

DOUG LAMALFA
1ST DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

COMMITTEE ON
NATURAL RESOURCES

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
505 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
TEL: (202) 225-3076
FAX: (202) 226-0852

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0501

AUBURN DISTRICT OFFICE:
13626 NEW AIRPORT ROAD
SUITE 106
AUBURN, CA 95602
TEL: (530) 878-5035
FAX: (530) 878-5037

OROVILLE DISTRICT OFFICE:
1463 DOWNER STREET
SUITE A
OROVILLE, CA 95965
TEL: (530) 534-7100
FAX: (530) 534-7800

REDDING DISTRICT OFFICE:
2885 CHURN CREEK ROAD
SUITE C
REDDING, CA 96002
TEL: (530) 223-5898
FAX: (530) 223-5897

<http://lamalfa.house.gov>

July 6, 2017

Ms. Cheryl LaFleur, Acting Chairman
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
888 First Street, N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20426

Re: Relicensing of Oroville Dam/FERC Project 2100

Dear Ms. LaFleur:

Thank you to you and your staff for meeting with me to discuss the current status of the Oroville Dam and Spillway operations and reconstruction efforts. I would like to thank you for responding positively to the information I shared regarding the impact of lake levels on recreational usage of the lake, the regional economy, and California's water supply. FERC efforts with the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) ensured that lake levels remained at a level which allowed maximum recreational use and water storage, while also protecting public safety.

As you'll recall, we also discussed FERC's ongoing consideration of a new license for the operation of Oroville Dam. As you are aware, my office worked closely with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to ensure the last outstanding item, the biological opinion, was delivered before the end of 2016. NOAA delivered it to FERC on December 5, 2016.

Unfortunately, as we all know too well, the February failure of Oroville Dam's primary spill and near-failure of the auxiliary spillway resulted in the evacuation of nearly 200,000 downstream residents and raised fundamental questions regarding operations and maintenance of the dam. While the initial incident was disruptive and endangered many of my constituents in the short term, it is impossible to quantify the long term economic and environmental damage to the region.

Immediately following the incident, FERC wisely directed DWR to convene an independent board of consultants to determine the causes of the spillway failure and prepare a forensic report expected to be complete this fall. This report may recommend fundamental alterations of the existing operations and maintenance of Oroville Dam.

It is with these concerns in mind that I write to you to request you delay the relicensing of the Oroville Dam/FERC Project 2100 until the following milestones are met:

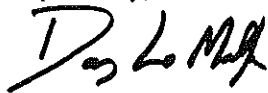
1. The independent board of consultant's final forensic report is delivered to FERC.
2. FERC takes adequate time to fully analyze and consider the findings of the forensic report.
3. FERC issues direction to the DWR providing detailed instructions, implementation plans, and compliance requirements to address any findings of the report impacting dam operations and maintenance, safety, or structural improvements.

4. The license includes adequate annual compensation for the City of Oroville and the County of Butte for the services these local governments provide to the State Water Project by hosting a facility of this magnitude, including but not limited to law enforcement efforts to secure the dam, search and rescue responsibilities on Lake Oroville, operation and maintenance of associated recreation facilities, and other impacts.
5. A complete analysis and report determining the condition and adequacy of all recreational facilities within the parameters of the project. Required upgrades to facilities or new additional recreational opportunities must be clearly defined and supported with design and implementation plans.

It is not my intent to impede progress with this request, but it is my duty to ensure the safety of the citizens in my district. I am certain you will agree that it would not be prudent to issue a new license until the causes of the incident are known and action is taken to ensure that such situations never occur again.

Thank you for your consideration on this important issue. Please contact my Chief of Staff, Mark Spannagel, at 202-225-3076 with any questions and send the response to my Oroville District Office located at 2862 Olive Highway, Suite D, Oroville, CA 95966.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Doug Lamalfa". The signature is written in a cursive, somewhat stylized font.

DOUG LAMALFA
Congressman, First Congressional District