

*Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):*

<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporation</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
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**XIV. RECREATION --**

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|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**SETTING**

McArthur Swamp, Glenburn Dredge, Burney Falls, Bowman Ditch, and Ahjumawi are located within the Fall River Valley in northeastern California. There are many opportunities to engage in recreational activities on state and federal lands in this relatively lightly populated region of California. Mount Shasta, Lake Shasta, Whiskeytown Reservoir, and the Lassen Volcanic National Park are premier recreation areas within the region. The lands and waters of Lassen and Shasta-Trinity National Forests also provide many public recreation opportunities within the region. Within Fall River Valley, the Fall River, Ahjumawi State Park, and McArthur Swamp are the primary recreation areas. Fall River Lake Pit 1 Project Forebay is also a popular recreation area for the local residents of eastern Shasta County. PG&E’s nearby Pit River and Hat Creek hydroelectric project developments provide water and land based recreation opportunities as well.

***BURNEY FALLS, BOWMAN DITCH, AND AHJUMAWI PROPERTY***

The McArthur-Burney Falls Memorial State Park is located on the shore of Lake Britton, the forbay for Pit 3 Powerhouse. This park, established in 1926, receives nearly 200,000 visitors each year from Redding, the San Francisco Bay Area, and Southern California. Recreation facilities included within the McArthur-Burney Falls Memorial State Park boundary include a 128-unit campground, a day use area and store near the Falls on Burney Creek and hiking trails, including a portion of the Pacific Crest Trail. The McArthur-Burney Falls Memorial State Park is the most intensively developed and used recreation area on Lake Britton.

Lake Britton is a natural facility available for camping, picnicking, water skiing, personal watercraft use, and fishing. The portion of Lake Britton west of the State Highway 89 bridge is the activity hub, and is the location of the lake’s primary recreation facilities. Here, McArthur-Burney Falls Memorial State Park and PG&E’s Northshore Campground provide public camping and day use areas. PG&E also provides additional day use facilities at the Pines Picnic Area and boat launching at the Jamo Point Boat Launch. The Pacific Service Employees Association (PSEA), a private organization, holds a license agreement with PG&E for recreational use of Camp Britton, which provides overnight lodge and shoreline access at Burney

Cove. Burney Falls also contains portions of McArthur-Burney Falls Memorial State Park's Burney Creek, Rim, PSEA, and Pioneer trails.

### ***Bowman Ditch***

Bowman Ditch is almost entirely surrounded by Ahjumawi State Park, except at its southern end where it abuts private property and drains into the Little Tule River. Public access to Bowman Ditch is possible by boat up to a point where the ditch drains into the Little Tule River. All of Bowman Ditch is located within the FERC boundary of the Pit 1 project. There are no public roads leading to, nor formal recreation facilities provided at Bowman Ditch and little, if any, recreational uses are available. Recreational use would likely be hiking and/or nature observation by visitors from adjacent Ahjumawi State Park.

### ***Ahjumawi***

Ahjumawi is located within Ahjumawi State Park on the north shores of Big Lake, Tule, and Little Tule rivers. Ahjumawi State Park, established in the 1970s, is approximately 5,890 acres of rugged volcanic lava flows, grasslands, and open water areas. The Ahjumawi State Park is managed for a primitive recreational experience and provides three environmental camp areas, each containing three primitive campsites and three nearby pit toilets. Primary activities include hiking, scenic and wildlife viewing, camping, fishing, canoeing, and kayaking. Water is available from many nearby springs but must be purified before drinking. Travel within Ahjumawi State Park is by foot, or by boat on the Horr Pond portion. Vehicle travel and hunting are prohibited within Ahjumawi State Park.

The levees at the Ahjumawi State Park are within the Pit 1 Project boundary. A levee break in 1997 flooded the majority of the property. The levees are not currently being maintained because of the presence of Shasta crayfish, and the resulting flooding has allowed the return of the property to its natural, wetland habitat condition. This wetland habitat is accessible by foot from the upland portion of Ahjumawi State Park or by canoeing or kayaking through breaks in levees into the wetland.

Access to Ahjumawi State Park is available by boat from the Big Lake Access area at McArthur Swamp. This facility provides an area to launch car-top boats and small trailered boats, a 22-vehicle gravel parking area, a double-vault sanitary facility, an Ahjumawi State Park informational sign, and a three-mile, gravel access road leading from the town of McArthur. As conditions require, PG&E grades the access road several times each year and provides a four-wheel drive advisory sign, cattle guards, and directional signs along State Highway 299.

### ***McArthur Swamp and Glenburn Dredge Site***

McArthur Swamp is 7,400 acres and provides opportunities to fish, boat, hunt waterfowl, and view wildlife and the surrounding natural beauty. Waterfowl hunting and wildlife and scenic viewing occur on the land, lake, and river areas of the property primarily during the fall-winter season. Fishing primarily occurs from boats on the property's open water areas, but some

shoreline fishing occurs from the McArthur Swamp Levee, especially near the Big Lake Access area.

The portions of McArthur Swamp located in the Pit 1 Project boundary include Big Lake, Tule River, and the Little Tule River to just downstream of Bowman Ditch. The entire Glenburn Dredge site is located within the Pit 1 Project boundary. Other features within the FERC project boundary are the McArthur Canal and Drain, the Rat Farm Road, the Big Lake Access area, and the area known as Hollenbeak Swamp or the Wildlife Habitat Improvement Project.

Pursuant to a FERC License condition, PG&E provided public car-top boat access to Fall River at the Glenburn Dredge Site until 1996. This public access relied on permission from an adjacent landowner to cross private property from McArthur Road to reach the Glenburn Dredge Site. The public access site was leased by the CDFG from PG&E. This site included a car-top boat launch, an informational sign, a gravel parking area for 10 vehicles, a portable toilet, and trash containers. When this access was closed in 1996, most of these facilities were removed. The informational sign and remnants of the parking area and access road remain.

## **REGULATORY SETTING**

The Shasta County General Plan and Zoning Ordinance guide recreational development and use of unincorporated lands outside of the FERC's jurisdiction. Recreation development and use of lands within the FERC boundary is regulated by FERC and not by the State or Shasta County. The State of California, Department of Boating and Waterways and Shasta County may regulate boating on project waters when consistent with FERC requirements. The CDFG also establishes fishing and hunting regulations applicable to the properties. After the property Shasta County and CDFG will regulate transfers, recreation on subject parcels.

### ***BURNEY FALLS, BOWMAN DITCH, AND AHJUMAWI PROPERTY***

#### ***Burney Falls***

The Bald Eagle Management Plan (BEMP), the McArthur-Burney Falls Memorial State Park General Plan and the Pit 3, 4 and 5 Project License conditions (for those portions that are within the FERC boundary) govern management of the recreation use and development within Burney Falls. The FERC boundary generally extends 200 feet inland from Lake Britton's shoreline, but also extends further inland to include all of the McArthur-Burney Falls Memorial State Park's Lake Day Use Area and the land licensed to PSEA.

The BEMP was developed cooperatively by the CDFG, USFWS, the U. S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, and PG&E to protect bald eagle habitat at Lake Britton and in the Pit River drainage. Since the BEMP's development in 1986, PG&E has been managing recreation use at its Lake Britton public recreation facilities in compliance with the BEMP's recommendations. In addition, the DPR's McArthur-Burney Falls Memorial State Park General Plan contains a resource element directive that recommends DPR adhere to guidelines and recommendations in

the BEMP until the document is no longer necessary as declared by CDFG, or has been superseded by updated guidelines. Dispersed camping is prohibited on PG&E lands around Lake Britton to protect bald eagles and cultural resources. The DPR policy also prohibits dispersed camping within boundaries of the McArthur-Burney Falls Memorial State Park.

Conditions of the FERC license that guide recreation use and development of the portion of Burney Falls within the FERC project boundary are contained in the Pit 3, 4 and 5 Projects recreation plan. The recreation plan consists of PG&E's recommendations in the project's original and revised recreation plans, recreation supplements, and the FERC's written orders approving or revising these recommendations. A revised FERC recreation plan was approved in 1987. In commenting on the revised recreation plan, USFWS and CDFG indicated that providing additional recreational facilities beyond what was proposed in the revised recreation plan would be inconsistent with the BEMP. In addition, the Forest Service recommended that Camp Britton be converted to public use. FERC's February 28, 1992 Order approved the proposals in the 1987 recreation plan. In response to the Forest Service comment, FERC indicated that the conversion of Camp Britton would not significantly increase the amount of facilities available to the general public, but that Camp Britton should remain in the project boundary so that conversion to public use can be re-evaluated as conditions of the Pit 3, 4 and 5 Project change.

### ***Bowman Ditch***

State and Shasta County boating regulations govern boating on the water surfaces of Bowman Ditch. Bowman Ditch has very limited access and is not particularly distinguishable from the adjacent Ahjumawi State Park lands. Visitors to Ahjumawi State Park are most likely unaware that Bowman Ditch is owned by PG&E, but it is reasonable to assume that the environmental setting and attraction of the park may include Bowman Ditch. Limited access and rough terrain serve to check the number of formal and informal recreational opportunities at Bowman Ditch and Ahjumawi State Park.

PG&E has agreed to allow DPR to change the character of Bowman Ditch from a man-made feature to a more natural wetland consistent with the adjacent lands. However, the water currently flowing in Bowman Ditch must continue to flow into the Little Tule River if and when the character of Bowman Ditch is changed. DPR has no specific plans to restore wetlands in the Bowman Ditch area at this time.

### ***Ahjumawi***

Ahjumawi is managed according to DPR's state wide general recreation policies. Boating on the water surfaces of Ahjumawi is governed by State and Shasta County boating regulations. The levees at the Ahjumawi State Park are within the Pit 1 Project boundary and are subject to the conditions of the Pit 1 Project FERC License. Except for the Ahjumawi State Park informational sign, all other improvements are a condition of the Pit 1 Project License.

Currently, DPR has not developed a General Plan for the Ahjumawi State Park. However, certain rules have been developed for the State Park. PG&E will transfer Ahjumawi to CWA subject to

the above deed restrictions, as well as a Conservation Easement. This Conservation Easement binds CWA and all successor owners of Ahjumawi to preserve existing scenic, agricultural and open space conditions of the property, preserve existing cultural sites, maintain existing wildlife benefits, and continue wetland habitat enhancement. PG&E and its successors are prohibited from conducting the following activities on, or with respect to, the subject property being conveyed: 1) hunting, 2) grazing, 3) subdivision, 4) commercialization, 5) construction, reconstruction or placement of any new roads, structures or other improvements, 6) dumping of refuse, toxic materials or hazardous wastes, 7) ground disturbing activity (including the maintenance of levees), and 8) mining including the exploration or extraction of minerals.

### ***McArthur Swamp and Glenburn Dredge Site***

Portions of McArthur Swamp and all of the Glenburn Dredge Site are included in the Pit 1 Project Licensed by the FERC and subject to its regulations. As required by FERC, PG&E upgrades Rat Farm Road several times each year, provides a four-wheel drive advisory sign, installs cattle guards, and posts directional signs along State Highway 299.

CWA will accept McArthur Swamp subject to restrictions on use, as described in the Conservation Easement and the MSMP. The Conservation Easement binds all successor owners to forever preserve: the existing scenic, agricultural, and open space condition of the property; the existing cultural sites; public access to McArthur Swamp for hunting, fishing and other recreational activities; existing wildlife benefits; and wetland habitat enhancement. The Conservation Easement also preserves public access to Ahjumawi State Park. It is expected that implementation of the wetland habitat improvement projects in the MSMP will increase and benefit the wildlife viewing and waterfowl hunting opportunities at McArthur Swamp above what would occur if McArthur Swamp remained in the Pit 1 Project, since the MSMP proposes to improve many acres of wetland outside of the Pit 1 Project FERC boundary as well.

## **RECREATION IMPACT DISCUSSION**

### ***Burney Falls, Ahjumawi, and Bowman Ditch***

- a) Numerous recreational opportunities (primarily dispersed) currently exist within the land transfer properties and surrounding areas. For Burney Falls, change in fee title of the land from PG&E to DPR is not expected to result in any tangible change, since the subject area is currently managed by DPR with additional guidance and restrictions by FERC and the recommendations of the BEMP. Improvements to the Park under the existing General Plan will occur regardless of fee ownership, and are not anticipated to effect subject properties. These actions were the subject of a previous CEQA compliance review.

The Park's General Plan as a potential long-range acquisition goal identifies Camp Britton. However, the existing buildings are not of statewide historic significance, may be substandard, would be expensive and difficult to maintain, and do not meet Americans with Disabilities Act requirements. Any destruction of or significant modification to Camp Britton would require a modification of the General Plan and an accompanying CEQA review. DPR

has no specific plans for Camp Britton at this time and is bound by the existing PSEA license for Camp Britton until 2005. CEQA review of any potential actions at Camp Britton would be speculative at this time and should, therefore, be performed if and when DPR proposes to modify its General Plan.

Transfer of the Ahjumawi and Bowman Ditch property to PG&E and subsequently CWA is expected to effect park user-ship to a very limited degree, since there is little or no activity within this area currently. The transfer will not cause additional recreational development to occur because the transfer deed from the State of California contains specific reservations which prevent PG&E or its successors from conducting significant activity on the property, including hunting, grazing, subdivision, commercialization, construction, reconstruction or placement of any new roads, structures or other improvements, dumping of refuse, toxic materials or hazardous wastes, ground disturbing activities (including maintenance of levees), and mining. The transfer of Ahjumawi will also be subject to a Conservation Easement, which binds CWA and all successor owners of Ahjumawi to preserve existing scenic, agricultural and open space conditions of the property, preserve existing cultural sites, maintain existing wildlife benefits, and continue wetland habitat enhancement.

Most of Ahjumawi is currently under water and will remain flooded following the transfer to PG&E and subsequently to the CWA. Over time, the levees will likely further deteriorate. This change in the property may result in improved wildlife viewing and boating opportunities and possibly result in increased recreational use of the property. However, any potential increased use would likely be modest considering the existing low use levels and remoteness of the property from large population centers. In addition, these changes would occur even if the property remained under DPR's management. No significant adverse impacts to recreational resources are expected to result from the transfer of Ahjumawi.

### ***McArthur Swamp and Glenburn Dredge Site***

- a) For McArthur Swamp, some minor increase in usage may occur over the long-term with project related improvements. Pursuant to the MSMP, waterfowl habitat will be created which could lead to additional wildlife viewing and hunting opportunities. Additionally, the Glenburn Dredge Site car top boat launch will be reopened, potentially increasing boating and fishing. None of these actions, however, are expected to result in a significant or detrimental increase in usage of existing recreational facilities, which would result in any substantial physical deterioration or environmental impacts.

Proposed project activities which have the potential to affect recreational facilities include the reopening of the Glenburn Dredge site boat launch, change in fee title to a portion of Burney Falls and Ahjumawi, and waterfowl habitat improvements in McArthur Swamp. No new recreational facilities requiring substantial construction are proposed and fee title changes are not anticipated to affect ongoing management, therefore no adverse physical effects on the environment are expected to occur.

***McArthur Swamp and Glenburn Dredge Site***

- b) CWA will receive McArthur Swamp subject to restrictions on use, as described in the Conservation Easement and the MSMP. The Conservation Easement binds all successor owners to forever preserve the existing scenic, agricultural, and open space condition of the property, public access to McArthur Swamp for hunting, fishing and other recreational activities, existing wildlife benefits, and wetland habit enhancement. The MSMP proposes to improve many acres of wetland outside of the Pit 1 Project FERC boundary. Therefore, implementation of the wetland habitat improvement projects of the MSMP will increase and benefit the wildlife viewing and waterfowl hunting opportunities at McArthur Swamp above what would occur if McArthur Swamp remained in the Pit 1 Project. This increase in recreation use at McArthur Swamp is not expected to have a significant adverse impact on Big Lake Access recreational facilities, Rat Farm Road, the wetland areas within McArthur Swamp, or on Ahjumawi State Park recreational facilities and resources, or the environment.

CWA will take ownership of Glenburn Dredge Site subject to conditions stated in the MSMP, which in part requires CWA to re-establish public access to the Fall River at the Glenburn Dredge Site. Re-establishment activities on the property include repair of the car-top boat launch, weeding at the parking area and placement of a portable toilet and trash containers. If the Glenburn Dredge Site property remained within the Pit 1 Project boundary, similar repairs would be required by FERC. Thus, the property transfer is not expected to have a significant adverse impact on existing recreational resources or the environment.

**REFERENCES**

- Pacific Gas and Electric, 2000a. Proponents Environmental Assessments for McArthur-Burney Falls Memorial State Park and McArthur Swamp (Application Numbers 00-05-030 and 00-05-029).
- State of California, Resources Agency, Department of Parks and Recreation Commission. McArthur-Burney Falls Memorial State Park General Plan. June 1997.