

FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION

Office of Energy Projects

Division of Dam Safety and Inspections – San Francisco Regional Office

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October 9, 2007

In reply refer to:

Project No. 2100-CA

NATDAM ID Nos. CA00035,

CA00530, CA83096,

CA00036, CA00041,

CA00042, CA00034

Mr. Ralph Torres
Deputy Director
California Department of Water Resources
1416 Ninth Street
P.O. Box 942836
Sacramento, CA 94236-0001

Re: 2007 Operation Inspection – Follow-Up Actions

Dear Mr. Torres:

On August 27-30, 2007, Mr. John Onderdonk, of my staff conducted an operation inspection of the Feather River Project, FERC Project No. 2100. On August 28-29, 2007 the inspection was focused on security at the Oroville Dam. Representatives of DWR that were present during the operation inspections included Messrs. Maury Miller, David Panec, Vincent Homdus, John Rizzardo, Bill Dickens and Ms. Jacquie Bolf and Ms. Trudy Payne. Representatives that were present during the security related aspects of the inspection included Messrs. Joe Royer, David Panec, John Rizzardo, Pat Whitlock, and David Samson. Also present during the security related inspections, were Lt. Al Smith of the Butte County Sheriffs Department, Mr. Justin Smith of FERC, Mr. Juris Sinats of FERC, and Joachim Gloschat of Security Management Solutions.

The time, effort and cooperative spirit of your staff in accompanying and assisting our staff on the inspection is appreciated. The project features were found to be in good condition. However, some items require attention and a list of these items follow:

Oroville Dam

1. The bolts and nuts that secure the river valves to the pipe flanges were observed to be rusty. This item was also on the 2006 follow-up letter and your plan and schedule

calls for the repair to be finished by November 2, 2007.

2. The covers for electrical junction boxes located on the river valves were noted to be removed during the inspection. By December 3, 2007, please provide a plan and schedule to replace or repair the junction boxes so that no wires are exposed.

3. Some of the grease fittings for the river valve operators appeared to be missing during the inspection. By December 3, 2007, please provide a plan and schedule to check the grease fittings and ascertain that the valve operation mechanisms are being supplied with adequate grease.

4. The concrete steps that lead down to the access gallery from the left abutment were noted to be in poor condition in several locations. It appears that minerals in the groundwater that is leaking into the gallery are reacting with the concrete steps and causing a build up on the steps. The deterioration of the steps is becoming excessive enough to present a safety hazard. Because the groundwater is so reactive with the concrete, the water should be prevented from leaking onto or running down the steps. This item was also on the 2006 follow-up letter regarding the steps leading down from the right abutment and your plan and schedule called for the repairs to be complete by December 7, 2007. By December 3, 2007, please provide a plan and schedule to repair the steps leading down to the gallery from the left abutment and prevent water from the drains from running down the steps.

5. One of emergency lights located in the gallery was noted to be inoperative. By December 3, 2007, please provide a plan and schedule to check and repair any inoperative emergency lights in the gallery.

6. A five-gallon container of hydraulic oil was found on the floor in the gate generator room. By December 3, 2007, please provide a plan and schedule to remove the oil container or provide secondary containment for the container.

7. During the inspection, Mr. Onderdonk was informed that Gate No. 4 was binding and causing large amperage draws on the gate hoist motor. In a subsequent October 1, 2007 telephone call, Mr. Maury Miller informed our office that the cause of the binding had been determined and bolts that penetrate the seal between the gate and the wall are backing out and scouring the stainless steel plate protecting the north concrete wall. We were informed in an October 3, 2007 telephone call that the DWR Engineering Division was evaluating ways to repair the gate. By December 3, 2007, please provide a plan and schedule to repair Gate No. 4.

8. Small areas of spalling damage of the concrete on the floor of the spillway were noted during the inspection. By December 3, 2007, please provide a plan and schedule to repair areas on the spillway where the concrete has been damaged.

9. During the inspection, Mr. Onderdonk inquired when the last time that the spillway drainage system has been cleaned out and he was informed that it has been many years. There are a series of vertical clean outs located on each side of the service spillway. By December 3, 2007, please provide a plan and schedule to clean out the spillway drains.

Parish Camp Saddle Dam

Ground rodent activity holes were noted in the right downstream area of the dam. By December 3, 2007, please provide a plan and schedule to provide rodent abatement measures to minimize the rodent activity on the dam.

Fish Barrier Dam

The drainage channel that was cut in the rock near the right abutment of the dam is partially blocked by vegetation and sediment. By December 3, 2007, please provide a plan and schedule to remove the vegetative growth and sediment in the channel.

Thermalito Diversion Dam

1. A five-gallon container of oil was found on the floor in the powerplant. By December 3, 2007, please provide a plan and schedule to remove the oil container or provide secondary containment for the container.

2. The locks for slide gate numbers 1 and 2 were noted to be missing and the gate operator buttons accessible. In a letter dated September 7, 2007, you were requested to submit a written report on the apparent vandalism incident. By December 3, 2007, please provide a plan and schedule to repair the control access cover locks.

Thermalito Forebay Dam

An oil leak was noted at the gate hoist for the radial gate. By December 3, 2007, please provide a plan and schedule to repair the oil leak.

Thermalito Afterbay Dam

1. Excessive vegetation was found at the exit point of the toe drains located at the

east and sides of the Sutter Butte Canal. By December 3, 2007, please provide a plan and schedule to remove the vegetative growth.

2. Excessive vegetation was found downstream of the toe drains located at Station 273+80. By December 3, 2007, please provide a plan and schedule to remove the vegetative growth.

3. Excessive vegetation was found downstream of the toe drain located at Station 59+00. By December 3, 2007, please provide a plan and schedule to remove the vegetative growth.

4. Oil leaks were noted at the gate hoists at the Western Canal entrance By December 3, 2007, please provide a plan and schedule to repair the oil leak.

Your continued cooperation on issues of dam safety is appreciated. If you should have any questions, please contact Mr. John Onderdonk at (415) 369-3339.

Sincerely,

TAKESHI YAMASHITA

Takeshi Yamashita, P.E.
Regional Engineer