

³The alternative energy value for the project is based on Utah Power & Light Company's current avoided cost as found in Electric Service Schedule No. 37, effective March 11, 2002.

D. Cost of Staff-Recommended Alternatives

Commission staff recommended one additional environmental measure: a cultural resource management plan, if during project operation and maintenance any new or undocumented archeological sites are discovered. The added cost of this measure and a plan to control noxious and invasive weeds is minimal and these measures would not affect project generation. Therefore, the staff-recommended alternative would have the same cost and generation benefits as the no-action alternative.

VII. Comprehensive Development and Recommended Alternative

Sections 4(e) and 10(a)(1) of the FPA require the Commission to give equal consideration to all uses of the waterway on which a project is located. When we review a proposed project, we equally consider the environmental, recreational, fish and wildlife, and other non-developmental values of the project, as well as power and developmental values. Accordingly, any license issued shall be best adapted to a comprehensive plan for improving or developing a waterway or waterways for all beneficial public uses.

Based on our independent review of agency and public comments filed on this project and our review of the environmental and economic effects of the proposed project and its alternatives, we selected the proposed project, with staff's additional measure, as the preferred option. We recommend this option because: (1) Issuance of a new hydropower license by the Commission would allow Parowan to operate the project as an economically beneficial and dependable source of electrical energy; (2) the 600-kW project would eliminate the need for an equivalent amount of fossil-fuel derived energy and capacity, which helps conserve these nonrenewable resources and limits atmospheric pollution; (3) the public benefits of the selected alternative would exceed those of Parowan's proposal and the no-action alternative, and (4) the recommended measures would protect existing environmental resources.

We recommend the following environmental measures be included in any license issued by the Commission for the Center Creek Project: (1) monitor and remove any noxious and undesirable plants after ground-

disturbing activities; and (2) should archeological or historic sites be discovered during project operation or maintenance, prepare a site-specific cultural resource management plan in consultation with the SHPO and BLM to evaluate the significance of the sites and to mitigate impacts to those sites that are determined to be eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

From our evaluation of the environmental and economic effects of the project, we conclude that licensing the Center Creek Project with our additional recommended environmental protection measures would best adapt the project to a comprehensive plan for the Center Creek Basin.

VIII. Recommendations of Fish and Wildlife Agencies

Under the provisions of Section 10(j) of the FPA, each hydropower license issued by the Commission shall include conditions based on recommendations provided by federal and state fish and wildlife agencies for the protection, mitigation, and enhancement of fish and wildlife resources affected by the project, where those conditions are not inconsistent with the purpose and requirements of the FPA or other applicable law.

We received one Section 10(j) recommendation from the FWS in its letter filed July 1, 2003. FWS recommends that Parowan monitor and remove any noxious and undesirable plants after any ground-disturbing activities. As discussed in this draft EA, Parowan now includes this recommendation in its proposed project. Commission staff recommends Parowan prepare a plan to implement this recommendation.

IX. Consistency With Comprehensive Plans

Section 10(a)(2) of the FPA requires the Commission to consider the extent to which a project is consistent with federal or state comprehensive plans for improving, developing, or conserving a waterway or waterways affected by the project. We identified 9 plans filed by federal, and state agencies that address various resources in Utah; however, none are relevant to the continued operation of the project.

X. Finding of No Significant Impact

We've prepared this environmental assessment for the project pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969. Should the Commission decide to issue a license for the project, staff analysis shows that licensing the project would not be a major federal action

significantly affecting the quality of the human environment. With our recommended measures existing environmental resources would be protected.

XI. Literature Cited

Sunrise Engineering, Inc., 2001. Application for a License for a Minor Water Power Project—Center Creek Hydroelectric Project—Parowan City (FERC Project No. 1273). November 15, 2002.

XII. List of Preparers

Gaylord W. Hoisington B Project Coordinator B Terrestrial, Cultural Resources, and Threatened and Endangered Species; Soil Conservationist; B.S., Recreation.

Nicholas Jayjack B Aquatic Resources B Fishery Biologist; M.S., Environmental Science in Civil Engineering; B.S., Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences.

Linda Lehman B Civil Engineer; M.S., Civil Engineering; B.S., Civil Engineering.

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Project No. 178-017]

Notice of Application Accepted for Filing and Soliciting Motions To Intervene and Protests

August 26, 2003.

Take notice that the following hydroelectric application has been filed with the Commission and is available for public inspection.

a. *Type of Application:* New Major License.

b. *Project No.:* 178-017.

c. *Date filed:* April 14, 2003.

d. *Applicant:* Pacific Gas and Electric Company.

e. *Name of Project:* Kern Canyon Hydroelectric Project.

f. *Location:* On the Kern River, near the Town of Bakersfield, Kern County, California. The project occupies approximately 11.26 acres of public land located within the Sequoia National Forest.

g. *Filed Pursuant to:* Federal Power Act, 16 U.S.C. §§ 791(a)-825(r).

h. *Applicant Contact:* Mr. Randal S. Livingston, Pacific Gas and Electric Company, Power Generation, Mail Code N11E, P.O. Box 770000, San Francisco, CA 94177 (415)973-7000.