

RESOLUTION NO. 25-

RESOLUTION OF THE MENDOCINO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS REGARDING THE FUTURE OF THE POTTER VALLEY PROJECT AND THE LOSS OF WATER SUPPLY RELIABILITY

WHEREAS, the County of Mendocino is charged with protecting and preserving the health and welfare of its citizens and is uniquely positioned to advocate on behalf of its citizens; and

WHEREAS, for more than one hundred years the Potter Valley Project (PVP), currently owned and operated by the Pacific Gas & Electric Company (PG&E), has stored water behind Scott Dam in Lake Pillsbury and diverted water from the Eel River into the Russian River basin via Cape Horn Dam, providing water supply and reliability for Mendocino and Sonoma Counties; and

WHEREAS, the water diverted through the PVP has formed the foundation for community development, agriculture, and economic stability throughout Mendocino County including Potter Valley, Redwood Valley, Ukiah Valley, Hopland, and other downstream Russian River communities; and

WHEREAS, entire communities, farms, and businesses have been built in reliance upon this water supply, and public services such as schools, fire protection, and municipal water systems depend on its continued availability; and

WHEREAS, these communities and economies developed under the expectation of water supply reliability created by PG&E's century-long operations, and PG&E has benefited from the use of public resources during that time from the generation of electricity which is the foundation for its rate base and dividends to its shareholders; and

WHEREAS, it is the strong desire of Mendocino County constituents and communities directly impacted by the Potter Valley Project to see the existing infrastructure maintained, protected, and responsibly managed; and

WHEREAS, the removal of Scott Dam and Cape Horn Dam would eliminate this critical water source serving community health and safety, causing significant harm to residents, agriculture, property values, and the long-term viability of rural communities and the region; and

WHEREAS, PG&E now seeks to give up the PVP based on profitability, without accepting responsibility for the consequences to the communities that were built around the project's operations; and

WHEREAS, the draft decommissioning plan submitted by PG&E in July 2025 to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) does not quantify or meaningfully assess these profound social and economic consequences that will happen if Scott and Cape Horn Dams are removed; and

WHEREAS, the draft decommissioning plan includes the proposal for a new water diversion facility near the Cape Horn Dam known as the New Eel Russian Facility (NERF) to maintain water diversions into the Russian River; and

WHEREAS, the NERF proposal continues vital water divisions, but without Lake Pillsbury the Russian River communities can only receive water in high flow seasons, requiring additional significant storage and infrastructure improvements that would not be necessary if Scott Dam was maintained; and

WHEREAS, the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors recognizes and supports the continued work of the Mendocino County Inland Water and Power Commission and the Eel-Russian Project Authority (ERPA) in developing long-term, sustainable strategies to protect and secure our regional water supply, all of which is essential should any aspect of the PVP be decommissioned.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors acknowledges the community opposition and concerns regarding the decommissioning of the PVP and calls on PG&E to reevaluate its decision to seek decommissioning of the PVP, and for PG&E to account for and address the severe social and community impacts of water loss as a result of its responsibility to the communities that developed around its operations; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board calls upon the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to condition any approval or certification of the decommissioning plan on a full and comprehensive analysis of community and economic impacts and enforceable mitigation strategies to safeguard the residents of Mendocino County and the greater region; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board urges state and federal representatives to hold PG&E accountable for its decision to decommission the PVP which is negatively impacting the communities who rely on the water, especially in light of its role in shaping those communities that now depend on the PVP, and to advocate for the protection of local economies, public services, and water security in all decisions concerning the project; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that if FERC orders decommissioning and Scott and Cape Horn Dams are removed, the Board urges maintaining a water diversion through the NERF proposal that provides the same or greater water supply, and along with it urges federal and state support for the funding and construction of necessary storage.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that no alternative diversion plan is adequate nor acceptable without permitted, fully funded and constructed water storage solutions available for all affected communities at the time of decommissioning and the removal of existing storage.

The foregoing Resolution introduced by Supervisor _____, seconded by Supervisor _____, and carried this _____ day of _____, 2025, by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

WHEREUPON, the Chair declared said Resolution adopted and SO ORDERED.

ATTEST: DARCIE ANTLE
Clerk of the Board

JOHN HASCHAK, Chair
Mendocino County Board of Supervisors

Deputy

I hereby certify that according to the provisions of Government Code Section 25103, delivery of this document has been made.

APPROVED AS TO FORM:
CHARLOTTE E. SCOTT
County Counsel

BY: DARCIE ANTLE
Clerk of the Board

Deputy