

January 10, 2014

**Public Notice for Water Quality Certification and/or Waste
Discharge Requirements (Dredge/Fill Projects)**

**PG&E Humboldt Bay Power Plant Decommissioning Program
Intake / Discharge Canal Remediation Project
WDID No. 1B13126WNHU**

Humboldt County

On September 13, 2013, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) (Applicant), requesting Federal Clean Water Act, section 401, Water Quality Certification for activities associated with the PG&E Humboldt Bay Power Plant Decommissioning Program Intake / Discharge Canal Remediation Project (Project). The proposed Project will cause disturbances to waters of the United States associated with Humboldt Bay and wetlands within the Eureka Plain Hydrologic Unit No. 110.00. The Project is located at 1000 King Salmon Ave., Eureka, Humboldt County. The Project site is located at latitude 40.7406182295°N, and longitude 124.210606006°W. Permanent impacts to waters of the U.S. and the State, including wetlands, eelgrass beds, channels and shorelines would be approximately 1.039 acres. Temporary impacts to waters of the U.S. and the State including eelgrass beds and channels and shorelines would be approximately 1.22 acres.

The primary purpose of the Project is the remediation of the intake and discharge canals to remove contaminated sediment as necessary to terminate the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) license for the Humboldt Bay Power Plant (HBPP) nuclear power Unit 3 in accordance with 10 Code of Federal Regulations 52.110. The final goal is to establish conditions that allow for license termination and restore the canals to near pre-project conditions.

The proposed Project would include removal and disposal of contaminated sediments and concrete structures from intake and discharge canals that were formerly part of a "once-through cooling" water system serving the HBPP. To achieve these project objectives the Applicant proposes to install a water control structure in the intake canal and a coffer dam in Humboldt Bay; dewater both canals; remove contaminated sediments, rip-rap, and concrete intake and discharge structures; and then restore these features to nearly pre-project conditions. The Applicant would additionally remove the discharge canal outfall pipes to Humboldt Bay, disconnecting the canal from the Bay.

The proposed Project includes mitigation for the impacts to wetlands, waters of the U.S. and State including creation of approximately 0.24 acres of wetlands, restoration of approximately 0.38 acres and creation of approximately 0.10 acres of eelgrass beds, as well as, creation of approximately 0.79 acres of deep water, northern coastal salt marsh, mudflat and eelgrass habitat. Mitigation for temporary impacts include restoration of 1.15 acres of channel and shoreline to pre-project conditions as well as enhancement of 6.20 acres of tidal salt marsh through invasive *Spartina densiflora* (denseflower cordgrass) eradication

at Buhne Slough Salt Marsh in Humboldt Bay. The Project proposes to employ best management practices to prevent or reduce any discharges during and after construction.

The Project is planned to take place between February 2014 and March 2018. Remediation work is planned to last approximately one year.

The Applicant has applied for authorization from the United States Army Corps of Engineers for a Clean Water Act, section 404 permit. The Applicant has applied to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife for a Streambed Alteration Agreement. Additionally, the Applicant has applied to the California Coastal Commission for a Coastal Development Permit.

The Humboldt Bay Harbor District, as lead California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) agency, has produced a Mitigated Negative Declaration and filed with the State Clearinghouse (SCH No. 2013122032), pursuant to CEQA guidelines.

The information contained in this public notice is only a summary of the Applicant's proposed activities. The application for Water Quality Certification in the Regional Water Board's file contains additional details about the proposed Project including maps and photos. The application and Regional Water Board file are available for public review.

Regional Water Board staff are proposing to regulate this Project pursuant to Section 401 of the Clean Water Act (33 USC 1341) and/or Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act authority. In addition, staff will consider all comments submitted in writing and received at this office by mail during a 21-day comment period that begins on the first date of issuance of this letter and ends at 5:00 p.m. on the last day of the comment period. If you have any questions, please contact staff member Gil Falcone at (707) 576-2830 or Stephen Bargsten at (707) 576-2653 within 21 days of the posting of this notice.