014, for your review and comment, as per the requirements of the District's License Number 2153-12 with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC).

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E. Michael Solomon

December 10, 2015

Dave Steindorf
California Stewardship Director
American Whitewater
4 Baroni Drive
Chico, CA 95928

Subject: Santa Felicia Project (FERC No. 2153-12 Article 409) Whitewater
Boating Access Monitoring Report for 2014

Dear Mr. Steindorf:

Enclosed please find United Water Conservation District's (District) annual Santa Felicia Whitewater Boating Access Monitoring Report for 2014, for your review and comment, as per the requirements of the District's License Number 2153-12 with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC).

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Clayton W. Strahan
Senior Park Services Officer

Linda Purpus

From: Linda Purpus
Sent: Wednesday, January 14, 2015 10:00 AM
To: Linda Purpus
Subject: 2014 Whitewater Boating Access Report

From: Dave Steindorf <dave@americanwhitewater.org>
Date: January 6, 2015 at 4:47:06 PM PST
To: <claytons@unitedwater.org>
Cc: Kurt Zimmerman <kzimmerman@caltrout.org>, "Richard A. Bush" <rick.bush@noaa.gov>, Megan Hooker <megan@americanwhitewater.org>
Subject: 2014 Whitewater Boating Access Report

Mr. Strahan,

American Whitewater provides the following comments on the Whitewater boating access monitoring report for the Santa Felicia project, FERC license number P- 2153. While the whitewater boating opportunity below Santa Felicia Dam was extremely limited in 2014—only one release occurred that exceeded 200 CFS—we believe that this example highlights important issues with access at this project. The report states that the short duration of the boating opportunity in March of 2014 did not allow enough time to provide advance notice to the paddling community, nor did it give whitewater boaters time to make the 24 hour advanced reservation to either be escorted by UWCD staff to the put-in via portage around the dam. The report should also say that boaters can be escorted directly to the put-in site, without having to portage the dam. We also recommend that the information regarding boating access, including the UWCD phone number, should be posted to the UWCD website.

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Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Thanks,
Dave

Dave Steindorf
California Stewardship Director
American Whitewater
4 Baroni Drive
Chico, CA 95928
530.518.2729

Join or donate today!
www.americanwhitewater.org