



**Federal Energy
Regulatory
Commission**

**Office of
Energy
Projects**

November 2008

FERC/EIS-0225D

Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Section 1 – Cover and Front Pages



**South Feather Power Project
FERC Project No. 2088-068, California**

**Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
888 First Street N.E.
Washington, DC 20426**



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**Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
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FERC/EIS-0225D

**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
FOR HYDROPOWER LICENSE**

South Feather Power Project—FERC Project No. 2088-068

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
Office of Energy Projects
Division of Hydropower Licensing
888 First Street, N.E.
Washington, DC 20426

November 2008

FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION

WASHINGTON, DC 20426

OFFICE OF ENERGY PROJECTS

To the Agency or Individual Addressed:

Reference: Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Attached is the draft environmental impact statement (draft EIS) for the South Feather Power Project (Project No. 2088-068), located on the South Fork Feather River (SFFR), Lost Creek, and Slate Creek, in Butte, Yuba, and Plumas counties, California.

This draft EIS document documents the view of governmental agencies, non-governmental organizations, affected Indian tribes, the public, the license applicant, and Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (Commission) staff. It contains staff evaluations on the applicant's proposal and alternatives for relicensing the South Feather Power Project.

You are invited to file comments on the draft EIS. Any comments, conclusions, or recommendations that draw upon studies, reports, or other working papers should be supported by appropriate documentation. Your comments will be considered in staff's preparation of the final EIS.

Comments should be filed with Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street N.E., Washington, DC 20426. All comments must be filed by January 6, 2009 and should reference Project No. 2088-068. The Commission strongly encourages electronic filing. See 18 CFR 385.2001(a)(1)(iii) and instructions at <http://www.ferc.gov> under the eLibrary link.

Before the Commission makes a licensing decision, it will take into account all concerns relevant to the public interest. The draft EIS will be part of the record from which the Commission will make its decision. The draft EIS was sent to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and made available to the public on or about November 7, 2008.

Copies of the EIS are available for review in the Commission's Public Reference Branch, Room 2A, located at 888 First Street, N.E., Washington DC. 20426. The EIS also may be viewed on the Internet at www.ferc.gov/ferris.htm. Please call (202) 502-8222 for assistance.

Attachment: Draft Environmental Impact Statement

COVER SHEET

- a. Title: Relicensing the South Feather Power Project, FERC Project No. 2088-068
- b. Subject: Draft Environmental Impact Statement (draft EIS)
- c. Lead Agency: Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
- d. Abstract: On March 26, 2007, the South Feather Water and Power Agency (South Feather) filed an application to relicense its 104-megawatt (MW) South Feather Power Project (P-2088-068). The South Feather Power Project is located on the South Fork Feather River (SFFR), Lost Creek, and Slate Creek, in Butte, Yuba, and Plumas counties, California.
- The project occupies 1,977.12 acres of federal lands administered by the Plumas National Forest and 10.57 acres of federal lands administered by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management. The project generates an average of about 498,972 megawatt-hours of energy annually.
- The staff's recommendation is to relicense the project as proposed, with certain modifications, and additional measures recommended by the agencies.
- e. Contact: John Mudre
- Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
Office of Energy Projects
888 First Street, N.E.
Washington, DC 20426
(202) 502-8902
- f. Transmittal: This draft EIS prepared by the Commission's staff on the hydroelectric license application filed by South Feather for the existing South Feather Power Project (FERC No. 2088) is being made available to the public on or about November 7, 2008, as required by the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969.¹

¹National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, amended (Pub. L. 91-190. 42 U.S.C. 4321-4347, January 1, 1970, as amended by Pub. L. 94-52, July 3, 1975, Pub. L. 94-83, August 9, 1975, and Pub. L. 97-258, §4(b), September 13, 1982).

FOREWORD

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (Commission), pursuant to the Federal Power Act (FPA)² and the U.S. Department of Energy Organization Act³ is authorized to issue licenses for up to 50 years for the construction and operation of non-federal hydroelectric development subject to its jurisdiction, on the necessary conditions:

that the project adopted...shall be such as in the judgment of the Commission will be best adapted to a comprehensive plan for improving or developing a waterway or waterways for the use or benefit of interstate or foreign commerce, for the improvement and utilization of water-power development, for the adequate protection, mitigation, and enhancement of fish and wildlife (including related spawning grounds and habitat), and for other beneficial public uses, including irrigation, flood control, water supply, and recreational and other purposes referred to in Section 4(e)...⁴

The Commission may require such other conditions not inconsistent with the FPA as may be found necessary to provide for the various public interests to be served by the project.⁵ Compliance with such conditions during the licensing period is required. The Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure allow any person objecting to a licensee's compliance or noncompliance with such conditions to file a complaint noting the basis for such objection for the Commission's consideration.⁶

²16 U.S.C. §791(a)-825r, as amended by the Electric Consumers Protection Act of 1986, Public Law 99-495 (1986) and the Energy Policy Act of 1992, Public Law 102-486 (1992).

³Public Law 95-91, 91 Stat. 556 (1977).

⁴16 U.S.C. §803(a).

⁵16 U.S.C. §803(g).

⁶18 C.F.R. §385.206 (1987).