

DOCKETED

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CALIFORNIA ENERGY COMMISSION

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NOTICE OF DETERMINATION
PETITION TO AMEND THE FINAL DECISION FOR THE LAKEVIEW GEOTHERMAL
PROJECT
(79-AFC-01C)

On September 21, 2016, Geyser Power Company, LLC (GPC) submitted a Petition to Amend to the California Energy Commission Final Decision (Decision) for the Geysers Lakeview Geothermal Project to allow the installation of a steam turbine bypass. The 8 acre project site is located in an unincorporated area of Sonoma County at 20100 Geysers Road. Lakeview was certified on September 20, 1979 and commenced commercial operation on March 1, 1982.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED MODIFICATION

GPC proposes to install a steam turbine bypass at Lakeview project in order to make the facility more flexible and responsive to the needs of the California Independent System Operator. The steam turbine bypass would make it easier for Lakeview output to be dispatched both up and down, in order to match the more variable energy production pattern created by renewable energy resources whose output varies by time of day, weather and season.

The steam turbine bypass would consist of several valves and piping that will route steam from before the turbine to a manifold inside the main condenser, bypassing the steam turbine. The bypassed steam would be condensed to water and the non-condensable gases would be processed in the same way as steam going through the turbine. The net effect would be a reduction in generation output and an increase in ramping capabilities.

The Energy Commission's webpage for this facility, http://www.energy.ca.gov/sitingcases/pre1999_page/index.php?xkm=ajdkha2385duhkasd213dsasjd5598fhajkhs has a link to the petition on the right side of the webpage in the box labeled "Compliance Proceeding." Click on the "Documents for this Proceeding (Docket Log)" option.

ENERGY COMMISSION STAFF REVIEW

Energy Commission staff reviewed the petition for potential environmental effects and consistency with the Decision and applicable federal, state, and local laws, ordinances, regulations, and standards (LORS). Staff has determined that the proposed modification to Lakeview would have no significant adverse impacts and the modified project would continue to comply with applicable LORS. In addition, the project modification would not significantly affect any population including the Environmental Justice population. Staff's conclusions in each technical area are summarized in **Table 1** and discussed, below.

Table 1
Summary of Staff's Conclusions

TECHNICAL/ ENVIRONMENTAL AREAS REVIEWED	STAFF RESPONSE			Revised Conditions of Certification Recommended
	Technical Area Not Affected	No Significant Environmental Impact or LORS Noncompliance*	Process As Amendment	
Air Quality		X	N/A	N/A
Biological Resources	X		N/A	N/A
Cultural Resources		X	N/A	N/A
Facility Design		X	N/A	N/A
Geological and Paleontological Resources		X	N/A	N/A
Noise	X		N/A	N/A
Traffic		X	N/A	N/A
Public Health	X		N/A	N/A
Waste Management		X	N/A	N/A
Water and Soil Resources		X	N/A	N/A
Worker Safety and Fire Protection		X	N/A	N/A
Transmission Line Safety and Nuisance	X		N/A	N/A
Visual		X	N/A	N/A
Socioeconomics		X	N/A	N/A
TSE	X		N/A	N/A

*There is no possibility that the proposed modifications would have a significant effect on the environment, and the modifications would not result in a change in or deletion of a condition adopted by the Energy Commission in the Final Decision, or make changes that would cause project noncompliance with any applicable laws, ordinances, regulations, or standards (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 20, § 1769 (a)(2)).

Staff has determined that the technical or environmental areas of Biological Resources, Noise, Public Health, Transmission Line Safety and Nuisance, and Transmission System Engineering are not affected by the proposed changes to the facility.

For the technical or environmental areas of Air Quality, Cultural Resources, Facility Design, Geological and Paleontological Resources, Public Health, Traffic & Transportation, Visual Resources, Socioeconomics, Waste Management, Water and Soil Resources, and Worker Safety and Fire Protection, staff has determined the modified project would continue to comply with applicable LORS and no changes are needed to any conditions of certification to ensure impacts would be less than significant. Staff notes the following for these technical or environmental areas:

AIR QUALITY

The proposed steam turbine bypass would route steam from before the turbine to a manifold inside the main condenser after the turbine. Both the steam routed to the turbine and the bypassed steam would be routed through the existing emission control equipment. The work would take place in or just outside the turbine building and would not require any off site staging areas. The work would be performed by a small group of contract workers (approximately 4-8) for 6 -8 weeks. The associated truck traffic is expected to be minimal and would not cause significant impacts relating to air quality. The construction and equipment use is temporary and could include both portable and mobile equipment. Diesel equipment would be required to meet the State of California diesel requirements. As applicable, diesel equipment would be registered through the Statewide Portable Equipment Registration Program or Diesel Off-road On-line Reporting System and associated permits are required to be retained onsite. Stationary permits through the Northern Sonoma County Air Pollution Control District (NSCAPCD) would not be required for the project. All associated equipment is expected to comply with all applicable LORS and significant impacts to air quality are not expected from the associated short-term installation. There are no proposed changes to the Air Quality conditions of certification in the Decision and the NSCAPCD has determined no permitting actions associated with the project as proposed would be required.

VISUAL RESOURCES

The proposed amendment would have a less than significant visual resources impact as the associated activities (steam turbine bypass) would take place in or just outside the turbine building and would not be noticeable from off-site vantage points.

SOCIOECONOMICS

The proposed amendment would have a less than significant socioeconomic impact as the associated activities (steam turbine bypass) would require a minimal workforce (maximum 6-10 workers on site) for 12-15 weeks.

TRAFFIC & TRANSPORTATION

The proposed amendment would have a less than significant traffic impact as the associated activities (steam turbine bypass) would require a minimal workforce (maximum 6-10 workers on site) for 12-15 weeks and require 6-8 truck trips.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Staff concludes that the proposed amendment would not affect cultural resources. No cultural resources have been identified in the area proposed for modification, nor are impacts on cultural resources expectable here during ground disturbance because of the age of the existing grade. In the unlikely event that cultural resources are encountered during construction of the proposed modification, the conditions of certification in the Decision will mitigate such an impact.

FACILITY DESIGN

The fabrication and installation of turbine bypass piping and associated valves and controllers must comply with the 2013 California Building Code and related engineering LORS. Implementation of the existing Facility Design conditions of certification adopted in the Decision would ensure this.

GEOLOGICAL AND PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Based on the information provided by the owner, staff concludes the proposed modifications would have no significant impact on geologic resources, paleontological resources, or impacts to public health and safety due to geologic hazards. The proposed construction would not require any change to the conditions of certification related to geologic or paleontological resources adopted by the Energy Commission in their Decision on September 1979, and all approved subsequent amendments. Staff also concludes that compliance with current geology LORS and with conditions specified by the Energy Commission in their decision would mitigate the effects of geologic hazards at the site (CEC 1979).

NOISE

With the limited equipment anticipated to be used during this change out and limited scope of installation activities, noise levels would be no greater than what occurs periodically from maintenance work. Any noise generated during these activities would result in a less-than-significant impact with implementation of the existing Noise conditions of certification in the Decision. The replacement would have no effect on plant operational noise.

WATER AND SOIL RESOURCES

Based on the information provided by the project owner, staff concludes the proposed modifications would have no significant impacts to water and soil resources. The petition would not require any change to the water and soil resource conditions of certification and would not be affected by any water or soil resource LORS.

WASTE MANAGEMENT

Based on the information provided by the project owner, staff concludes the proposed modifications would be in compliance with applicable Waste Management LORS with the implementation of the conditions of certification in the Decision. The existing conditions of certification would ensure there are no significant impacts from the proposed project modifications.

WORKER SAFETY AND FIRE PROTECTION

The installation of a steam turbine bypass would not have a significant effect on power plant worker safety. Activities to be performed during the construction duration required for the installation would comply with worker safety and fire safety requirements already contained in health and safety plans utilized for construction of the main facility per Condition of Certification **Section 12** in the Decision.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

The **Environmental Justice (EJ) Population Figure** shows 2010 census blocks in the six-mile radius of Unit 17 with a minority population greater than or equal to 50 percent. The population in these census blocks represents an EJ population based on race and ethnicity as defined in the Council on Environmental Quality's *Environmental Justice: Guidance Under the National Environmental Policy Act*.

Based on California Department of Education data in the **Environmental Justice Population Table**, staff concluded that the percentage of those living in the Cloverdale Unified School District and Geyserville Unified School District (in a six mile radius of the Unit 17 site) and enrolled in the free or reduced price meal program are comparatively greater than those in the reference geography (Sonoma County), and thus are considered an EJ population based on poverty as defined in *Environmental Justice: Guidance Under the National Environmental Policy Act*.

**Environmental Justice Population Table-
Poverty Data within the Project Area**

SCHOOL DISTRICTS IN SIX-MILE RADIUS	Enrollment Used for Meals	Free or Reduced Price Meals
Middletown Unified School District	1,667	854 51.2%
REFERENCE GEOGRAPHY		
Lake County	9,168	6,727 73.4%
Cloverdale Unified School District	1,394	796 57.1%
Geyserville Unified School District	253	170 67.2%
REFERENCE GEOGRAPHY		
Sonoma County	71,108	33,366 46.9%

Source: CDE 2015. California Department of Education, DataQuest, Free or Reduced Price Meals, Last Modified: March 20, 2015, <<http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/>>.

Staff has identified impacts that with the project's continued compliance with existing conditions of certification would be reduced to less than significant. Therefore, impacts would be reduced to less than significant for any population in the project's six-mile radius, including the EJ population represented in **Environmental Justice Population Figure** and the low income population living in the Cloverdale Unified School District and Geyserville Unified School District.

ENERGY COMMISSION STAFF DETERMINATION

Section 1769(a)(2) of Title 20, California Code of Regulations, states, "(w)here staff determines that there is no possibility that the modifications may have a significant effect on the environment, and if the modifications will not result in a change or deletion of a condition adopted by the commission in the final decision or make changes that

would cause the project not to comply with any applicable laws, ordinances, regulations, or standards, no commission approval is required....”

Pursuant to that section, Energy Commission staff has determined for this petition that approval by the full Commission is not required and the proposed modifications meet the criteria for approval at the staff level because:

- The modifications will not have any significant effect on the environment;
- Existing conditions of certification are sufficient to cover the proposed modifications without changes to, or deletions of, any conditions of certification; and
- The project as modified will maintain full compliance with applicable LORS.

This Notice of Determination has been mailed to the Energy Commission’s facility mail list of interested parties and property owners adjacent to the facility site. It has also been e-mailed to the facility listserv. The listserv is an automated Energy Commission e-mail system by which information about this facility is e-mailed to parties who have subscribed. To subscribe, go to the Energy Commission’s webpage for this facility, cited above, scroll down the right side of the project’s webpage to the box labeled “Subscribe,” and provide the requested contact information.

Any person may file an objection to staff’s determination within 14 days of the date of this Notice on the grounds that the project modification does not meet the criteria set forth in section 1769(a)(2). Absent any relevant objections, the amendment petition will be approved 14 days after this Notice is docketed. To use the Energy Commission’s electronic commenting feature to object to staff’s determination, go to the Energy Commission’s webpage for this facility, cited above, click on the “Submit e-Comment” link, and follow the instructions in the on-line form. Be sure to include the facility name in your comments. Once submitted, the Energy Commission Dockets Unit reviews and approves your comments, and you will receive an e-mail with a link to them.

Written comments may also be mailed or hand-delivered to:

California Energy Commission
Dockets Unit, MS-4
Docket No. 99-AFC-4C
1516 Ninth Street
Sacramento, CA 95814-5512

All comments and materials filed with and approved by the Dockets Unit will be added to the facility Docket Log and be publicly accessible on the Energy Commission’s webpage for the facility.

If you have questions about this Notice, please contact Bruce Boyer, Compliance Project Manager, at (916) 653-7181, or by fax to (916) 654-3882, or via e-mail at bruce.boyer@energy.ca.gov.

For information on participating in the Energy Commission's review of the petition, call Alana Mathews, Public Adviser, at (916) 654-4489 or (800) 822-6228 (toll-free in California) or send your e-mail to publicadviser@energy.ca.gov.

News media inquiries should be directed to the Energy Commission Media Office at (916) 654-4989, or by e-mail to mediaoffice@energy.ca.gov.

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