
**Negative Declaration
Pacific Gas & Electric Company**

**Revised McArthur Swamp Management Plan –
Implementation of the Waterfowl Restoration Project**

Lead Agency:

State Water Resources Control Board
Division of Water Rights
1001 I Street, 14th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Attn: Mr. Peter Barnes, Engineering Geologist/Project Manager
(916) 445-9989 or pbarnes@waterboards.ca.gov

Introduction and Project Description

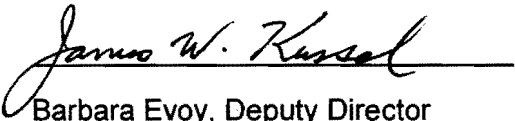
The Revised McArthur Swamp Management Plan – Implementation of the Waterfowl Restoration Project (McArthur Swamp Waterfowl Restoration Project or Project) proposes the flooding of Ash Field, Rat Farm Pond, and a portion of Hollenbeak Field. The primary water supply for the Project will come directly from Big Lake. A portable water pump will be used annually to pump water into the three sites as described below. To control water levels, two new water control structures will be built: one in Central Drain and a second structure in Ash Field. Fencing will be installed to control cattle access to the drains and canals. A rotational grazing plan was originally proposed; however, due to the many cattle leases this element is no longer part of the plan. Instead, PG&E will continue to work with the local cattle ranchers who lease the property for grazing to ensure they conduct their grazing operations to minimize environmental disturbance.

The Project area encompasses approximately 475 acres. To help distribute water in the fields during flood-up, approximately 133 acres of meandering swales will be constructed. In addition to swales, approximately 18 acres of elevated mounds will be created. Swale construction will generate approximately 67,500 cubic yards of soil, of which 41,700 cubic yards will be used to create elevated mounds for cover habitat and 1,067 cubic yards for new berm construction. Remaining spoils will be used to reinforce segments of the existing Big Lake levee (spoils will be deposited in upland habitat) and the re-shaping of the existing Rat Farm Pond levee. Construction of the swales (133 acres), elevated mounds less than 24 inches high (12 acres), temporary road and equipment staging areas (2.94 acres), re-grading of the Central Drain (1.8 acres), and the reshaping of the existing Rat Farm Pond levee (1.38 acres) will result in the temporary impacts to approximately 152 acres of jurisdictional wetlands. Construction of two water control structures (0.04 acres), two rock swale crossings (0.11 acres), a new section of berm (0.22 acres), and the creation of mounds greater than or equal to 24 inches in height (5.97 acres) will result in a permanent impact to 6.34 acres of jurisdictional wetlands.

PG&E proposes to construct and operate the Project as outlined in the Initial Study and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Checklist. The baseline for evaluating the potential significant environmental impacts of the Project includes the existing facilities. Therefore, this Initial Study and Negative Declaration evaluate the potential impacts from the construction and operation of the Project.

Findings and Determination

The Project plans or proposals, already made by, or agreed to, by PG&E will avoid the negative environmental impacts or mitigate the Project's potential effects to a point where no significant impact on the environment will occur. The State Water Board has determined that the Project will have a less than significant effect on the environment for the reasons specified in the Initial Study and CEQA Checklist prepared for this Project. Once approved, this Negative Declaration will be filed pursuant to the CEQA Guidelines.

for 
Barbara Evoy, Deputy Director
Division of Water Rights
State Water Resources Control Board

Date: 8/30/12