

Philbrook Reservoir Planning Unit

Recommended measures would be coordinated with the current relicensing effort to ensure consistency with ongoing studies and subsequent actions to avoid a duplication of efforts. Surveys are intended to augment the geographic reach of the studies being performed as part of the relicensing process. Revisions to the recommended measures should be conducted consistent with future findings of the relicensing studies and in compliance with the New FERC License Order.

Fish, Plant, and Wildlife Habitat

Potential Measure:

- *Conduct surveys outside the FERC relicensing study area to identify biological resources and enable their protection.*

Although some occurrences of special status species have been documented, the Stewardship Council recommends conducting surveys of biological resources on planning unit lands outside the relicensing study area to determine the locations and distribution of these important species. This measure would complement the study planned for the relicensing process, which will survey the FERC Project area and within a 200-foot buffer. Additionally, an assessment of noxious weeds would be conducted on planning unit lands outside the relicensing study area to identify and map noxious weed populations. If necessary, control measures and a management plan would be developed to promote habitat values and limit noxious weed populations.

Potential Measure:

- *Close unauthorized OHV trails and revegetate affected areas, in coordination with the USFS where necessary.*

To minimize resource impacts and to foster consistency with adjacent USFS management of OHV routes on their lands, it is recommended that unauthorized OHV trails be closed within the planning unit. Vehicles would be restricted to established roads, and damaged areas would be revegetated. Unauthorized OHV use has been a minor issue in the planning unit, and measures would be taken to further control unauthorized uses through the use of gates, boulders, or other barriers. These closure and revegetation efforts would be coordinated with the USFS as OHV trails cross both PG&E and National Forest lands.

Outdoor Recreation

Potential Measure:

- *Install an ADA fishing platform and floating extension to Philbrook Angler Access in coordination with the USFS.*

Only a few small recreation enhancements are recommended to increase public enjoyment of the Philbrook Reservoir Planning Unit. Two of these are recommended for the Philbrook Fishing Access. First is the addition of an ADA fishing platform that would provide improved angling opportunities. At present, visitors without a boat are limited to shoreline fishing, which is not accessible to disabled visitors and is diminished for all visitors by the muddy shoreline when the reservoir is drawn down. Although the reservoir drawdown would make such a platform unusable at lower pool elevations, a sufficiently long floating dock extension to the platform

would permit it to be functional for a substantial portion of the summer season. The floating dock would most likely not meet ADA accessibility standards due to the steepness of the shoreline and the ramp that would be required to join the platform and dock.

This addition would require coordination with the USFS since a portion of the structure would be on the shore above the high water line, on USFS land. Alternatively, the platform and floating dock could be installed in the campground area or the Philbrook Picnic Area. However, the shoreline at those sites appears to be affected more severely by reservoir drawdown than at the fishing access, and the exposed shoreline appears to be less muddy.

Potential Measures:

- *Enhance the existing boat ramp to extend usability.*
- *Install interpretive signage regarding local history and natural resources.*

The second recommended recreation enhancement is an extension of the existing boat ramp, with gravel or cement, to extend the usability of the ramp to later in the summer drawdown period and reduce the need for boaters to launch from the unimproved lake bottom below the existing gravel portion of the ramp. The third recommended addition is installation of interpretive signage, little of which exists at present, at the Philbrook Picnic Area to provide visitors with a greater sense of the purpose of the reservoir, and the cultural and natural resource values of the Philbrook Reservoir area. It may be necessary to provide a protective covering for the signage during the off-season (fall through spring) to protect the signs from vandalism, which is known to occur during that period.

More substantial recreation enhancements may be desired in the future to respond to the expected large increase in recreation activity in the area following the paving of the upper Skyway Road. However, an assessment is needed of how and to what degree this demand can be accommodated at Philbrook Reservoir. The small size of the reservoir, the large summer drawdown, the presence of private summer cabins in several areas, and the lack of road access and steep terrain on the south shore all limit the capacity of Philbrook Reservoir to support additional recreation use. The planning unit lands in particular appear to offer few opportunities for additional recreation development. Nevertheless, opportunities to meet expected increased recreation demand may exist at currently developed sites or adjacent lands near the north shore. Recreation studies currently being conducted for FERC relicensing, such as the Recreation Demand and Recreation Carrying Capacity and Suitability studies, are expected to provide the information needed. The Recreation Needs Assessment study is expected to propose appropriate recreation enhancements to meet the increased demand.

Stakeholders have proposed a trail around the south shore of the reservoir, which would help distribute use and expand access to that portion of the reservoir shore. However, the lands above the high water line in that area are USFS lands outside the planning unit, and therefore actions on those lands cannot be recommended by the Stewardship Council. However, such enhancements may be developed through the FERC relicensing process, which the Lassen National Forest is a participant, along with PG&E and other stakeholders.

Preservation of Historic Values

Potential Measure:

- *Conduct surveys outside the FERC Project APE to identify cultural resources and develop protection measures as needed as a companion any future FERC-required final HPMP in coordination with Native American entities.*

The Stewardship Council also recommends a survey of cultural resources (historic, prehistoric, and ethnographic) on lands outside the FERC Area of Potential Effects (APE). These surveys would complement the surveys conducted for relicensing, which did not include all areas of the planning unit. These surveys would identify cultural resources in the area and aid in the determination of appropriate locations for recreation activities. Measures to protect any cultural resources found on the planning unit outside the APE would be developed as a companion any future FERC license required final historic properties management plan (HPMP). As mentioned above, interpretive signage would be installed to inform recreationists of the rich history of the area, as well as natural resource values. Documentation of cultural resources and development of cultural resource protection measures and interpretive signage should be coordinated with Native American entities.

Sustainable Forestry

Potential Measure:

- *Develop a fuels management plan for the planning unit in coordination with adjacent landowners to ensure long-term forest health and reduce fuel loading and fire hazard.*

The Stewardship Council also recommends developing a fuels management plan. The fuels management plan would ensure long-term forest health and reduce fuel loading and fire hazard throughout the planning unit, a particularly important need due to the large number of recreation homesites in the planning unit area. A fuels management plan would aid in the prevention of high intensity fires, promote natural forest structure and composition, as well as foster natural regeneration in these forests. Additionally, snags and downed woody debris would be maintained in the planning unit for wildlife habitat and forest regeneration when not deemed a safety, fire, or disease hazard. Coordination with USFS management and adjacent landowners would foster a holistic approach to management of forest, habitat, and recreation resources in this area. The fuels management plan should be consistent with any relevant future FERC license required plan.

Potential Measure:

- *Develop a fire management and response plan for the planning unit in coordination with adjacent landowners to ensure fire preparedness.*

In addition to a fuels management plan, a fire management and response plan would be developed to ensure fire preparedness in the planning unit. The fire management and response plan would include fire prevention measures designed to promote public awareness about fire danger and provide the provisions and staff for an appropriate response to fire. This plan would be developed in coordination any relevant FERC license required plan.

Open Space

Potential Measure:

- *Apply permanent conservation easements to ensure a higher level of open space protection.*

Additionally, the Stewardship Council recommends preserving open space values through permanent conservation easements. Conservation easements would describe all prohibited uses to maintain open space values, including the level of uses allowed. Recommendations include only minor recreation development and are therefore not expected to decrease the scenic quality of the viewsheds.

Agricultural Uses

None recommended.