

Lee Vining Hydroelectric Project

FERC No. 1388

Welcome!

Using the chat, please write your name, organization, and a new habit or hobby from Social Distancing that you will continue doing

TERRESTRIAL RESOURCES

Technical Working Group Meeting

May 26, 2021

Safety Moment



Lee Vining Relicensing TWG Team

SCE Team

Matthew Woodhall
Project Manager

Martin Ostendorf
Senior Manager

Seth Carr
Operations Manager

Lyle Laven
Production Manager

Consultant Team

Finlay Anderson
Project Manager

Kelly Larimer
Project Director

Shannon Luoma
Deputy PM

Carissa Shoemaker
TWG Coordinator

Steve Norton
Wildlife Lead

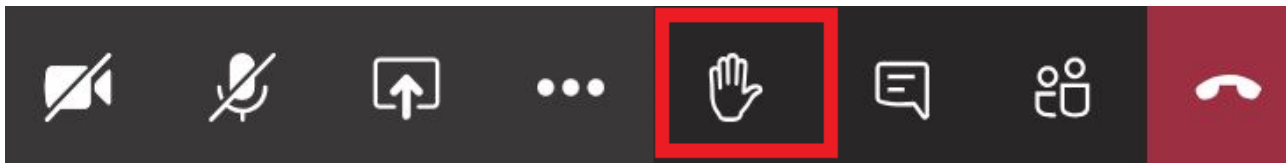
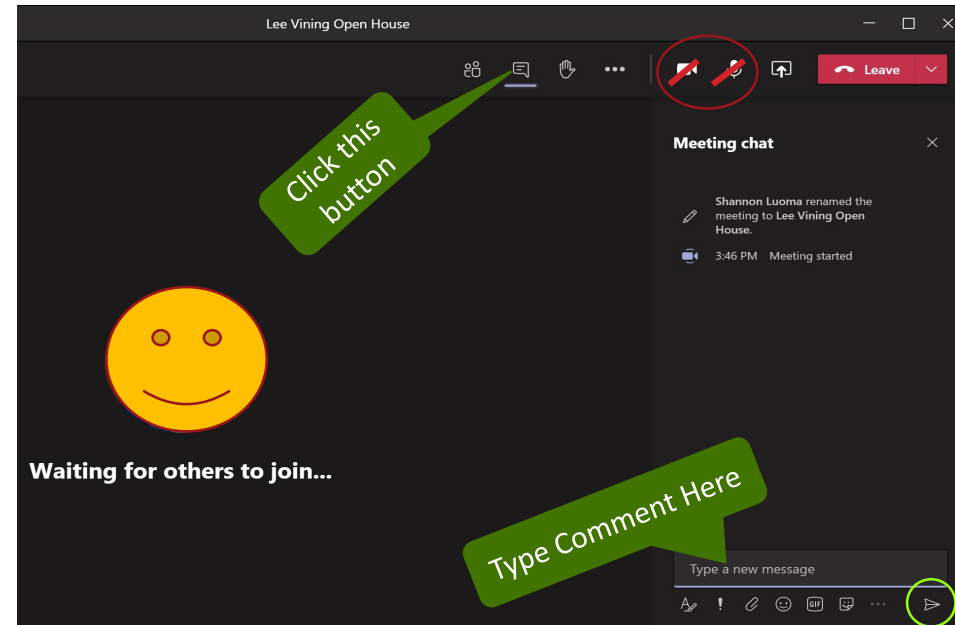
Allison Rudalevige
Botanical Lead

Agenda

- Welcome & Introductions
 - Safety Moment
 - Review of March TWG notes
 - Meeting goals
- Discussion of Study Plans
 - Wildlife
 - Botanical
- Schedule, Next Steps, Action Items
 - Next TWG date(s) TBD, as needed
 - Other action items
- Final Questions

Meeting Tips and Guidelines

- Please wait to be called on and then unmute your line
 - Introduce yourself (name and affiliation) prior to speaking
- Listen and respect each other
- Stay on topic
- Ask a question by typing it into the chat box during the presentation or by using the raise your hand feature



Review of March TWG notes

- Aquatics questions:
 - Which are Project-affected reaches
 - Which studies don't have nexus
 - Is there a water quality study moving forward
- Studies proposed:
 - Wildlife, Botanical & Riparian
- Yosemite toad study area, methods, BA scoping, and Section 7 requirements
- Existing compliance for invasives and O&M
- Aerial images flown for riparian veg (current license), led to NDVI discussion

Review of March TWG action items

- Psomas, USFWS, USFS, and CDFW have a separate call to discuss the best approach for approaching Endangered Species Act consultation for Yosemite toad, including appropriate survey methods, study area, existing models, and Biological Assessment needs.
 - Calls with CDFW and USFWS completed. Will share learnings today during TWG.
- The Relicensing Team will talk internally about our capability to calculate NDVI and USFS (Nathan Sill) will talk to the USFS remote sensing lab to see if it would be possible on their side.
 - SCE doesn't believe the NDVI data would inform our study approach but recognize USFS may have other uses for the data
 - USFS update?

Agency Discussion Summary (CDFW/USFWS)

- USFWS will look into availability of existing internal habitat modeling for YOTO.
- Questions about potential affects to occupied YOTO habitat by water levels at Saddlebag Lake:
 - Do higher lake levels result in increased foot traffic through occupied meadow? (To be addressed in the study plan)
 - Is the water level in the meadow directly affected by lower lake levels at Saddlebag? (Not likely as the meadow is higher in elevation than the lake and the meadow receives water from snow-melt).
- Project Team will coordinate YOTO survey dates directly with CDFW to jointly survey project.
- Per the existing license requirement, SCE provides some funding for stocking fish in Ellery Lake only.

Study Plans

Potential Studies for Other Resource Areas

- Aquatics
 - Reservoir Fish Populations
 - Stream Fish Populations
 - Aquatic Habitat Mapping and Sediment Characterization
 - Aquatic Invasive Plants and Algae
 - Stream and Reservoir Water Quality
 - Hydro Operations Model

Potential Studies for Other Resource Areas (continued)

- Cultural and Tribal
 - Cultural Study
 - Tribal Study
- Recreation and Land Use
 - Recreation Use and Needs Evaluation
 - Existing Recreation Facilities Condition Assessment
 - Project Boundary, Lands, and Roads
 - Visual Quality Assessment

Terrestrial and Botanical Resources: Potential Studies

Team Proposed Studies

- General Wildlife Study
- Botanical Study

Terrestrial and Botanical Resources: Proposed Studies

Wildlife Study

- Objectives

- Build a compendium of common, special status, and rare, threatened, and endangered (RTE) wildlife species occurring within Project areas that may be affected by proposed operation and maintenance activities.
- Identify RTE and riparian birds in the area during general wildlife surveys.
- Determine persistence of known Yosemite toad populations within the Project area.
- Determine potential effects and/or interactions between dispersed recreational use and terrestrial wildlife species of interest, including Yosemite toad.
- Develop sufficient data for informal and formal consultation needs for U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) with respect to Yosemite toad.
- Assess willow flycatcher nesting habitat between Poole Powerhouse and the reservoir at the LADWP Diversion Dam, using vegetation classification as primary tool with review of aerial photography and ground-truthing.

Terrestrial and Botanical Resources: Proposed Studies

Wildlife Study

- General Wildlife Survey
 - Pedestrian survey: upland birds, riparian birds, raptors, reptiles, amphibians, and mammal sign.
 - Inspect project facilities for bat roosting.
 - Trail cameras for mammal species (set for one year).
- Focused Yosemite Toad Survey
 - Review of aerial and infrared imagery to identify new potential habitat locations.
 - 3-4 survey visits between June and September
- YOTO Habitat-Recreation Survey
 - Track pedestrian access through occupied YOTO meadow at Saddlebag during 3 separate visits.
- Willow Flycatcher Habitat Assessment
 - Assess presence of suitable nesting habitat between Poole and LADWP reservoir via veg classification, aerial photography, and subsequent ground-truthing.

Terrestrial and Botanical Resources: Proposed Studies

Botanical Study

- Objectives
 - Documenting the presence of species listed by the federal and/or state ESAs or proposed for listing; e.g., whitebark pine
 - Documenting the presence of other special-status plants including species with a California Rare Plant Rank (CRPR) of 1 or 2 and USFS Species of Conservation Concern
 - Ground-truthing the existing USFS vegetation map (USFS, 2018), including identification of any sensitive natural communities
 - Incorporating results of the riparian monitoring study undertaken as part of the existing license
 - Documenting non-native, invasive plants identified in the Inyo National Forest (INF) Invasive Plant Inventory Database (NRM – TESP/IS, 2018) and on the California Invasive Plant Council Inventory (Cal-IPC, 2017).

Terrestrial and Botanical Resources: Proposed Studies

Botanical Study

- Botanical Survey
 - Pedestrian survey: Special-status plant species; non-native, invasive plant species; ground-truth vegetation communities.
 - Map observations of special-status plant species, including information on population size, phenology, and microsite characteristics.
 - Map observations of non-native, invasive plant species.
 - Adjust USFS vegetation mapping, as appropriate.
- Riparian Monitoring
 - Follows existing methodology (Read 2012, 2017) to document vegetation conditions along established belt transects
 - Herbaceous species documented with one-meter square quadrats within the transect; tree and shrub parameters documented within the 3-meter-wide belt.

Terrestrial and Botanical Resources

- Questions
- Do you have information you want to share with us?
- Proposed next TWG date: TBD, as needed

RELICENSING SCHEDULE OVERVIEW

Relicensing Process Schedule

(subject to change depending on relicensing process)

Date	Activity
August 2, 2021	SCE Files Notice of Intent/Pre-Application Document (NOI/PAD)
September 2021	FERC initiates Tribal consultation
September – October 2021	<i>If ILP:</i> FERC issues Notice of Commencement and Scoping Document 1 (SD1) and hosts scoping meeting/site visit <i>If TLP:</i> FERC approves use of TLP
Late Sept 2021	Public Meeting to discuss PAD and NOI
October/November 2021	Stakeholders file comments on NOI/PAD and request studies
November 13, 2021	SCE files proposed Study Plans
January 2022	SCE hosts Study Plan Meeting
April 2022	Revise Study Plans as appropriate
Spring/Summer 2022-2023	Conduct field studies
September 3, 2024	SCE Files Draft License Application
January 31, 2025	SCE Files Final License Application

How to Stay Involved

- Check the Project website for updates/news at www.sce.com/leevining
- You can view other SCE relicensing Projects at www.sce.com/regulatory/hydro-licensing
- Sign-up to receive Project-related emails through the Contact Registration Form/Project Questionnaire on the Project website
- Participate in an ongoing TWG
- Sign up for FERC's for e-subscription (docket number "P-1388") at www.ferc.gov
- Email Carissa Shoemaker with questions carissa.shoemaker@erm.com



Thank you!