

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA 54 FERC 62,059
FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION

Farmers Irrigation District Project No. 6801-003
Oregon

ORDER AMENDING CONDUIT EXEMPTION
(Issued January 29, 1991)

Farmers Irrigation District, exemptee for the Farmers Irrigation District Hydroelectric Project No. 3, filed on May 11, 1990, an application for amendment of its conduit exemption. The project was exempted from licensing on February 1, 1983, and amended once on August 12, 1988.¹ The project is located in the Hood River basin, Hood River County, Oregon.

The exemptee proposes to divert up to 25 cubic feet per second of additional water at three additional existing irrigation diversions into existing canals and pipelines for more efficient operation of the existing project. The three diversions are located on Cabin, Gate, and North Fork Green Point Creeks. Water would only be diverted from the proposed new sources during periods when sufficient water cannot be attained from already permitted sources. No new structures or facilities would need to be built to accommodate the proposed new sources of water.

Notice of the application has been published. No protests or motions to intervene were filed in this proceeding, and no agency objected to the amendment of exemption. Revised terms and conditions have been provided by the National Marine Fisheries Service (letter dated October 19, 1990), the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (letter dated October 25, 1990), and the U.S. Department of the Interior (letter dated October 31, 1990).

Based on the terms and conditions required by federal and state fish and wildlife agencies, the environmental information in the application for amendment of exemption, supporting documents, and the staff's independent assessment,² the Director finds that issuance of this order is not a major federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment.

- 1 Farmers Irrigation District, Oregon, 22 FERC 62,127 and 44 62,131, respectively.
- 2 Environmental Assessment, Farmers Irrigation District Hydroelectric Project No. 3, FERC Project No. 6801-003, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, dated January 25, 1991. This document is available in the Commission's public files associated with this proceeding and is attached to this order.

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The Director orders:

(A) The exemption from licensing for Project No. 6801 is amended as proposed in the application filed on May 11, 1990, effective the first day of the month in which this order is issued.

(B) This order constitutes final agency action. Requests for rehearing by the Commission may be filed within 30 days of the date of issuance of this order, pursuant to 18 C.F.R. 385.713.

J. Mark Robinson
Director, Division of Project
Compliance and Administration

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
FOR AMENDMENT OF CONDUIT EXEMPTION

Farmers Irrigation District Hydroelectric Project No. 3

FERC Project No. 6801-003

Oregon

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
Office of Hydropower Licensing
Division of Project Compliance and Administration
825 N. Capitol Street, NE
Washington, D.C. 20426

January 25, 1991

FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20426

DATE: January 25, 1991

MEMORANDUM TO: J. Mark Robinson, Director
Division of Project Compliance and Administration

THROUGH : Lon R. Crow, Chief
Environmental Review Branch

FROM : James Hastreiter, Chief
Water Resources Section

SUBJECT : Environmental Assessment for the Farmers Irrigation
District Hydroelectric Project No. 3, FERC Project
No. 6801-003--Oregon

X Attached is the Environmental Assessment (EA) on the application
filed on May 11, 1990. The status of the Environmental
Recommendations (ER) (5350 milestone) is as follows:

X Complete; X ER is not required.
Final ER is being transmitted concurrently.

Incomplete; Draft ER target date: / / .
Draft ER is transmitted concurrently;
Final ER target date: / / .

Reason: 10(j). Other: .

The attached document supplements or revises the EA dated
/ / . The status of the ER is as follows:

Complete; ER or revised ER is not required.
Final revised ER is transmitted concurrently.

Incomplete; Draft revised ER target date: / / .
Draft revised ER is transmitted
concurrently;
Final revised ER target date: / / .

Reason: 10(j). Other: .

Attachment: Environmental Assessment

cc: PRO DPCA DOCKETS(2) GRIEVE

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ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION OFFICE OF HYDROPOWER LICENSING DIVISION OF PROJECT REVIEW

Date: January 25, 1991

Project name: Farmers Irrigation District Hydroelectric Project
No. 3

FERC Project No. 6801-003

A. APPLICATION

1. Application type: Amendment of Conduit Exemption
2. Date filed with the Commission: May 11, 1990
3. Applicant: Farmers Irrigation District
4. Water body: Lowline Ditch River basin: Hood
5. Nearest city or town: Hood River

B. PURPOSE AND NEED FOR ACTION

Revenues from power production are needed to support irrigation system improvements. The specific purpose of the proposed amendment is to provide additional water to an existing project that does not have sufficient water to operate at installed capacity.

C. PROPOSED PROJECT AND ALTERNATIVES

1. Description of the proposed action.

The exemptee proposes to divert up to 25 cubic feet per second (cfs) of additional water at three additional existing irrigation diversions into existing canals and pipelines for more efficient operation of the existing project. The three diversions are located on Cabin (5 cfs maximum diversion), Gate (5 cfs maximum diversion), and North Fork Green Point (20 cfs maximum diversion) Creeks.

Water would only be diverted from the proposed new sources during periods when sufficient water cannot be attained from already permitted sources. No new structures or facilities would need to be built to accommodate the proposed new sources of water.

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2. Applicant's proposed mitigative measures.

The project would operate under an interim flow agreement between the exemptee and the resource agencies. Further, the exemptee would: install recording and staff gages; provide a plan and schedule to continue to convert canals to pipelines, thereby decreasing the incidence of canal failure; provide a plan to benefit anadromous fish resources in Green Point Creek; screen seven irrigation intakes; and conduct additional studies to evaluate minimum flows and additional enhancement measures.

3. Federal lands affected.

X No. Yes; ; acreage = ;
(agency)

4. Alternatives to the proposed project.

a. No reasonable action alternatives have been found.

Action alternative:

b. Alternative of no action.

No action, denial of the amendment would preclude the exemptee from operating the existing project at its full potential.

D. CONSULTATION AND COMPLIANCE

1. Fish and wildlife agency consultation (Fish & Wildlife Coordination Act).

a. U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS): Yes. No.

b. State(s): Yes. No.

c. National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS): Yes. No.

2. Section 7 consultation (Endangered Species Act).

a. Listed species: None. Present:

b. Consultation: Not required.

Required; completed: / / .

3. Section 401 certification (Clean Water Act).

Not required.

Required

4. Cultural resource consultation (Historic Preservation Act).

a. State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO): Yes. No.

b. National Park Service (NPS): Yes. No.

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c. National Register status: None. Eligible or listed.

d. Council: Not required. Completed: / / .

e. Further consultation: Not required. Required.

Remarks: By letter dated June 30, 1988, the SHPO stated that the proposal would have "no effect" on sites on, or eligible for inclusion, on the National Register of Historic Places.

5. Recreational consultation (Federal Power Act).

- a. U.S. Owners: Yes. No.
- b. NPS: Yes. No.
- c. State(s): Yes. No.

Remarks: State and federal agencies responded that they had no concerns.

6. Wild and scenic rivers (Wild and Scenic Rivers Act).

Status: None. Listed. Determination completed: / / .

7. Land and Water Conservation Fund lands and facilities (Land and Water Conservation Fund Act).

Status: None. Designated.
Determination completed: / / .

E. COMMENTS

1. The following agencies and entities provided comments or terms and conditions on the application or filed a motion to intervene in response to the public notice dated 9/10/90.

Commenting agencies and other entities	Date of letter
National Marine Fisheries Service	10/19/90
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife	10/25/90
U.S. Department of the Interior	10/31/90

Motions to intervene	Date of motion
None	

2. The applicant responded to the comments or motion(s) to intervene by letter(s) dated / / .

The applicant did not respond to the comments or motion(s) to intervene.

F. AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

The primary resource potentially impacted would be the fish resources in the affected water courses. Fish species in Green Point Creek drainage include rainbow trout/cutthroat trout hybrids, steelhead trout, and possibly coho salmon. Rainbow, brook, or cutthroat trout have been found in Dead Point, Cabin, Gate, and

South Fork Pine Creeks. The upstream point of migration of anadromous fish in the North fork of Green point Creek is a vertical falls near the mouth. In South Fork of Green Point Creek, the upper limit of migration is about river mile 2.6.

G. ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES AND PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

There is 1 issue addressed below.

Anadromous fish:

The exemptee's diversions are located on several small creeks that effect Green Point Creek, a tributary to West Fork Hood River, which, according to the National Marine Fisheries Service, provides habitat for anadromous fish. Prior to applying for the subject amendment, the exemptee conducted various biological and hydrological studies concerning the feasibility of diverting water from the North Fork Green Point Creek subbasin. Based on the results of studies covering water resources, fisheries, and aquatic habitat, flows necessary to protect fisheries resources were proposed. Potential limiting factors and enhancement activities that could occur in Green Point Creek were also determined. Further, the exemptee would, for the next five years, collect data and evaluate adequacy of the interim flows. The exemptee would also identify additional fish habitat enhancement measures for the project area.

After review of the exemptee's studies and amendment proposal, the resource agencies set new terms and conditions for the proposed amended project. The terms and conditions require verification of the adequacy of the minimum flows proposed by the exemptee, installation of gages, conversion of additional canals to pipelines, and aquatic habitat enhancement for Green Point Creek.

Compliance with the terms and conditions proffered by the fish and wildlife resource agencies would adequately mitigate for any perceived adverse impact that the additional withdrawal of flow from the Green Point Creek subbasin might entail.

H. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

1. Impacts of the proposed project.

Flows would be reduced periodically by up to 5 cfs each in Cabin and Gate Creeks and 20 cfs in North Fork Green Point Creek.

2. Impacts of the no-action alternative.

Under the no-action alternative, the project would operate as it has in the past, without withdrawing additional flow from Cabin, Gate, and North Fork Green Point Creeks.

3. Recommended alternative (including proposed, required, and recommended mitigative measures):

Proposed project. Action alternative. No action.

4. Reason(s) for selecting the preferred alternative.

Approval of the proposed amendment would allow the project to operate at its installed capacity without untoward effects on the local environmental resources.

I. UNAVOIDABLE ADVERSE IMPACTS OF THE RECOMMENDED ALTERNATIVE

None

J. CONCLUSION

Finding of No Significant Impact. Approval of the recommended alternative [H(3)] would not constitute a major federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment; therefore, an environmental impact statement (EIS) will not be prepared.

Intent to Prepare an EIS. Approval of the recommended alternative [H(3)] would constitute a major federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment; therefore, an EIS will be prepared.

K. REFERENCES

Craven, R. 1989. Compilation of fisheries and habitat information for Green Point Creek: Analysis of impacts of water diversion on fisheries resources, and District proposal for interim flows. Campbell-Craven Environmental Consultants, Tigard, Oregon.

Farmers Irrigation District. 1990. Application for Amendment of Exemption for a Small Conduit Hydroelectric Power Project of 15 Megawatts or Less: Farmers Irrigation District, Project No. 3, FERC Project (Exemption) No. 6801. Hood, Oregon.

L. LIST OF PREPARERS

Name	Position title
Robert H. Grieve	Fishery biologist