

Filing of Final License Application nears

By April 30, 2014, the Modesto Irrigation District and Turlock Irrigation District will file the joint application for a new license for the Don Pedro Hydroelectric Project with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). This will be one of many significant milestones thus far in the Don Pedro Relicensing process; an arduous process that the Districts began in 2011 with the filing of the pre-application document.

The Final License Application (FLA) contains a number of new proposed measures to protect the environment and promote recreational use of the Project area. In addition to a Historic Properties Management Plan to protect cultural resources and provide information to the public, the measures include a Vegetation Management Plan, a Bald Eagle Management Plan, and improvements to the current take-out at Wards Ferry to benefit whitewater boaters using the wild and scenic river above Don Pedro.

The FLA may be modified in 2016 after completion of ongoing studies. At that time the Districts may propose additional future protection, mitigation and enhancement measures, including potential flow proposals.

Prior to the FLA, the Districts filed with FERC a Draft License Application (DLA) for the Don Pedro Hydroelectric Project on Nov. 26, 2013.

Required by federal regulations, the purpose of the draft application was to provide relicensing participants with a preview of what the final license application would contain. The Districts received comments regarding the DLA from many local, state, and federal agencies as well as various conservation groups.

Relicensing milestones

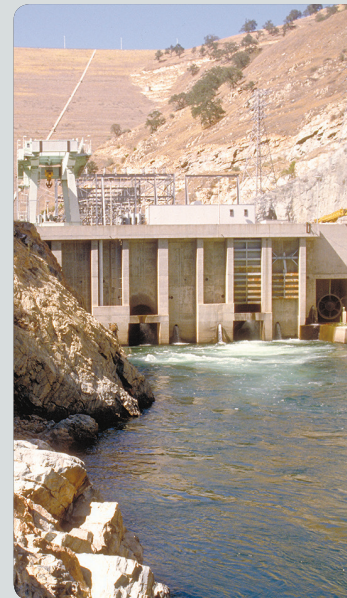
The joint MID-TID relicensing of the Don Pedro Hydroelectric Project formally began in 2011. On the heels of the recent Final License Application filing, what follows is a recap of some of the major stages of the process.

1. Districts filed PAD and Notice of Intent in February 2011.
2. FERC conducts scoping in May 2011.
3. Interested parties discuss issues and develop study requests.
4. Districts file Proposed Study Plan (PSP) in July 2011 and undertake a series of meetings with relicensing participants to discuss study plans.
5. FERC issues Study Plan Determination in Dec. 2011.
6. Studies begin in 2012.
7. Initial Study Report issued for review and comment in Jan 2013.
8. Districts filed Draft License Application with FERC on Nov. 26, 2013.
9. Districts filed Updated Study Report in January 2014.

Important dates

by April 30, 2014

**Final License Application
to be filed with FERC**



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On Jan. 16, 2014, the Districts held a public meeting at the MID office to present and discuss the USR.

Many studies complete, handful still in progress

On Jan. 6, 2014, the Districts filed with FERC the Updated Study Report (USR) for the Don Pedro Hydroelectric Project. The USR includes the results of the studies conducted and completed in 2012 and 2013.

The USR contained reports on over 30 completed studies and status updates on the studies still in progress. The completed studies and in progress studies are listed in the table at right. The USR is available online at the Don Pedro Relicensing website www.donpedro-relicensing.com.

Two studies, the CR-01: Historic Properties Study and CR-02: Native American Traditional Cultural Properties Study are

complete, and the reports for these two studies will be issued in April to FERC, however the reports will be unavailable for public review due to the sensitive content of the reports.

More than 60 people participated in a Jan. 16, 2014 public meeting at the MID office to present and discuss the USR.

On Feb. 14, 2014, due to the inability to receive the necessary permits, the Districts requested from FERC a one-year extension to the 2014 Predation Study Plan. FERC granted the one-year extension in March. The Predation Study will now be conducted in 2015, with a final study report to be completed by March 2016.

Relicensing Studies

Study No.	Study Name	Status
Cultural Resources (CR)-01	Historic Properties Study	Complete
CR-02	Native American Traditional Cultural Properties Study	Complete
Recreational Resources (RR)-01	Recreation Facility and Public Accessibility Assessment	Complete
RR-02	Whitewater Boating Take Out Improvement Feasibility	Complete
RR-03	Lower Tuolumne River Boatable Flow Study	Complete
RR-04	Visual Quality Study	Complete
Terrestrial Resources (TR)-01	Special-Status Plants	Complete
TR-02	ESA- and CESA-Listed Plants Study	Complete
TR-03	Wetland Habitats Associated with Don Pedro Reservoir	Complete
TR-04	Noxious Weed Survey	Complete
TR-05	ESA-Listed Wildlife - Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle (VELB)	Complete
TR-06	Special-Status Amphibians and Aquatic Reptiles	Complete
TR-07	ESA-Listed Amphibians - California Red-Legged Frog (CRLF)	Complete
TR-08	ESA-List Amphibians - California Tiger Salamander (CTS)	Complete
TR-09	Special-Status Bats	Complete
TR-10	Bald Eagle Study	Complete
Water & Aquatic Resources (W&AR)-01	Water Quality Assessment	Complete
W&AR-02	Project Operations/Water Balance Model	Complete
W&AR-03	Reservoir Temperature Model	Complete
W&AR-04	Spawning Gravel Study	Complete
W&AR-05	Salmonid Populations Information Integration	Complete
W&AR-06	Tuolumne River Chinook Salmon Population Model	Complete
W&AR-07	2012 Predation Study	Complete
W&AR-07	2014 Predation Study	Field work planning in progress
W&AR-08	Salmonid Redd Mapping	Complete
W&AR-10	Oncorhynchus mykiss Population Study	Complete
W&AR-11	Chinook Salmon Otolith Study	Study in progress
W&AR-12	Oncorhynchus mykiss Habitat Assessment	Complete
W&AR-13	Fish Assemblage and Population Study	Complete
W&AR-14	Temperature Criteria Assessment	Study in progress
W&AR-15	Socioeconomics Study	Complete
W&AR-16	Lower Tuolumne River Temperature Model	Complete
W&AR-17	Don Pedro Reservoir Fish Population Study	Complete
W&AR-18	Sturgeon	Complete
W&AR-19	Riparian Information Synthesis	Complete
W&AR-20	O. mykiss scale & age	Complete
—	Lower Tuolumne Instream Flow (IFIM)	Complete; supplemental analysis in progress
W&AR-21	Floodplain Hydraulic Assessment	Study in progress

Plan calls for improvements at Wards Ferry

As one element of the Recreation Resource Management Plan (RRMP) being filed as part of the Final License Application to FERC, the Districts are proposing improvements to the current river-egress being used by whitewater boaters at the upstream end of Don Pedro Reservoir at Wards Ferry Bridge.

In 2012 and 2013, the Districts performed a Whitewater Boating Take-Out Feasibility Study (RR-02) and identified technically feasible improvements to improve safe, efficient use of the site by commercial and individual boaters exiting the river. Under the RRMP, the improvements to the whitewater boating take-out will be implemented within five years of the effective date of the new FERC license. The estimated cost of design and construction is \$1.1 million. To recover costs, the RRMP proposes a user fee of \$10 per boater, payable by the commercial rafting companies. At this rate, cost recovery by the Districts will likely exceed 35 years.

The improvements include a new access road/water access ramp, a vehicle turn around area, and an upgraded pedestrian trail that descends in a downstream direction from the old bridge abutment.

History of Don Pedro relevant as project's future weighed by FERC

As we prepare for the filing of the Final License Application with FERC, it is important to reflect on how Don Pedro came to be.

Formed in 1887, the Modesto Irrigation District and the Turlock Irrigation District are the oldest irrigation districts in California. They were created by a vote of the people in accordance with the laws of California to provide irrigation water for agricultural purposes in their respective irrigation service areas which today total approximately 300,000 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 customers in a 1,000 square mile area.

The Tuolumne River has a long history of water planning. Concern over the need to withstand the effects of multiple dry years and the growing demand for electricity resulted in the Districts developing the current Don Pedro Hydroelectric Project.

The New Don Pedro Project inundated the original dam and impoundment, and the resulting current Don Pedro Reservoir has a storage capacity of 2,030,000 acre-feet, over seven times that of its predecessor; the new Don Pedro Powerhouse constructed with the dam has a generating capacity of 203 MW.

Model training workshops held

In February of 2014, the Districts hosted several relicensing participant meetings. On Feb. 13, the Districts hosted two public meetings at HDR's Sacramento offices: a model training for the W&AR-03 Reservoir Temperature Model and a Workshop on the W&AR-21 Floodplain Hydraulic Assessment.

On March 4, draft meeting notes from the W&AR-21 Workshop were sent to relicensing participants for review. Comments on the draft meeting notes were

due by April 3. On Feb. 24, also at the HDR's Sacramento offices, the Districts held a model training for W&AR-06 Tuolumne River Chinook Salmon Population Model and the W&AR-10 Oncorhynchus mykiss Population Study.

Throughout the relicensing process, more than 20 workshops on studies and models have been conducted. Future public meetings and workshops will be posted online at www.donpedro-relicensing.com.



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