

# Don Pedro

*A newsletter about the relicensing of the Don Pedro Project*

## Public Scoping Meetings set for May 11

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) will host a pair of public scoping meetings on May 11 in relation to the Modesto and Turlock irrigation districts' relicensing efforts for the Don Pedro Project.

The morning meeting is planned to begin at 9 a.m. and will take place at the California State University, Stanislaus University Student Union Event Center in Turlock, located at 801 W. Monte Vista Ave.

The evening meeting is set to start at 7 p.m. and will take place at Modesto's DoubleTree Hotel, Ballroom 3, located at 1150 Ninth St.

The purpose of these meetings, which are sponsored and facilitated by FERC, is to identify relevant issues of public interest involving the Don Pedro Project in relation to the National Environmental Policy Act.

The scoping meetings, just as any other formal FERC scoping meetings, are designed for members of the public to make statements about the project to FERC staff in an open forum. One of the primary purposes of a formal scoping meeting is so the members of the public have an opportunity to speak their concerns.

**MORE INSIDE:** Don Pedro's significance and background, plus more about the relicensing process

Also at the scoping meeting, it is expected that FERC staff will describe the environmental review process, as well as provide relevant information and answer procedural questions.

As co-relicensing applicants, MID and TID will have staff members present. It is expected that District representatives will briefly describe the Don Pedro Project and will be available before and after the formal part of the meeting for questions and answers.

Comments on the proposed project may be submitted in written form or communicated verbally during the course of the scoping meeting. The scoping meetings are recorded by a stenographer and become part of the formal record of the FERC proceeding on the project.

Information gathered at these scoping meetings may also help the Districts develop environmental protection measures to present in its environmental resource reports filed with FERC in its Final License Application. This information will also provide FERC staff with the resources needed to publish a more complete environmental impact document for public review.

**May 11 FERC Meetings**

**TURLOCK SCOPING MEETING**

**WHERE:** CSU Stanislaus University Student Union Event Center, located at 801 W. Monte Vista Ave., Turlock

**WHEN:** 9 a.m.

**MODESTO SCOPING MEETING**

**WHERE:** DoubleTree Hotel, Ballroom 3, located at 1150 Ninth St., Modesto

**WHEN:** 7 p.m.

### Important dates

May 10  
*FERC site inspection of Don Pedro Project*

May 11  
*Public Scoping Meetings in Modesto and Turlock*

May 18  
*Cultural Relicensing Working Group (RWG) and Recreation RWG Meetings*

May 19  
*Aquatic/Water RWG and Terrestrial RWG Group Meetings*

June 10  
*Deadline for Relicensing Participants to request studies and to comment on the Pre-Application Document (PAD)*

June 21  
*Aquatic/Water RWG and Terrestrial RWG Meetings*

July 25  
*Districts to file Proposed Study Plan (PSP) with FERC*

From the original dam and powerhouse built in 1923 to the significant facility that exists today, Don Pedro continues to show ...

# a *history* of benefits

People in the region are passionate about the Don Pedro Project. And why wouldn't they be?

The project's reservoir and dam provide flood protection for many area residents. Some water from Don Pedro eventually makes its way to Modesto Reservoir, where it is eventually treated and purified to become drinking water for many Modesto residents. Much of the water from Don Pedro is used by growers to irrigate crops that help feed and employ many in the region, state and nation. There are recreation opportunities aplenty. And let's not forget the power plant that provides clean, efficient and affordable energy powering thousands of homes and businesses within the MID and TID service areas.

Simply put, the Don Pedro dam, reservoir and powerhouse offer a collection of benefits that will continue to be of great value to the people of the Central Valley and beyond.

That value was always part of the vision of the project's forefathers. But to know the story of the project, it's best to know the story of the districts and the people that were antecedents to the project.

Formed in 1887, the Modesto and Turlock irrigation districts are the oldest irrigation districts in California, and are among the oldest in the nation. They were created by a vote of the people in accordance with the laws of the State of California to provide water for agricultural purposes in their respective irrigation service areas which today total approximately 200,000 acres of trees, vines, row and forage crops.

Soon after formation, the Districts acquired a water diversion site on the Tuolumne River located downstream of the Don Pedro site along with "pre-1914" water rights; the Districts have added other water rights to these over time. An original Don Pedro Reservoir with approximately 290,400 acre-feet of storage and its associated Powerhouse were brought online in 1923 to improve water availability for the long growing season of the Central Valley and to bring electrification to a portion of this rural area. The Districts have been providing retail electric service to the communities' farms, homes, municipalities, business and industry since that time. Today, the Districts serve approximately 200,000 electric customers in a 1,000-square mile area.

The Tuolumne River has a long history of water planning. Concern



**1887:** Modesto and Turlock irrigation districts are organized.

**1923:** The Original Don Pedro Dam and Powerhouse is constructed, capable of generating up to 15 megawatts and storing 289,000 acre-feet of water.



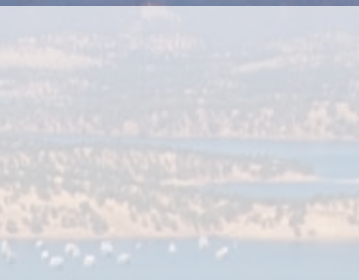
**1961:** Voters overwhelmingly approve bonds to fund the New Don Pedro project.

**1966:** MID and TID received a federal license for an enlarged Don Pedro from the Federal Power Commission, the predecessor to FERC.

**1967:** Ground is broken on New Don Pedro; diversion tunnel work begins

**1970:**

- Don Pedro Recreation Agency formed
- Old Don Pedro opened and water storage transferred to New Don Pedro



Transmission lines near the Don Pedro Powerhouse help transport up to 203 megawatts of generation that helps power MID and TID customers homes and businesses.

over the need to withstand the effects of multiple dry years and the growing demand for electricity resulted in the Districts partnering with the City and County of San Francisco to develop the current Don Pedro Project. The new Don Pedro Project inundated the original dam and impoundment, and the resulting new Don Pedro Reservoir has a storage capacity of 2,030,000 acre-feet, more than seven times that of its predecessor; the new Don Pedro Powerhouse constructed with the dam has a maximum generating capacity of 203 megawatts. Planning for the enlarged Don Pedro began in the 1940s and culminated when the Districts received the federal license in 1966 from the Federal Power Commission, the predecessor to FERC.

The City and County of San Francisco contributed to the construction of the project but has no ownership interest in the dam, reservoir, or powerhouse, nor does it have any ownership of water in the reservoir. San Francisco participated in construction of the project in order to obtain a water banking arrangement in the new reservoir which provides it with greater flexibility in storing water for use at its upstream power facilities and for water supply. Construction of the project also relieved San Francisco of flood control responsibilities in the watershed thereby providing another important benefit for the City.

As the sixth largest reservoir in California, Lake Don Pedro provides extensive habitat for fish and wildlife, and has a wide recreation following. It is known for its bass tournaments and houseboating. Approximately 400,000 visitor-days of recreation occur at the reservoir each year. Activities include camping, boating, fishing, and enjoying water sports such as skiing, wake boarding, and the use of personal watercraft.

**1971:**

- New Don Pedro Dam and Powerhouse is constructed with a total generating capacity of 203 megawatts and a water storage capacity of 2,030,000 acre-feet
- New Don Pedro Project officially changed to Don Pedro Dam

# The relicensing process

## Notice of Intent to relicense filed, public scoping meeting next

Relicensing of the Don Pedro Project follows the Integrated Licensing Process as designated by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC).

The Modesto and Turlock irrigation districts took the first step in this several-year process by filing of a Notice of Intent (NOI) and a Pre-Application Document (PAD) in February 2011.

The next formal step is FERC's scoping of the issues to be considered in the relicensing of the project. On May 11, FERC will hold two scoping meetings to obtain public input.

Filings throughout the process will be made available to the public on the project relicensing website located at [www.donpedro-relicensing.com](http://www.donpedro-relicensing.com). Certain information may be restricted from publication on the relicensing website in accordance with FERC's regulations protecting Critical Energy Infrastructure Information (CEII) or in cases where the document contains sensitive information.

The PAD contains a synopsis of the known information relevant to the relicensing of the Don Pedro Project. It includes a detailed description of the project, an explanation of the relicensing process and the schedule to be followed as well as pertinent

### The Process

1. Districts filed PAD and NOI in Feb. 2011.
2. FERC conducts scoping.
3. Interested parties discuss issues and develop study requests.
4. Applicant files its proposed study plan and conducts approved studies.
5. Studies are conducted and Study Report issued for review and comment.
6. Applicant files draft and final license applications.
7. FERC issues new license with new terms and conditions in 2016.

information related to Project operations, engineering, water resources, environmental resources, recreation, cultural resources, and socioeconomics. The information in the Pre-Application Document allows FERC and interested parties to identify data gaps and needs for additional information which will form the basis for study requests to acquire the information needed in developing the new license.

Name of Agency  
Return Address Line 1  
Return Address Line 2  
City, State ZIP

## Upcoming Meeting

May 11, 2011  
FERC Scoping Meetings  
in Turlock and  
Modesto. More info  
inside.

Josh Wilson  
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Sacramento, CA 95356

