



COUNTY OF MENDOCINO

Board of Supervisors

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CLERK OF THE BOARD

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December 19, 2023

Tony Gigliotti
Senior Licensing Project Manager: Power Generation
12840 Bill Clark Way
Auburn, CA 95602
E-mail: PVSurrender@pge.com

Re: Support for the New Eel-Russian Facility in PG&E's Initial Draft Surrender Application

Dear Mr. Gigliotti,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on PG&E's Initial Draft Surrender Application, which includes a proposal, attached here as Exhibit A, which we term the "New Eel-Russian Facility". This proposal was created with input from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, California Trout, Humboldt County, Mendocino County Inland Water and Power Commission, the Round Valley Indian Tribes, Sonoma County Water Agency, and Trout Unlimited for Project facilities in the Cape Horn Dam Area.

We write to provide you with our strong support for PG&E's continued and serious consideration of the proposed New Eel-Russian Facility. The Mendocino County Board of Supervisors understands our area's collective need for the continued diversion of water from the Eel River. A great man once wrote that "the history of California is written on its waters." The same holds true for the Greater Ukiah Valley and the Upper Russian River Watershed: our history has been written on the mingled waters of the Eel and Russian Rivers. We believe that our future will be as well.

As PG&E notes in its Initial Draft Surrender Application, water has been diverted from the Eel River into the Russian River Watershed for nearly 120 years through what is now the Potter Valley Hydroelectric Project (the "Project"). During this time along the Russian River, the farmers and ranchers in Potter and Redwood Valleys down to Hopland; and especially the Greater Ukiah Valley area that includes residents, schools, and businesses in the City of Ukiah, the neighborhoods Deerwood, El Dorado Hills, Regina Heights, and Vichy Springs neighborhoods, and the homes, vineyards, orchards, and parks scattered throughout – have relied upon the water imported from the Eel River and mingled with those of the Russian River watershed.

The four Core Components outlined by the New Eel-Russian Facility's proposal envision the creation of a Regional Entity capable of owning, constructing, and operating a project to continue to divert water from the Eel River into the Russian River Watershed. As such, the Regional Entity will be responsible for purchasing certain existing infrastructure currently part of the Potter Valley Hydroelectric Project. The Proponents have committed to receive support from, among others, the United States National Marine Fisheries Service and non-governmental entities. We agree with the four core components and believe they are key to PG&E's successful surrender of the Potter Valley Hydroelectric Project and our future success.

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Importantly, the New Eel-Russian Facility is proposed recognizing the needs of our constituents and neighbors on the Eel River and to honor their own unique ties to those waters. Proponents of the New Eel-Russian Facility commit to the coequal goals of (1) improving fish migration and habitat on the Eel River with the objective of achieving naturally reproducing, self-sustaining, and harvestable native anadromous fish populations; and (2) maintaining material and continued water diversion from the Eel River through the existing tunnel to the Russian River to support water supply reliability, fisheries, and water quality in the Russian River basin. PG&E has stated that its “decommissioning plan will include the removal of in water facilities such that no feature will continue to impound water and the natural flow of the river will occur.” The Proponents commit to develop mutually agreeable terms related to the Regional Entity’s construction of the New Eel-Russian Facility and other terms for license surrender that advance the coequal goals and meet regulatory requirements. The Proponents also commit to negotiate terms related to the Regional Entity’s operation of the New Eel-Russian Facility, including those related to water rights and the rate, timing, bypass flows, and other conditions for diversion to the Russian River Watershed. As representatives of those who would benefit from the New Eel-Russian Facility, we share the Proponents’ coequal goals.

As proposed, the New Eel-Russian Facility seeks to secure our collective future. It is to that future we now look, believing the New Eel-Russian Facility is a fundamental component to realizing a bright future for our common posterity.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Glenn McGourty". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Glenn" and last name "McGourty" clearly legible.

Glenn McGourty
Chair, Mendocino County Board of Supervisors