

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

REGION 2

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(916) 355-7020



December 29, 1994

Mr. Noel Folsom, P.E.
Regional Director
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
901 Market Street, Suite 350
San Francisco, California 94103

Dear Mr. Folsom:

The Department of Fish and Game (DFG) was present at the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) follow up compliance inspection of the Sayles Flat Hydroelectric Project (FERC Project No. 3195) South Fork American River, El Dorado County, on November 8, 1994. The inspection was conducted by Mr. Rob Humble and Mr. Phil Scordelis of your office. Also in attendance were Mr. Bob Jessen, U.S. Forest Service, Mr. Stafford Lehr, DFG Biologist, and Mr. Michael Elmer, Sayles Flat Licensee.

The inspection revealed that there were some problems regarding ongoing soil and streambank erosion around some of the project facilities. The most serious problem is located about 150 yards downstream of the intake structure. The South Fork American River has eroded into the toe of the slope of Highway 50 and around the footings supporting the penstock. The responsibility to correct the problem lies either with the California Department of Transportation or the Licensee. The DFG recommends that the two parties enter into negotiations to solve the problem.

Another problem area is the access road that crosses the South Fork American River at the Slippery Ford temporary bridge crossing. Rills and gullies have formed in and along the road. Water bars and silt containment areas will need to be improved or added. The DFG recommends that straw bales or silt fences be installed on the downslope of all the locations where erosion is currently taking place.

Inspection of the powerhouse and transformer raised questions regarding the adequacy of the oil containment basin and drain network. The issue of oil containment on site is serious, as the powerhouse is located within 50 yards of the river. The Licensee stated that a containment basin was constructed, but visually this was not evident. The Licensee also stated that the transformer was not filled with oil, however, Mr. Humble

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indicated that it was. The DFG requests that the oil containment issue be fully examined to ensure that full containment on-site is in fact possible.

Additionally, there were 50 gallon drums discarded at the site and in the tailrace. The DFG does not know what was contained in the drums, but residual odors indicated the possible presence of petroleum products.

The DFG was informed that no work has been done on the project since 1987, consequently the project shows many signs of neglect. For example, construction materials and petroleum product drums are strewn haphazardly around the project. The Licensee has indicated that, after the snow has melted, remedial measures will be performed in the spring/summer of 1995. The DFG strongly recommends that all remedial measures be taken during the spring/summer 1995. Should the Licensee fail to correct the above mentioned issues by the end of the one year extension, the DFG would recommend revocation of the license.

If we can be of further assistance, please contact Mr. Stafford Lehr, Fishery Biologist, telephone (916) 647-9827, or Ms. Cindy Chadwick, Environmental Services Supervisor, at (916) 355-7030.

Sincerely,



for L. Ryan Broddrick
Regional Manager

cc: Mr. Joel Medlin, Field Supervisor
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cc's (continued next page)

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