



SAN MATEO, SANTA CLARA & SAN BENITO COUNTIES

June 8, 2020

Valley Water Board of Directors
via email

Re: June 9, 2020 Agenda Item 3.2 Anderson Dam Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
Order Compliance Project

Dear Chair Hsueh and Board Members,

The Sierra Club is always concerned when environmental review is eliminated for projects, especially large, complicated projects such as the Anderson Dam Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) Order Compliance Project (FOCP). The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) is the main mechanism for informing the public about such projects and for the public to ask for additional information or provide input on impacts and mitigation measures.

We understand the emergency nature of this project, but we disagree with Valley Water's decision to completely bypass CEQA. Given the number of permits that need to be obtained to begin construction, there is time for an expedited CEQA process for the FOCP. Alternatively, elements of the FOCP projects could be integrated in the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the Anderson Dam Seismic Retrofit Project (ADSRP) which is scheduled to be completed before the end of this year.


Specifically, some elements of the FOCP are already part of the project description for the ADSRP. We are especially concerned about the Anderson Dam Tunnel Operation and Maintenance actions since these will not go into effect until the project is completed in December 2023. Project Operation is included in the Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the ADSRP EIR. It is imperative that dam operations are fully analyzed in the DEIR. Other actions in the NOP include the Intake and Outlet Works (i.e. Anderson Dam Tunnel) and Spoils Disposal (related to construction of Tunnel).

Most other elements of the FOCP are mitigation measures, which must also be included in the DEIR. Such measures must be included under the impact categories and in the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program.

Regarding the Engineer's Report published on Friday June 5, we request more information about the FOCP Coyote Creek Stream Augmentation Fish Protection Measure in the Project Description. The Project Description needs to include information about the source of the up to 10 cfs of imported water to release into Coyote Creek for the Cold Water Management Zone (CWMZ). The source of that water is not clear since the Anderson Reservoir will be empty.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments. We also appreciate your commitment to inform the public and allow for public input, including the CEQA process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Katja Irvin".

Katja Irvin, AICP
Conservation Committee Co-chair
Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter