

Southern California Edison (SCE) is notifying agencies, Native American Tribes, non-governmental organizations, and members of the public of the upcoming relicensing for the Rush Creek Hydroelectric Project (Project) using the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's (FERC) Integrated Licensing Process (ILP). The relicensing process is formally initiated upon SCE's filing of a Notice of Intent (NOI) and Pre-Application Document (PAD) with FERC (regulatory deadline is January 31, 2022).

Background

SCE currently operates the Project under a 30-year FERC license that expires January 31, 2027. The Project is located on the eastern slope of the Sierra Nevada Mountains in Mono County, California. The Project is situated approximately four miles southwest of the unincorporated community of June Lake. The majority of the Project occupies federal lands within the Inyo National Forest which is under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Forest Service (portions of the Project are located within the Ansel Adams Wilderness Area). The Project was constructed between 1915 and 1918, and later modified in 1924 and 1925, prior to the formation of the Wilderness.

The 13.01-megawatt Project includes three dams and associated reservoirs – Agnew Dam (Agnew Lake), Gem Dam (Gem Lake), and Rush Meadows Dam (Waugh Lake); a water conveyance system; the Rush Creek Powerhouse; and ancillary facilities. The three Project reservoirs historically provided storage for lake recreation during the summer and allowed for electricity generation at the Rush Creek Powerhouse in the fall/winter. Water exiting the powerhouse enters a short tailrace and is returned to Rush Creek upstream of Silver Lake.

Recently, SCE conducted fault studies, structural testing, and engineering analyses of Agnew, Gem, and Rush Meadows dams as a consequence of the Silver Lake Fault being identified as a potential safety concern in 2007. As a result of the analyses and subsequent consultation with FERC and the Division of Safety of Dams, SCE implemented storage restrictions at the three reservoirs beginning in 2012, as well as structural modifications at Agnew and Rush Meadows dams in 2017 and 2018 and Gem Dam in 2020 and 2021.

SCE is diligently evaluating various options for Agnew and Rush Meadows dams and retrofitting of Gem Dam in preparation for the relicensing. A detailed project description of all options under consideration will be included in the PAD to be filed with FERC by January 31, 2022.

Early Outreach Activities

Prior to filing the NOI and PAD, SCE will complete the following early outreach activities:

- In March 2021, a questionnaire will be distributed to all stakeholders soliciting information on existing resources in the vicinity of the Project.
- In October 2021, SCE will convene a public meeting open to all stakeholders to discuss the relicensing process, describe resource information to be presented in the PAD, and provide a detailed overview of the Proposed Project under consideration. Additional information on the public meeting will be provided to stakeholders at a later date.

If you received this announcement via e-mail, you are on the relicensing distribution list. If you obtained this announcement by another means and want to be added to the distribution list, please send your contact information to David Moore, SCE Relicensing Project Manager, at david.moore@sce.com, or visit the Project website at www.sce.com/RushCreek and complete the contact registration form.

Register online at www.ferc.gov/ferc-online/overview to be notified via e-mail of new FERC filings and issuances related to the Rush Creek Project. Follow the online instructions and subscribe to docket number P-1389.

After filing the NOI and PAD, SCE will conduct numerous stakeholder meetings during the formal relicensing proceeding to further define the Project; identify potential resource issues; develop technical studies; discuss study results; and evaluate potential protection, mitigation, and enhancement measures. SCE is aware of local community concerns regarding the Project and will strive during the stakeholder meetings to fully understand their issues/concerns and seek mutually acceptable solutions. SCE looks forward to working collaboratively with all stakeholders during the upcoming relicensing proceeding.