

Recreation Access Plan for Slab Creek Reservoir at Forebay Road Sacramento Municipal Utility District

Hydro License Implementation • July 2016

Upper American River Project

FERC Project No. 2101





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Appendices

Appendix A—Consultation with Forest Service and Consultation Group

Acronyms and Abbreviations

ENF	Eldorado National Forest
FERC	Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
SMUD	Sacramento Municipal Utility District or Licensee
UARP	Upper American River Project (FERC Project No. 2101) or Project
USFS	United States Forest Service

1.0 INTRODUCTION

By order dated July 23, 2014, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) issued a new License to the Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD) for operating the Upper American River Project (UARP), FERC Project No. 2101. The new License incorporates conditions that are consistent with a Settlement Agreement between SMUD and various stakeholders (SMUD 2007) that resolved resource issues related to SMUD's Application for a New License to operate and maintain the UARP. The purpose of the Recreation Access Plan (Plan) for Slab Creek Reservoir at Forebay Road is to comply with License Conditions No. 45, "Boat Launch at Slab Creek Reservoir at Forebay Road." Condition No. 75 requires SMUD to develop a plan that addresses access to Slab Creek Reservoir (Figure 1.0-1) during and after Iowa Hill Pumped Storage Project construction.

Because Iowa Hill Pumped Storage Project construction would have temporarily closed public access to the existing boat launch near the dam, SMUD developed an interim access plan for the east end of Slab Creek Reservoir to provide an alternative location for boating access to the reservoir (SMUD 2015a). After the Eldorado National Forest (ENF) reviewed and approved the interim access plan, SMUD implemented the plan measures in August 2015. Since that time, SMUD has decided not to proceed with the proposed Iowa Hill Pumped Storage Project.

This Plan describes the measures SMUD will implement to provide for long-term recreational access to Slab Creek Reservoir at the east end of the reservoir. The Plan includes a narrative describing the planned development and a site plan.

Upon United States Forest Service (USFS) approval, SMUD will submit the Plan to FERC for informational purposes only. SMUD will implement and complete the measures in the FERC-approved plan by December 31, 2019.

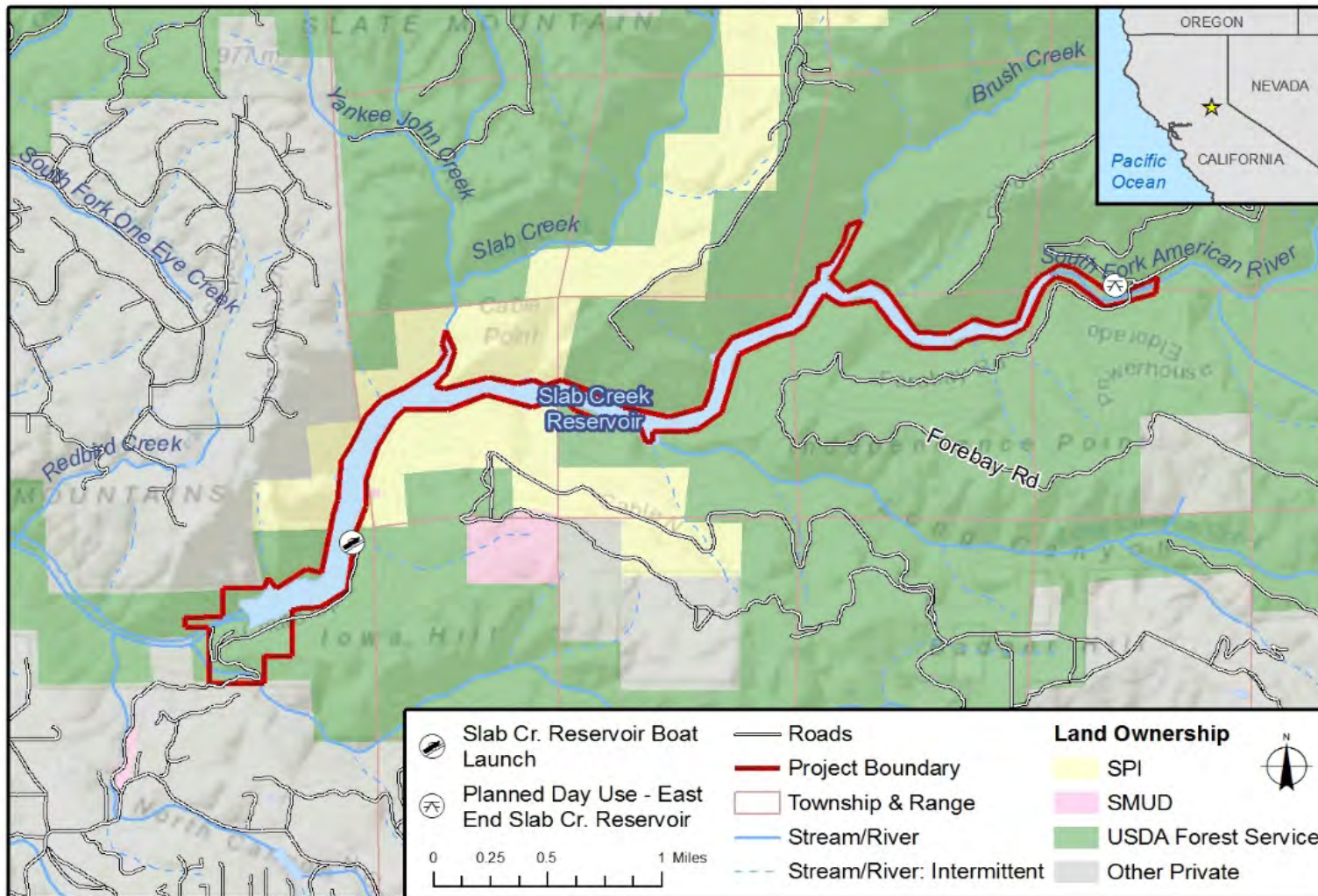


Figure 1.0-1. Slab Creek Reservoir location.

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2.0 NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION OF PLANNED DEVELOPMENT

The area along the northern shoreline at the upstream end of Slab Creek Reservoir, located on National Forest System land, has a long history of dispersed recreation use. In addition to shoreline use for picnicking and camping, some visitors also launch non-motorized boats at this location to paddle on the reservoir. Although the area receives low visitor use, some existing users show little regard for protecting resources, and recurrent, unmanaged use at this location has created several issues, including resource damage from vehicle use on undesignated routes, vandalism, improper sanitation, and litter. Based on consultation with ENF, an objective of this Plan is to allow recreation use and reservoir access to continue at this location, while minimizing resource impacts. Because much of the damaging visitor behavior appears to be associated with overnight use and it is desirable to reduce the potential for such effects to provide a suitable recreation facility for visitors, SMUD recommends managing this area for only day use recreation. Accordingly, this Plan provides for installing site amenities and signage appropriate for only daytime recreation use. To enforce this management approach, the ENF will need to issue a forest order that closes the site to overnight use.

Other measures included in this Plan take into account potential flooding and high flows entering Slab Creek Reservoir. Because portions of the site are located in the flood plain, visitors need to be aware of potentially rising water levels. Additionally, high flows at low reservoir levels may prevent non-motorized boaters from returning upstream from the reservoir to the site. The Plan includes signage to make visitors aware of these potential events, so they may adjust their activities as necessary.

SMUD estimates the Slab Creek/White Rock hydro development of the UARP provides 542 recreation-days annually (SMUD 2015b) and most of this use is associated with the boat launch at the west end of the reservoir. Incidental observations by SMUD staff of this site indicate infrequent recreation use and when such use is observed, only one to two groups, at the most, are at the site at one time. Considering this planned development provides five picnic sites, abundant space for parking and the site has more than 1,000 feet of suitable shoreline where visitors can disperse, SMUD estimates the development would provide capacity for more than twice the level of existing use. Planned development will provide day use area amenities, including picnic sites, hand only boat launches with pedestrian access trails, and a restroom; eliminate vehicle access to the shoreline; and provide signage to guide and inform visitors about proper use. Low visitor use does not warrant incurring costs to provide potable water or

garbage service. Consequently, the site will be managed as pack-in/pack-out with no water or garbage service provided, which is consistent with how the Forest Service manages similar small day use areas with low visitor use. Figure 2.0-1 provides a site plan of the planned development. All planned recreation amenities and support facilities will be designed to comply with accessibility guidelines including the Architectural Barriers Act and the Forest Service Outdoor Recreation Accessibility Guidelines as applicable.

2.1 Day Use Area Amenities

To address sanitation issues SMUD will install a one-stall, accessible vault CXT toilet. Visitor parking areas will be located along the access road with a pedestrian trail leading a short distance to the four picnic tables near the shoreline; another table will be located at an open area near the restroom. SMUD will install concrete picnic tables because this material is less susceptible to vandalism and, in the event flooding occurs, will not float away or be damaged. Two user created pedestrian routes will be formalized with native surfacing to provide hand only boat launch access to the reservoir. Vehicle access to the area will be controlled by an automatic entrance gate opened during daylight hours. The entrance gate is outfitted with a sensor to open the gate for vehicles exiting the site after the gate closes at sunset.



Source: El Dorado County 2012

Slab Creek Reservoir - East End Access Point

DRAFT

Figure 2.0-1. Slab Creek Reservoir access site plan.

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2.2 Vehicle Access

The terrain at the site has gentle slopes and scattered vegetation, so it is easily accessed by vehicle. Consequently, unmanaged vehicle use has denuded hillsides and caused erosion along the shoreline. To protect this area and allow vegetation to regrow, boulders will line the access road to restrict vehicles from the shoreline, and define parking areas.

Vehicle access on the existing route at the west end of the site will be blocked by placing boulders where the vegetation narrows the width of the route and provides a natural barrier for vehicles. A pedestrian trail to the hand only boat launch will begin at this point. The entire access road from the gate to its terminus to the west will be graded and surfaced with gravel.¹

2.3 Signage

This section provides the information and directional signage that will be installed at the gate and throughout the site.

¹ SMUD resurfaced much of the access road with gravel as part of the interim access measures.
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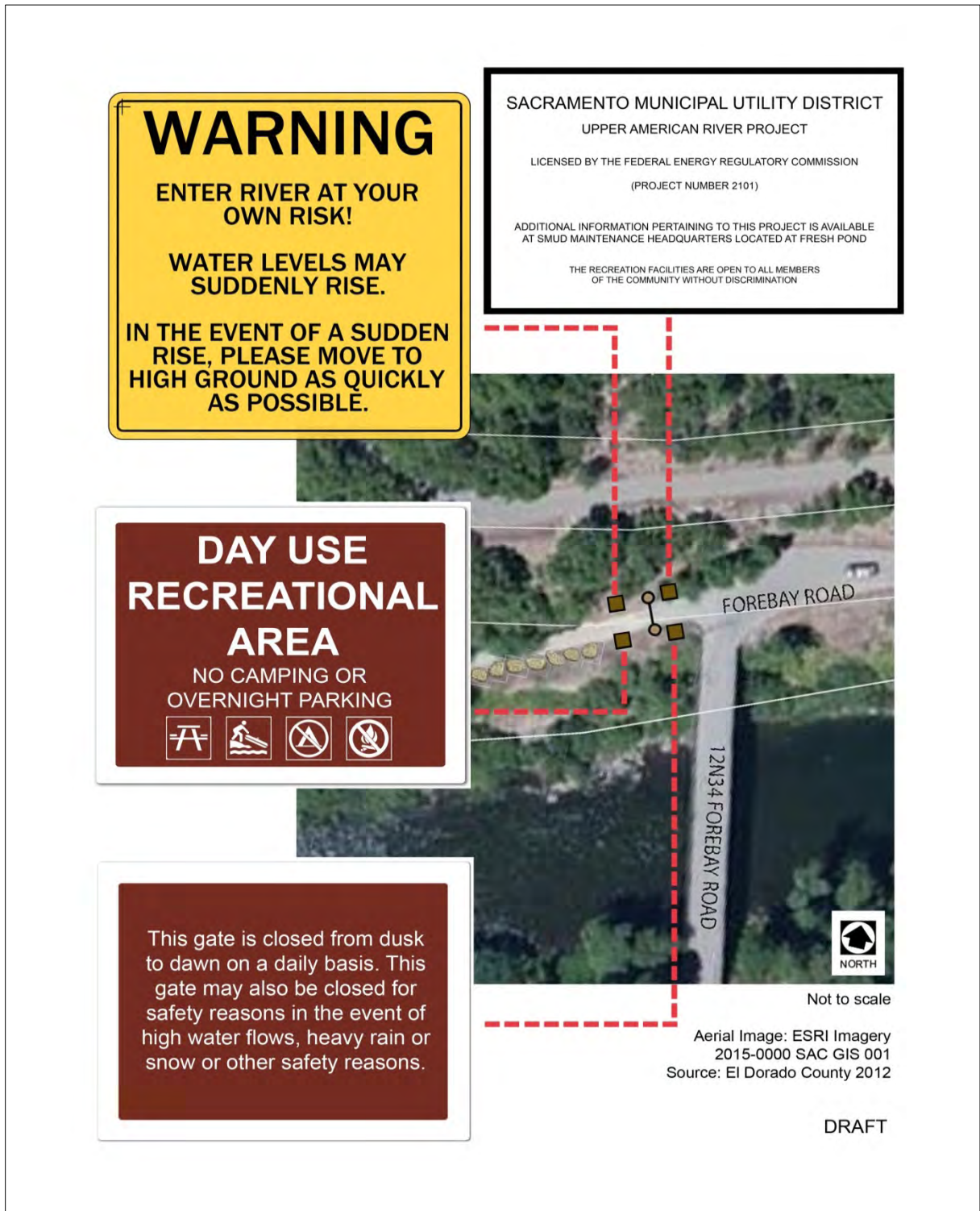


Figure 2.3-1. Signage at entrance gate.

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Figure 2.3-2. High water warning level sign at entrance gate and hand boat launch locations.



Figure 2.3-3. Hand boat launches near picnic tables and end of access road.

An information sign board measuring 4 feet x 4 feet made of a composite material and mounted on two 4-inch x 4-inch wooden posts will be installed near the restroom (Figure 2.3-6). This board can be used to post information such as fire or other use restrictions and pack-in/pack-out messages.



Figure 2.3-4. Example of information board.

3.0 IMPLEMENTATION, MAINTENANCE, AND MONITORING

SMUD will implement the measures in the USFS-approved plan in 2019.

SMUD meets its operation, maintenance and administrative responsibilities for Project-related recreation facilities in the vicinity of UARP reservoirs through annual funding provided to the ENF (Condition no. 47, “Recreation Operation, Maintenance, and Administration”). Consistent with the Rationale Report provided by the ENF to support its 4(e) conditions (ENF 2005), the ENF will use a portion of this funding to maintain and monitor the site by patrolling the areas to enforce rules and regulations, remove litter, rehabilitate damaged areas, provide public information, post relevant signs on visitor information boards and perform routine facility repairs as necessary.

4.0 REFERENCES

ENF (Eldorado National Forest). 2005. Rationale Report for Comprehensive Resource Agency/NGO Alternative contained in Filing of Alternative for Consideration in Environmental Impact Statement for Upper American River Project, FERC No. 2101, and Chili Bar Hydroelectric Project, FERC No. 2155. U.S. Forest Service, Eldorado National Forest, Placerville, CA. Filed with Federal Energy Regulatory Commission on November 1, 2005.

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