
PUBLIC NOTICE

#29667
REQUEST FOR PUBLIC INPUT
USDA - FOREST SERVICE
BASS LAKE RANGER DISTRICT
SIERRA NATIONAL FOREST

PROJECT NAME: Wishon Quarry Project and Special Use Authorization associated with the Seismic Retrofit of Pacific Gas and Electric's Crane Valley Dam

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), in cooperation with the U.S. Forest Service (FS) has prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Crane Valley Dam Seismic Retrofit project. The EA discloses the environmental effects of implementing the proposed improvements to the Crane Valley Dam to comply with the Department of Water Resources (DWR) Division of Safety of Dams (DSOD) requirements to address safety deficiencies and guard against failure of the dam in a seismic event. The FERC analysis included the entire project and connected actions including areas that are outside of the FERC project boundary and within the authority of the Sierra National Forest (SNF). The proposed project is at Bass Lake, in Madera County. The legal description for the project is Section 21, Range 22 East in the Township 7 South, MDBM.

The FS will be using the FERC EA to make a decision on the implementation of four proposed actions.

1) Sale of minerals materials to Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E). A new quarry will be constructed near the old Wishon Quarry. Up to 300,000 cubic yards of rock for construction on the dam would be obtained from the new quarry. Approximately 20 acres of land would be cleared of vegetation, topsoil would be removed and acres of land would be cleared of vegetation, topsoil would be removed and stockpiled, and blasting would occur. After construction is complete, the quarry sites would be restored, consistent with a reclamation plan approved by the USFS and Madera County.

2) Sale of timber to PG&E. Approximately 2,300 trees would be removed from the 30-acre Action site through a Timber Sale Contract. Approximately 443 thousand board feet would be sold to PG&E to allow for the quarry development, dam and road construction, and temporary storage areas. Trees would be cut starting in June of 2010 and would be completed before other dam retrofit activities. Re-vegetation of cut areas would be included in the reclamation of the quarry site and road reclamation after the dam construction is completed.

3) Road Use Authorization to use existing FS roads and construct access and haul roads that would connect the quarry site and staging areas to both the waterside and landside dam areas where rock buttressing is proposed. Quarry access could include use of existing FS and PG&E roads, improvement of existing FS and PG&E roads, use of existing County roads, and construction of new road segments.

4) Special Use Authorization to divert approximately 50 acre-feet of water during construction of the seismic retrofit of Crane Valley Dam, pursuant to the forest Service's riparian rights to the extent such rights allow for such use. The FS holds title to lands riparian to North Fork Willow Creek and upon which both Crane Valley Dam and Wishon Quarry are located.

Please send substantive comments to:

Attn: Cindy Whelan
Natural Resource Planner, US Forest Service
1600 Tollhouse Road, Clovis, California, 93611

You may also hand deliver your comments during normal business hours from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm, Monday through Friday, excluding federal holidays, at the address above.

Comments must be postmarked or received within the 45-calendar days following the date of publication of a legal notice in the Fresno Bee. Individuals or organizations wishing to comment must provide the following information as part of their comments:

1. Your name, address, and (if possible) telephone number;
2. Title of the document(s) on which comment is being submitted; and
3. Specific facts or comments along with supporting reasons that the person believes the Responsible Official should consider in reaching a decision.

Written comments can be sent by facsimile to: (559) 294-4809.

Additional information on the project, please contact, Cindy Whelan at (559) 297-0706 ext. 4931 or email: cwhelan@fs.fed.us

All documents associated with this proposed action can be reviewed at the Bass Lake Ranger District Office at the Bass Lake Ranger District Office, 57003 Road 225, North Fork, California, 93643. To obtain paper copies of the EA or to request further information, please contact Cindy Whelan at (559) 297-0706 extension 4931 or Karen Nooney, Acting District Lands Officer at (559) 877-2218 extension 3197.

The Crane Valley Seismic Retrofit Project EA is available the Sierra National Forest projects website <http://www.fs.fed.us/r5/sierra/projects/>.

(PUB: March 8, 2010)