

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0502

April 28, 2026

The Honorable Brooke Rollins
Secretary of Agriculture
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250

The Honorable Doug Burgum
Secretary of the Interior
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Secretary Rollins and Secretary Burgum,

Recent public statements by Secretary Rollins and representatives of the Elsinore Valley Municipal Water District (the District) confirm that your agencies are actively working toward the purchase and transfer of Pacific Gas and Electric Co.'s (PG&E) water rights and infrastructure associated with the Potter Valley Project (PVP), including Scott Dam and Cape Horn Dam. While few details have been publicly disclosed, Secretary Rollins has called the District a "legitimate buyer" with "strong interest" in acquiring and operating the project. She has said the District's proposal would allow President Trump and Secretary Burgum to "restart/expand" hydropower operations while keeping both dams in place, and she has urged PG&E to take the proposal seriously. Representatives of the District have met with Secretary Rollins and publicly confirmed their interest in securing additional water supply through this proposal.

The communities and Tribal Nations I represent would be directly impacted by the proposal Secretary Rollins and the District have described. Yet your agencies have thus far provided no information to explain why a Southern California water district would seek to acquire water rights and water infrastructure on the Eel River, hundreds of miles north of its service area, and why the departments of Agriculture and Interior would be encouraging, facilitating, funding or otherwise supporting such a scheme.

The involvement by these federal agencies, the District, and perhaps others in a scheme to take over the PVP and to "restart/expand" its defunct hydropower operations revives a long and contentious history of plans to divert Eel River water to distant interests in Southern California and the Central Valley. The controversy, conflict, and mistrust from these historic efforts to build the Dos Rios Dam left an enduring legacy of mistrust among Northern California tribes, communities, and stakeholders who would have borne all of the impacts of such a scheme while receiving none of the benefits.

Accordingly, my constituents and I are acutely interested in all of the details surrounding your efforts relative to a potential purchase or acquisition of the PVP and any plans or proposals to operate the project for the benefit of the District and perhaps others far from the Eel and Russian River basins. Even the minimal information you have shared to date raises serious environmental, legal, economic, and water supply concerns for vulnerable communities in the Eel and Russian River basins.

The public deserves a clear and complete accounting of what the District and your agencies have been discussing and planning. Toward that end, please provide both (1) written responses with

sufficient detail to understand the discussions, plans, decision-making, and parties involved, and (2) the underlying records described below, including drafts and attachments. Specifically, please identify all entities and individuals involved; describe the interests intended to be served; and explain the origin, scope, and current status of any related efforts:

1. Information relating to the acquisition, transfer, operation or modification of any part of the Potter Valley Project (PVP), including Scott Dam, Cape Horn Dam, other PVP infrastructure, and any water rights associated with the PVP:

- a) To the extent that any personnel from your agency have been parties to, or have knowledge of, any meetings, communications, plans, proposals, offers or agreements regarding these subjects, please provide facts sufficient to explain the date, location, purpose, and participants (including federal personnel/offices, the District, PG&E, consultants, and any other person or entity) of any such meetings or communications; the specific plans, proposals, offers or agreements that were discussed, referenced or considered and the resolution (if any) and current status of such plans, proposals, offers or agreements – including but not limited to the proposed structure and terms including ownership, governance, financing, operational responsibilities, liabilities, compliance obligations, anticipated timelines and milestones, and the intended use(s) and beneficiaries. Included within the scope of this request are all facts and documents sufficient to describe whether any government-to-government consultation has occurred with affected Tribal Nations pursuant to Executive Order 13175 regarding the potential sale or transfer of these dams, associated water conveyance facilities, or associated water rights to any specific entities, including but not limited to Elsinore Valley Municipal Water District. This request specifically includes any connection to the operation of Lake Mendocino, including the proposed raising or replacement of Coyote Valley Dam.
- b) Provide all documents or records relating to this information request 1(a), including but not limited to: proposals, term sheets, letters of intent, memoranda of understanding, meeting agendas, notes, minutes, and summaries, briefing materials, analyses, presentations, correspondence (including emails, texts, and messages), draft and final agreements, and any attachments or exhibits thereto.

2. Information relating to any proposal or plan to store, divert, transfer, sell, exchange, deliver, or control Eel River water for use outside the Eel River or Russian River watersheds:

- a) To the extent that any personnel from your agency have been parties to, or have knowledge of, any meetings, communications, plans, proposals, offers or agreements regarding these subjects, please provide facts sufficient to explain the date, location, purpose, and participants (including federal personnel/offices, the District, PG&E, consultants, and any other person or entity). Please describe the origin and purpose of any such proposed diversion and/or transfer discussed or considered, including the infrastructure to be used, acquired, or constructed, water rights, ownership, governance, financing, operational responsibilities, liabilities, compliance with state or federal laws, permitting requirements, tribal rights, anticipated timelines and milestones, any modeling or analysis regarding the anticipated water sources, volumes, timing, and method(s) of

storage/diversion/transfer, as well as the intended destination(s), end use(s), and all intended beneficiaries. For any such plans, proposals, offers or agreements, describe the resolution (if any) and current status. This request specifically includes any proposal or plan that:

i) revives, incorporates or includes any part of the proposed infrastructure, operational scheme, or other elements of these previously studied projects: Dos Rios dam and diversion; North Bay recycled water aqueduct connecting Sonoma and Napa counties; the Richmond Bridge pipeline connecting Marin and Contra Costa counties; and

ii) any potential new infrastructure that could connect the Eel or Russian River watersheds, directly or by way of water transfers or exchanges, with any canal, pipeline, river, tributary or other water body which is capable of carrying water from the State or Federal Water Projects or which is located in the Bay-Delta watershed. This includes but is not limited to Sites Reservoir, Tehama-Colusa Canal, Glenn-Colusa Canal, North Bay Aqueduct, Cache Creek watershed, or Putah Creek watershed.

- b) Provide all documents or records relating to this information request 2(a), including but not limited to studies, modeling, and technical analyses, memoranda and white papers, presentations, maps and engineering or operational descriptions, meeting agendas, notes, minutes, and summaries, correspondence (including emails, texts, and messages), and any draft or final proposals and attachments, including any documents referencing the PVP, the Dos Rios project, or other prior Eel or Russian River diversion proposals.

Please provide responses and responsive records no later than May 12, 2026. These records are necessary for ongoing congressional investigation of this matter and will help ensure transparency and accountability for actions affecting the Eel and Russian River watersheds.

Sincerely,



Jared Huffman

Member of Congress

Ranking Member, House Natural Resources Committee