

3.2.6 Recreation and Land Use

This section discusses recreational and land use resources potentially affected by the Project.

3.2.6.1 Affected Environment

The section includes two subsections. Recreation is discussed in Section 3.2.6.1.1 and land use in 3.2.6.1.2.

3.2.6.1.1 Recreation

Recreation Within the FERC Project Boundary

The Project does not include any recreation facilities, or opportunities. The Project is located on a steep, rocky slope with no areas conducive to safe recreation by the public. The Project Boundary only encompasses 2.92 acres and is above and adjacent to a reach of the Yuba River almost directly below the uncontrolled spillway of Englebright Dam.

Recreation Opportunities Immediately Upstream of the Project at USACE's Englebright Reservoir

Englebright Reservoir is immediately upstream of the Project. The reservoir has a surface area and shoreline length of approximately 815 ac and 24 miles, respectively, and its water surface elevation normally fluctuates within an 8-ft-wide band between elevations of 517 ft and 525 ft which facilitates flat water recreation on the reservoir. The reservoir offers picnicking, angling, boat-in camping, houseboating, and boating. Two paved boat launch ramps provide access to the reservoir for boating and boat-in camping. The boat-in camping opportunities occur at 18 campgrounds with a total capacity of 100 campsites (USACE 2020). Each campground varies in size ranging from two to 15 campsites. Campsites typically consist of a table, fire grill, lantern hanger, and several tent pads with portable restrooms centrally located in all camping areas. Drinking water is available near each launch ramp. A marina offers boat rentals, mooring, fuel, sanitation, and store facilities. In addition, the reservoir provides angling opportunities for rainbow and brown trout, largemouth and smallmouth bass, catfish, sunfish, and Kokanee salmon (USACE 2020). In compliance with Article 403 of the existing license, YCWA reimburses a private fish hatchery, and coordinates with CDFW, for stocking up to 5,000 rainbow trout (half pound each) in Englebright Reservoir each year. CDFW enforces State fishing and hunting regulations throughout the reservoir area. There is no access from the FERC Project Boundary to Englebright Reservoir. The USACE manages Englebright Reservoir per the USACE's Rules and Regulations Governing Public Use of Corps of Engineers Water Resources Development Projects (USACE 2000). In 2019, the USACE reported visitation to Englebright Reservoir at 137,757 visits (USACE 2019).

In compliance with Article 409 of the existing FERC license, in 1994 PG&E provided one-time funding to the USACE for construction and installation of: 1) signs at the two boat launching ramps and marina at Englebright Reservoir; and 2) an interpretive display near USACE's

headquarters at Englebright Reservoir. The signs at the boat launching ramps and marina show times and areas where caution should be taken when mooring a boat on the reservoir for extended periods of time. The interpretive display describes the Yuba River watershed and the river's hydroelectric system and operation.

Recreation Opportunities in the Yuba River Downstream of the Project

The Yuba River extends approximately 24.1 miles from the Project to the confluence with the Feather River. In general, hiking and boating opportunities in the lower Yuba River are limited by poor vehicular public access. Public river access is generally limited to three primary locations: 1) at Parks Bar, located approximately 5 miles northeast of the town of Smartsville; 2) Hammon Grove Park and Sycamore Ranch near the Dry Creek confluence; and 3) at the Hallwood Avenue Access, approximately 5 miles northeast of Marysville) (YCWA 2010). Where access is available, fishing, picnicking, rafting, kayaking, canoeing, tubing, and swimming are the dominant recreational uses.

Fishing Opportunities

The Yuba River below Englebright Dam is regarded as a high quality fishing reach and offers excellent American shad, steelhead, resident trout, and striped bass fishing, but access is limited largely due to pervasive private land ownership along the river (YCWA 2010). The Yuba River from the Highway 20 Bridge downstream to the private Sycamore Campground is a wild trout fishery, which also offers Chinook salmon and steelhead fishing (YCWA 2010). CDFW fishing regulations on the mainstem Yuba River are summarized in Table 3.2.6-1.

Table 3.2.6-1. CDFW fishing regulations on the mainstem Yuba River.

River Reach	Season and Regulations	Daily Bag and Possession Limit (Trout & Salmon Combined)
From Feather River to Highway 20 Bridge	All year. Only artificial lures with barbless hooks may be used.	2 hatchery trout or hatchery steelhead 4 hatchery trout or hatchery steelhead in possession.
From Highway 20 Bridge to Englebright Dam	Dec. 1 through Aug. 31. Only artificial lures with barbless hooks may be used.	2 hatchery trout or hatchery steelhead 4 hatchery trout or hatchery steelhead in possession.

Source: CDFW 2020a. 2020-2021 California Freshwater Sport Fishing Regulations.

Notes:

*Hatchery trout or steelhead are those showing a healed adipose fin clip (adipose fin is absent). Unless otherwise provided, all other trout and steelhead must be immediately released unharmed. Wild trout or steelhead are those not showing a healed adipose fin clip (adipose fin is present).

STEELHEAD FISHING REPORT AND RESTORATION CARD: Anglers must have a nontransferable Steelhead Fishing Report and Restoration Card issued by the department in their possession while fishing for steelhead trout in anadromous waters. For purposes of this regulation, a steelhead trout is defined as any rainbow trout greater than 16 inches in length found in anadromous waters. Anglers must record, with a ball point pen, the month, day, location fished, number of steelhead caught and kept, and number of steelhead caught and released. Month, day, and location must be recorded **EVEN IF NO STEELHEAD WERE CAUGHT**. A report-restoration card shall be valid for the calendar year. When the card is completely filled-in, a person may purchase another card. Anglers are required by law to return Steelhead Fishing Report and Restoration cards to the Department of Fish and Wildlife by January 31 of the year following the card expiration. Example: 2018 cards are to be returned by January 31, 2019.

Recreation Facilities

Recreation facilities are generally found only at the Spenceville Wildlife Area. The river also contains several private recreation sites near Browns Valley (Sycamore Campground) and beyond.

The Spenceville Wildlife Area is a CDFW-managed wildlife area located 1 mile down Smartsville Road via Highway 20, approximately 18 miles east of Marysville. The Spenceville Wildlife Area is comprised of 11,900 ac of blue oak-gray pine woodland characteristic of the Sierra Foothills with terrain varying from 200 to 1,200 ft of elevation (CDFW 2020b). Recreational uses at the wildlife area include fishing, wildlife viewing, hiking, dog training, equestrian trail riding, bicycling, seasonal camping, and hunting.

Whitewater Boating Opportunities

Two whitewater boating reaches occur. However, only the 6-mile-long Class III whitewater boating run below Englebright Dam downstream to the Highway 20 Bridge (Parks Bar) is well-documented (Table 3.2.6-2). The second run has very little documented information other than it is rated as a Class I whitewater run from Parks Bar downstream to the Hallwood Avenue access (American Whitewater 2020).

Table 3.2.6-2. Known whitewater boating reaches on the Mainstem Yuba River

Whitewater Run	Length (mi)	Elevation Range	Gradient (ft per mi)	Flow Range (cfs)	Optimum Flow (cfs)	Whitewater Classification
Englebright Dam to Highway 20 Bridge	6.0	260-200	15 fpm	700-10,000	1,500-3,500 (kayak/raft), 700 (inflatable kayak)	Class III

Sources: AW 2020; California Creeks 2020.

Regionally or Nationally Significant Recreation Areas in the Project Region

National Wild and Scenic Rivers and State-Protected Rivers

Three river segments in the vicinity of the Project have been proposed by the Forest Service for designation under the Federal Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (USFS and BLM 1999). These are: 1) the North Yuba River, approximately 45 miles from Yuba Pass to its impoundment with New Bullards Bar Reservoir; 2) Canyon Creek, a tributary to the North Yuba River; and 3) the South Yuba River between Lake Spaulding and Point Defiance, near the confluence of the South Yuba River and the Yuba River at the upper end of Englebright Reservoir. Until official designation, the Tahoe and Plumas National Forest Land and Resource Management Plans state that these rivers are to be managed by the Forest Service as if they were protected under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (USFS and BLM 1999). The nearest state-designated Wild and Scenic River is the South Yuba River from Lang Crossing to its confluence with Kentucky Creek. It is managed by BLM in partnership with the Forest Service and CDPR. All of these river segments are well upstream of the Project.

Wilderness Areas and National Scenic Trails

There are no National Trails System trails in the FERC Project Boundary. The nearest designated Wilderness area to the Project is Bucks Lake Wilderness to the north, approximately 46 miles from the Project. The Granite Chief Wilderness is approximately 50 miles to the west, and the Cache Creek Wilderness is approximately 65 miles to the southwest (University of Montana 2020).

Yuba Rim Trail (Yuba Bear Land Trust)

Opened officially to the public in 2015, this 2.35-mile-long trail offers views of snow-capped peaks, views of the confluence of the Middle Yuba River and North Yuba River, and a moderately challenging hike. The Land Trust worked with federal agencies like Bureau of Land Management, Tahoe National Forest, and Plumas National Forest. The trail incorporates old logging skid roads and is a wild country trail alive with mountain lions, bears, rattlesnakes, and lots of poison oak. (<https://www.bylt.org/trail/yuba-rim-trail/>)

Recreation Needs in the Project Region

Management plans that cover recreation resources that overlap with the Project Boundary include the California Department of Parks and Recreation's (CDPR) California Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), Nevada County's Non-Motorized Transportation Master Plan, Nevada County's Western Nevada County Non-Motorized Trails Master Plan, and CDFW's fish planting program.

Statewide California Outdoor Recreation Plan

The 2015 SCORP (CDPR 2015) identifies and prioritizes outdoor recreation opportunities and constraints most critical in California. The SCORP establishes the following actions to address California's park and recreation needs: 1) inform decision-makers and communities of the importance of parks; 2) improve the use, safety, and condition of existing parks; 3) use GIS mapping technology to identify park deficient communities and neighborhoods; 4) increase park access for Californians including residents in underserved communities; and 5) share and distribute success stories to advance park and recreation services.

An element of the SCORP, the 2012 Survey on Public Opinions and Attitudes on Outdoor Recreation (SPOA) in California, identifies the top 15 recreational activities in California with the highest latent demand, as follows in order of rank (CDPR 2014):

1. Picnicking in picnic areas (with tables, fire pits, or grills)
2. Walking for fitness or pleasure on paved surfaces
3. Camping in developed sites with facilities such as toilets and tables (not including backpacking)
4. Beach activities (swimming, sunbathing, surf play, wading, playing on beach)
5. Swimming in a pool
6. Day hiking on un-paved trails
7. Attending outdoor cultural events
8. Visiting outdoor nature museums, zoos, gardens, or arboretums
9. Shopping at a farmer's market
10. Visiting historic or cultural sites
11. Wildlife viewing, bird watching, viewing natural scenery

12. Driving on paved surfaces for pleasure, sightseeing, driving through natural scenery
13. Swimming in freshwater lakes, rivers and/or streams
14. Jogging and running for exercise (on trails, streets, sidewalks, paths)
15. Bicycling on paved surfaces

These are activities that Californians would participate in, from a statewide perspective, if more facilities and opportunities were provided. None of these top 15 recreation activities is available within in the FERC Project Boundary due to unsafe and steep terrain.

Other relevant findings from the 2012 SPOA survey include (CDPR 2014):

- More than two-thirds (68%) of Californians report spending the same or more time in outdoor recreation activities compared to 5 years ago.
- Most Californians participated in walking for fitness or pleasure (74%). Other activities with high percentages of participants include picnicking in picnic areas; driving for pleasure; sightseeing; driving through natural scenery; beach activities; and visiting outdoor nature museums, zoos, gardens, or arboretums.
- The park facilities and services that Californians rank most important are play areas for young children; wilderness type areas where no vehicles or development are allowed; environmental and outdoor education programs; multi-use turf areas for field sports; picnic sites for large groups; trails for multiple, non-motorized activities; and hard-surface trails.
- The majority of Californians visit highly developed parks and recreation areas; developed nature-oriented parks and recreation areas; historical or cultural buildings, sites, or areas; and natural and undeveloped areas during the past 12 months.

The Nevada County Non-Motorized Transportation Master Plan

The Nevada County Non-Motorized Transportation Master Plan (Nevada County 2000) describes the planning of facilities for commuting, sidewalks, safe routes to school, and rural recreational trails.

The Western Nevada County Non-Motorized Trails Master Plan

The Nevada County Planning Department developed the Western Nevada County Non-Motorized Trails Master Plan (Nevada County 2010) as a tool for the Nevada County Planning Department and decision-makers to work with developers to provide recreational trails consistent with a regional system. This plan also provides a framework for other trail related organizations in Western Nevada County to enhance trail opportunities and become more competitive for grant funding (Nevada County 2010). The plan's primary components contain: 1) a map depicting existing trails and identifying gaps in the regional trail system; 2) goals and policies developed through collaboration and public involvement; 3) design guidelines for trail development; and 4) programs to implement the regional trail system (Nevada County 2010). This master plan is a supplemental document for the Nevada County Non-motorized Transportation Master Plan

specific to the western portion of the county. The plan does not identify any trails within or adjacent to the FERC Project Boundary.

Fish Planting Program

Englebright Reservoir is part of the CDFW fish-planting program. As mentioned above, in compliance with Article 403 of the existing license, YCWA annually reimburses a private hatchery, in coordination with CDFW, for stocking up to 5,000 rainbow trout (half pound each) in Englebright Reservoir. CDFW enforces State fishing and hunting regulations throughout the reservoir. Refer to Section 3.2.3.1.2 of this PAD for a description of fish stocking in Englebright Reservoir. CDFW does not stock fish in the Yuba River downstream of the Project.

3.2.6.1.2 Land Use

The FERC Project Boundary is entirely in Nevada County and includes 2.92-ac, 2.37 ac of which are private lands owned by YCWA and on which all aboveground Project facilities are located. The boundary on this private land includes 30 ft on either side of centerline along the Narrows Tunnel and Narrows Penstock (i.e., a 60 ft corridor), 15 ft on either side of the centerline of the Powerhouse Access Tram (i.e., a 30 ft corridor), and 65 ft from the Narrows 1 Powerhouse outside wall on dry land and about 50 feet from the powerhouse bulkhead into the Yuba River to the intersection of the Yuba and Nevada county line (i.e., mid- channel).

Nevada County is 70 percent privately owned and 30 percent publicly owned, with a total area of 958 square miles (Nevada County 2014). As assessed in 2013, the majority of land in Nevada County was considered forest (56%) and rural (29%), as shown in Table 3.2.6-3 (Nevada County 2014). The lands within the FERC Project Boundary are zoned as rural (Nevada County 2014).

Table 3.2.6-3. Acreage of Existing Land Use Designations (2013) in Nevada County.

Land Use Designation	Acreage (%)
Business Park	0.12
Industrial	0.11
Office and Professional	0.01
Public	0.60
Special Development Area	1.44
Community Commercial	0.03
Rural Commercial	0.01
Neighborhood Commercial	0.03
Highway Commercial	0.01
Urban High Density Residential	0.01
Urban Medium Density Residential	0.10
Urban Single-Family Density Residential	0.25
Planned Residential Community	1.04
Planned Development	1.69
Residential	1.60
Estate	2.79
Rural	29.27
Recreation	0.27
Forest	55.54

Table 3.2.6-3. (continued)

Land Use Designation	Acreage (%)
Open Space	4.27
Water	0.90
Total	100.00

Source: Nevada County 2014.

Nevada County has been transitioning from a resource-based rural county to a more diverse population and economic base. Timber, mining, farming, and ranching historically have been the main land uses in the county. Cattle ranching remains the dominant form of agriculture; however, vineyards and wineries are becoming more prevalent (Nevada County 2014). Forested lands (timberlands and woodlands) in Nevada County are mostly under the jurisdiction of the Tahoe National Forest (Nevada County 2014).

The 0.55 ac of U.S. lands within the FERC Project Boundary are managed by the USACE as part of the Harry L. Englebright Dam and Lake, which was constructed by the California Debris Commission in 1941 under the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1935 as part of the Sacramento River Debris Control Project. The primary purpose of the dam is to trap and contain sediment derived from extensive historic hydraulic mining operations in the Yuba River watershed. Although hydraulic mining in the upper Yuba River watershed was not resumed after the construction of Englebright Dam, historical mine sites contribute sediment to the river, which the dam entrains. When the California Debris Commission was decommissioned in 1986, administration of Englebright Dam and Reservoir passed to the USACE. USACE manages Englebright Dam and Reservoir in accordance with its federal land and dams protocols and guided by USACE's Operational Management Plan for the operation of the recreation and resource management programs (i.e., USACE does not have a management plan for the operation of the dam specifically).

Englebright Dam and Reservoir, and their associated facilities, including USACE's tunnel, as federal facilities, are not under FERC's jurisdiction. Table 3.2.6-4 identifies by Public Land Survey System the section within the existing FERC Project Boundary that encompasses U.S. lands.

Table 3.2.6-4. Lands of the United States enclosed within the existing FERC Project Boundary and managing federal agency.

Administered by	Township	Range	Section	Acres
USACE	16N	6E	14	0.55
Total				0.55

Source: Yuba County Geographic Information System Parcel Base, obtained August 2013, modified per the United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service's request.

In compliance with Articles 101 and 102 of the existing FERC license, PG&E entered into a Use of Outlet Facilities and Storage Space Agreement and an Operations and Maintenance Agreement with the USACE in November 1994. The agreements were transferred to YCWA in 2020. The Use of Outlet Facilities and Storage Space Agreement gives YCWA usage of Englebright Dam outlet facilities and storage space in Englebright Reservoir between 450 ft and

527 ft elevations. The Operations and Maintenance Agreement outlines the responsibility of both agencies to pay all costs necessary for the maintenance, repair, and replacement of their own facilities.