



DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Project No. 175-032]

Pacific Gas and Electric Company; Notice of Application Ready for Environmental Analysis and Soliciting Comments, Recommendations, Terms and Conditions, and Prescriptions

Take notice that the following hydroelectric application has been filed with the Commission and is available for public inspection.

- a. Type of Application: New Major License
- b. Project No.: 175-032
- c. Date filed: April 18, 2024
- d. Applicant: Pacific Gas and Electric Company
- e. Name of Project: Balch Hydroelectric Project
- f. Location: The existing project is located on the North Fork Kings River in Fresno County, California, approximately 45 miles northeast of the City of Fresno. Pacific Gas and Electric's proposed project boundary would include 491.50 acres of land in the Sierra and Sequoia National Forests managed by the U.S. Forest Service.
- g. Filed Pursuant to: Federal Power Act 16 U.S.C. 791(a) – 825(r)
- h. Applicant Contact: Dave Gabbard, Vice President Power Generation, Pacific Gas and Electric Company, 300 Lakeside Drive, Oakland, CA 94612; telephone at (650) 207-9705; email at David.gabbard@pge.com.
- i. FERC Contact: Benjamin Mann, (202) 502-8127 or benjamin.mann@ferc.gov

- j. Deadline for filing comments, recommendations, terms and conditions, and prescriptions: on or before 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on July 14, 2025; reply comments are due on or before 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on August 28, 2025.

The Commission strongly encourages electronic filing. Please file comments, recommendations, terms and conditions, and prescriptions using the Commission's eFiling system at <https://ferconline.ferc.gov/FERCOOnline.aspx>. Commenters can submit brief comments up to 6,000 characters, without prior registration, using the eComment system at <https://ferconline.ferc.gov/QuickComment.aspx>. For assistance, please contact FERC Online Support at FERCOOnlineSupport@ferc.gov, (866) 208-3676 (toll free), or (202) 502-8659 (TTY). In lieu of electronic filing, you may submit a paper copy. Submissions sent via the U.S. Postal Service must be addressed to: Debbie-Anne A. Reese, Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street, N.E., Room 1A, Washington, DC 20426. Submissions sent via any other carrier must be addressed to: Debbie-Anne A. Reese, Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 12225 Wilkins Avenue, Rockville, Maryland 20852. All filings must clearly identify the project name and docket number on the first page: **Balch Hydroelectric Project (P-175-032).**

The Commission's Rules of Practice require all intervenors filing documents with the Commission to serve a copy of that document on each person on the official service list for the project. Further, if an intervenor files comments or documents with the Commission relating to the merits of an issue that may affect the responsibilities of a particular resource agency, they must also serve a copy of the document on that resource agency.

- k. This application has been accepted and is ready for environmental analysis at this time.
- l. The existing Balch Hydroelectric Project (project) includes the following facilities:
- (1) a 135-foot-high, 396-foot-long diversion dam with a crest elevation of 4,098 feet that includes a 364-foot-long ogee-type and 20-foot-long broad-crested weir spillway;
 - (2) the 35-acre Black Rock Reservoir with a usable storage capacity of 1,260 acre-feet at a normal water surface elevation of 4,097 feet;
 - (3) an 84.7-foot-high, concrete tunnel intake;
 - (4) a water conveyance system consisting of a 19,336-foot-long tunnel with a maximum hydraulic capacity of 760 cubic feet per second (cfs) that includes the 308-foot-long Black Rock Adit, the 350-foot-long Weir Creek Adit, an unlined surge chamber, and two sluice channels;
 - (5) a 4,882 foot-long penstock leading to the Balch No. 1 Powerhouse and a 4,952-foot-long penstock leading to the Balch No. 2 Powerhouse;
 - (6) the 65.5- foot-long, 80.5-foot-wide Balch No. 1 Powerhouse housing one turbine-generator unit with an authorized installed capacity of 31.02 MW and a maximum hydraulic capacity of 213 cfs;
 - (7) the 149-foot-long, 84-foot-wide Balch No. 2 Powerhouse housing two turbine-generator units with a total authorized installed capacity of 100.5 MW (each turbine has a rated capacity of 315 cfs at a design head of 2,293.0 feet, for a total maximum hydraulic capacity of 630 cfs);
 - (8) a 165-foot-high, 27.5-foot-long afterbay dam with a crest elevation of 1,704 feet that includes a 238-foot-long spillway;
 - (9) a 7-acre afterbay with a usable storage capacity of 135 acre-feet;
 - (10) project roads and trails;
 - (11) recreation facilities;
 - (12) a 22-mile-long, 115-kilovolt (kV) transmission line connecting the project with the grid at Piedra Junction;
 - (13) the 76-acre Balch Camp, which is the project operating headquarters and includes personnel housing;
 - (14) a 6.2-mile-line, 12-kV distribution

line connecting Balch Camp with the project's diversion dam; and (15) appurtenant facilities. The estimated average annual generation for Balch No. 1 powerhouse is 110.0 GWh and Balch No. 2 powerhouse is 514.4 GWh, for a total of 624.4 GWh.

- m. A copy of the application is available for review via the Internet through the Commission's Home Page (<https://www.ferc.gov>), using the "eLibrary" link. Enter the docket number, excluding the last three digits in the docket number field, to access the document. For assistance, contact FERC at FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov or call toll free, (886) 208-3676 or TTY (202) 502-8659.

All filings must (1) bear in all capital letters the title "COMMENTS," "REPLY COMMENTS," "RECOMMENDATIONS," "TERMS AND CONDITIONS," or "PRESCRIPTIONS;" (2) set forth in the heading the name of the applicant and the project number of the application to which the filing responds; (3) furnish the name, address, and telephone number of the person submitting the filing; and (4) otherwise comply with the requirements of 18 CFR 385.2001 through 385.2005. All comments, recommendations, terms and conditions or prescriptions must set forth their evidentiary basis and otherwise comply with the requirements of 18 CFR 4.34(b). Agencies may obtain copies of the application directly from the applicant. Each filing must be accompanied by proof of service on all persons listed on the service list prepared by the Commission in this proceeding, in accordance with 18 CFR 4.34(b) and 385.2010.

The Commission's Office of Public Participation (OPP) supports meaningful public engagement and participation in Commission proceedings. OPP can help members of the public, including landowners, community organizations, Tribal members, and others, access publicly available information and navigate Commission

processes. For public inquiries and assistance with making filings such as interventions, comments, or requests for rehearing, the public is encouraged to contact OPP at (202) 502-6595 or OPP@ferc.gov.

You may also register online at <https://ferconline.ferc.gov/FERCOOnline.aspx> to be notified via email of new filings and issuances related to this or other pending projects. For assistance, contact FERC Online Support.

- n. A license applicant must file no later than 60 days following the date of issuance of this notice: (1) a copy of the water quality certification; (2) a copy of the request for certification, including proof of the date on which the certifying agency received the request; or (3) evidence of waiver of water quality certification.
- o. Procedural schedule: The application will be processed according to the following schedule. Revisions to the schedule will be made as appropriate.

Deadline for Filing Comments, Recommendations, and

Agency Terms and Conditions/Prescriptions

July 14, 2025

Licensee's Reply to REA Comments

August 28, 2025

Dated: May 15, 2025.

Carlos D. Clay,

Deputy Secretary.