
DATE: January 22, 2021
TO: Agencies, organizations, and interested parties
FROM: California Department of Water Resources
SUBJECT: Notice of Intent to Adopt an Initial Study and Negative Declaration (IS/ND)

This serves as the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) Notice of Intent to Adopt an Initial Study and Negative Declaration (IS/ND) prepared in accordance with the California Environment Quality Act (CEQA) and State CEQA Guidelines.

PROJECT TITLE: Devil Canyon Project Relicensing, FERC Project No. 14797 (Project)

PROJECT LOCATION: The Project is located along the southern end of the East Branch of the State Water Project in San Bernardino County, California, south of Hesperia, and north of San Bernardino.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The State of California owns the land and DWR operates the Devil Canyon Power Development (DCPD), an existing power recovery project that includes hydroelectric facilities, access roads, maintenance areas, recreation areas, rights-of-way, and other appurtenant facilities. DWR operates the DCPD under an existing Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) license that is scheduled to expire on January 31, 2022. DWR has used the Traditional Licensing Process in seeking a new license from FERC pursuant to the Federal Power Act. Under this CEQA analysis, the proposed Project is the continued operation of the DCPD, including the hydroelectric, recreation, and appurtenant facilities, in accordance with DWR's proposed terms and conditions for inclusion in the new FERC license, as described in DWR's Final License Application, as amended.

DWR's proposed changes to the existing DCPD include: (1) a change in the FERC project boundary, resulting in an overall reduction in land area designated in the license that encompasses all existing facilities and lands necessary for the operations and maintenance of the DCPD; (2) the administrative designation of access roads currently maintained by DWR that are used exclusively for accessing the DCPD facilities; (3) the administrative addition of an existing lake level gage into the license; and (4) potential FERC-required protection, mitigation, and enhancement measures, such as upgrades to existing recreation facilities, vegetation management, wildlife and aquatic species protections, cultural resources protection and management, and other environmental measures.

DWR, as the lead agency, has initiated the CEQA process to inform DWR's discretionary decision on whether to approve the proposed Project and accept the new license when issued, request rehearing on a new license when issued, or otherwise challenge its issuance, or reject the new license.

SIGNIFICANT PROJECT IMPACTS DISCUSSED IN DOCUMENT: The IS/ND did not identify any significant and unavoidable impacts; hence, no mitigation is proposed.

PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD: The IS/ND will be circulated for a 30-day public review period beginning on January 19, 2021 and concluding on February 18, 2021. In accordance with the State CEQA Guidelines, any comments concerning the findings of the IS/ND must be submitted in writing and received by DWR no later than 5:00 p.m. (Pacific Standard Time) on February 18, 2021, in order to be considered. Please include a name, address, and telephone number of a contact person for all future correspondence on this subject. Please mail or email your written comments or questions to Lon Maier on behalf of DWR (contact information provided below).

AVAILABILITY OF ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION: The IS/ND may be viewed at the following locations:

- On the web: <http://devil-canyon-project-relicensing.com>
- Public Library: Howard M. Rowe Branch Library
108 East Marshall Boulevard
San Bernardino, California 92404
(Please check with the library for hours of operations, including potential closures due to COVID-19 restrictions. Visitors are advised to follow the California Department of Public Health guidelines, as well as San Bernardino County guidelines.)

For more information on the Project, or if you would like to request a hard copy, please contact:

Lon Maier, Environmental Program Manager
Hydropower License Planning and Compliance Office
Executive Division
California Department of Water Resources
2033 Howe Avenue, Suite 220
Sacramento, California 95825
Phone: (916) 557-8151
lonn.maier@water.ca.gov
