

amendment for the Battle Creek Hydroelectric Project No. 1121. The project is located on the mainstem Battle Creek, and on the North Fork and South Fork Battle Creek in Shasta and Tehama counties, California. The project occupies federal lands administered by the U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management.

PG&E is requesting that its license for the Battle Creek Hydroelectric Project be amended to support a new Phase 2 of the Battle Creek Salmon and Steelhead Restoration Project (Restoration Project). The Restoration Project is a collaborative effort to restore fish habitat on Battle Creek and some of its tributaries. The new Phase 2 amendment requires the removal of the South Diversion Dam, Soap Creek Feeder Diversion Dam, Lower Ripley Creek Feeder Diversion Dam, and Coleman Diversion Dam, but does not include the tailrace connector tunnel from South Powerhouse to Inskip Canal. A Notice of Application Accepted for Filing and Soliciting Comments, Motions to Intervene, and Protest was issued on October 3, 2022.

The original Phase 2 was evaluated in a 2005 Environmental Impact Statement; however, the new Phase 2 amendment request does not include the construction of one of the mitigation measures. This notice identifies Commission staff's intention to prepare an environmental assessment (EA) analyzing the recent changes to the proposed action. The planned schedule for the completion of the EA is April 7, 2025.¹ Revisions to the schedule may be made as appropriate. The EA will be issued and made available for review by all interested parties. All comments filed on the EA will be reviewed by staff and considered in the Commission's final decision on the proceeding.

The Commission's Office of Public Participation (OPP) supports meaningful public engagement and participation in Commission proceedings. OPP can help members of the public, including landowners, community organizations, Tribal members and others, access publicly available information and navigate Commission processes. For public inquiries and assistance with making filings such as interventions, comments, or requests for rehearing, the public is encouraged to contact OPP at (202) 502-6595 or OPP@ferc.gov.

Any questions regarding this notice may be directed to Rebecca Martin at 202-502-6012 or Rebecca.martin@ferc.gov.

(Authority: 42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*)

Dated: March 6, 2025.

Debbie-Anne A. Reese,

Secretary.

[FR Doc. 2025-03925 Filed 3-13-25; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6717-01-P

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

[FRL OP-OFA-169]

Environmental Impact Statements; Notice of Availability

Responsible Agency: Office of Federal Activities, General Information 202-564-5632 or <https://www.epa.gov/nepa>. Weekly receipt of Environmental Impact Statements (EIS)

Filed March 3, 2025 10 a.m. EST

Through March 10, 2025 10 a.m. EST Pursuant to 40 CFR 1506.9.

Notice: Section 309(a) of the Clean Air Act requires that EPA make public its comments on EISs issued by other Federal agencies. EPA's comment letters on EISs are available at: <https://cdxapps.epa.gov/cdx-enepa-II/public/action/eis/search>.

EIS No. 20250027, Final, USAF, AZ, 492nd Special Operations Wing Beddown, Review Period Ends: 04/14/2025, Contact: Mr. Nick Post 380-459-0507.

EIS No. 20250028, Draft, UDOT, UT, Kimball Junction, Comment Period Ends: 04/28/2025, Contact: Carissa Watanabe 503-939-3798.

EIS No. 20250029, Final, NMFS, CA, Consideration of Exempted Fishing Permits for Testing Fishing Practices To Target Swordfish and Other Marketable Highly Migratory Species in the United States West Coast Exclusive Economic Zone, Review Period Ends: 04/14/2025, Contact: Amber Rhodes 910-352-7186.

EIS No. 20250030, Draft, TVA, TN, Allen Aeroderivative Combustion Turbine Project, Comment Period Ends: 04/28/2025, Contact: Matthew Higdon 865-632-8051.

Dated: March 10, 2025.

Mark Austin,

Acting Director, NEPA Compliance Division, Office of Federal Activities.

[FR Doc. 2025-04109 Filed 3-13-25; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6560-50-P

FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION

Sunshine Act Meetings

FEDERAL REGISTER CITATION NOTICE OF PREVIOUS ANNOUNCEMENT: 90 FR 11607.

PREVIOUSLY ANNOUNCED TIME AND DATE OF THE MEETING: Thursday, March 13, 2025 at 10 a.m.

Hybrid Meeting: 1050 First Street NE, Washington, DC (12th Floor) and Virtual.

CHANGES IN THE MEETING: The March 13, 2025 Open Meeting has been canceled.

CONTACT PERSON FOR MORE INFORMATION: Myles Martin, Deputy Press Officer, Telephone: (202) 694-1221.

(Authority: Government in the Sunshine Act, 5 U.S.C. 552b)

Vicktoria J. Allen,

Deputy Secretary of the Commission.

[FR Doc. 2025-04290 Filed 3-12-25; 4:15 pm]

BILLING CODE 6715-01-P

FEDERAL MARITIME COMMISSION

[Docket No. FMC-2025-0005]

Order of Investigation Into Transit Constraints at International Maritime Chokepoints

AGENCY: Federal Maritime Commission.

ACTION: Order of investigation and request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Federal Maritime Commission (Commission) has exercised its statutory authority to initiate a nonadjudicatory investigation into transit constraints at international maritime chokepoints, particularly concerning the effects of the laws, regulations or practices of foreign governments, and the practices of owners or operators of foreign-flag vessels, on shipping conditions in these chokepoints.

DATES: Submit comments on or before May 13, 2025.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments, identified by Docket No. FMC-2025-0005, by the following method:

Federal eRulemaking Portal: Your comments must be written and in English. You may submit your comments electronically through the Federal Rulemaking Portal at www.regulations.gov. To submit comments on that site, search for Docket No. FMC-2025-0005 and follow the instructions provided.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For questions regarding submitting comments or the treatment of confidential information, contact David Eng, Secretary; Phone: (202) 523-5725; Email: Secretary@fmc.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Introduction

Based on available information, it appears that constraints on transits

¹ The unique identification number for documents relating to this environmental review is EAXX-019-20-000-1741169216.

through the English Channel, the Malacca Strait, the Northern Sea Passage, the Singapore Strait, the Panama Canal, the Strait of Gibraltar, and the Suez Canal may have created shipping conditions that call for careful consideration by the Federal Maritime Commission (Commission) in connection with the determination of its policies and the carrying out of its duties. The Commission has a statutory mandate to monitor and evaluate conditions affecting shipping in U.S. foreign trade. 46 U.S.C. 42101. Section 42101(a) provides that the Commission “shall prescribe regulations affecting shipping in foreign trade . . . to adjust or meet general or special conditions unfavorable to shipping in foreign trade,” when those conditions are the result of a foreign country’s laws or regulations or the “competitive methods, pricing practices, or other practices” used by the owners, operators, or agents of “vessels of a foreign country.”

The Commission will conduct this investigation in accordance with its procedures for a nonadjudicatory investigation set forth in 46 CFR part 502, subpart R.

II. Summary of Apparent Conditions

Recent events have indicated that transit constraints at several critical points in the global shipping supply chain have led to conditions that are appropriate for the Commission to investigate. Such constraints have affected transits through the English Channel, the Malacca Strait, the Northern Sea Passage, the Singapore Strait, the Panama Canal, the Strait of Gibraltar, and the Suez Canal. The significance of these chokepoints is described below.

(A.) English Channel

The English Channel, with its narrow width of 21 miles and heavy traffic, experiences congestion, limited passing opportunities, and an elevated risk of collisions, especially near busy ports like Dover and Calais.¹ Navigational challenges are compounded by strong tidal currents, variable weather conditions, and hazards such as shallow areas and sandbanks, requiring precise maneuvering. The region’s strict environmental regulations, geopolitical tensions, security risks, and ongoing issues like smuggling and illegal migration can further cause delays and

disruptions. Additionally, political developments, border controls, and customs checks add complexities, with the Channel’s proximity to sensitive areas between the UK and France sometimes leading to heightened security concerns.

(B.) Malacca Strait

The Malacca Strait, with its narrow width, shallow areas, and limited navigational infrastructure in remote sections, presents significant challenges for large vessels, particularly in low visibility or harsh weather conditions such as monsoons, storms, and strong currents. These factors increase the risk of accidents and restrict the passage of deep-draft vessels. The high traffic volume, especially during peak seasons, leads to congestion, delays, and limited passing opportunities, further heightening the risk of accidents. Piracy, including hijackings and robberies, remains a significant concern, particularly in remote areas, while regional political instability and territorial disputes create additional security risks and potential disruptions² to transit.

(C.) Northern Sea Passage

The Northern Sea Passage is emerging as a critical maritime chokepoint as new shipping routes open, a development that could reshape global trade patterns. As the region’s waters become ice-free for longer periods, the Northern Sea Passage offers a shortcut between Europe and Asia, reducing travel time and fuel consumption. However, this has sparked competition over governance, with Russia seeking control over the shortest maritime route between Europe and Asia, and imposing fees, while other nations push for international access. The Northern Sea Passage’s strategic importance is further amplified by increased military activity from Russia and China, including new bases³ and icebreakers,⁴ reflecting its growing value for nuclear deterrence and missile defense. As a result, both Russia and NATO forces are ramping up

² Interview on *Goeconomic Crossroads: The Strait of Malacca’s Impact on Regional Trade*, The National Bureau of Asian Research (Oct. 5, 2023), <https://www.nbr.org/publication/geoeconomic-crossroads-the-strait-of-malaccas-impact-on-regional-trade/>.

³ Laws, Jasmine, *Map Shows Locations of NATO and Russian Military Bases in the Arctic*, Newsweek (Feb. 3, 2025, 4:57 a.m.), <https://www.newsweek.com/nato-russias-military-bases-northern-sea-passage-map-2022961>.

⁴ Shkolnikova, Svetlana, *Russia and China Conducting Joint Arctic Operations for First Time*, Coast Guard Says, Stars and Stripes (Nov. 14, 2024), https://www.stripes.com/branches/coast_guard/2024-11-14/coast-guard-arctic-icebreakers-russia-china-15849293.html.

their military presence, increasing the potential for tensions and conflicts⁵ over access to the region’s trade routes and resources.

(D.) Singapore Strait

The narrow Singapore Strait presents significant challenges for maritime navigation, with limited passing opportunities that increase delays and the risk of accidents, particularly for large vessels that require precise navigation in congested areas. Shallow zones restrict the passage of deep-draft vessels, necessitating careful maneuvering to avoid grounding.⁶ The Strait is also subject to unpredictable weather conditions, including heavy rains, storms, and strong currents, which can slow vessel movement and complicate navigation, especially for larger ships. Environmental risks such as oil spills, marine pollution, and stringent regulations further constrain passage and cause delays. Although piracy has decreased, the Strait still faces security threats, including hijackings and robberies⁷ in remote areas, along with potential disruptions due to regional political tensions.

(E.) Panama Canal

While the Panama Canal underwent a major expansion in 2016 with the addition of a third set of locks to accommodate “New Panamax” vessels,⁸ it still faces significant capacity limitations and cannot accommodate the largest ships, such as ultra-large container vessels. During periods of high demand, congestion leads to delays, causing costly disruptions to global supply chains.⁹ The canal relies on freshwater from nearby lakes to operate its locks, and prolonged droughts, exacerbated by unpredictable rainfall patterns, can significantly

⁵ Grady, John, *Risks of Military Confrontation in Arctic Increasing, Say U.S. and Russian Officials*, USNI News (Dec. 25, 2024, 3:41 p.m.), <https://news.usni.org/2024/12/25/risks-of-military-confrontation-in-arctic-increasing-say-u-s-and-russian-officials>.

⁶ IMO Navigation Rules at Straits of Malacca and Singapore, International Register of Shipping (Dec. 7, 2019), <https://intlreg.org/2019/12/07/imo-navigation-rules-at-straits-of-malacca-and-singapore/>.

⁷ Marcus Hand, *Multiple Groups of Robbers Targeting Ships in Singapore Strait*, Seatrade Maritime (Mar. 3, 2025), <https://www.seatrade-maritime.com/piracy/multiple-groups-of-robbers-targeting-ships-in-singapore-strait>.

⁸ Kahuina Miller, and Tetsuro Hyodo, *Impact of the Panama Canal Expansion on Latin American and Caribbean Ports: Difference in Difference (DID) Method*, Journal of Shipping and Trade (July 8, 2021), <https://jshippingandtrade.springeropen.com/articles/10.1186/s41072-021-00091-5#>.

⁹ Drought at the Panama Canal delays energy shipments, increasing shipping costs, U.S. Energy Information Administration (Oct. 23, 2023), <https://www.eia.gov/todayinenergy/detail.php?id=60842#>.

¹ Squire, David, *The Hazards of Navigating the Dover Strait (Pas-de-Calais) Traffic Separation Scheme*, Journal of Navigation (May 2003), https://www.researchgate.net/publication/231921002_The_Hazards_of_Navigating_The_Dover_Strait_Pas-de-Calais_Traffic_Separation_Scheme.

reduce available water levels, impacting its functionality and efficiency. These environmental factors increase the canal's vulnerability to operational disruptions, especially during dry spells.

The Panama Canal also holds substantial geopolitical importance, crucial to the interests of the United States. Political instability or disruptions in its operation could have far-reaching consequences.

Panama's Ship Registry is one of the world's largest ship registries with over 8,000 vessels reportedly registered under the Panamanian flag. Remedial measures the Commission can take in issuing regulations to address conditions unfavorable to shipping in U.S. foreign trade include refusing entry to U.S. ports by vessels registered in countries responsible for creating unfavorable conditions. *See* 46 U.S.C. 42107.

(F.) Strait of Gibraltar

The Strait of Gibraltar, at just eight miles wide, is one of the world's busiest shipping lanes, with heavy traffic and limited space for large vessels, raising the risk of collisions, congestion, and delays, especially during peak periods.¹⁰ Navigational challenges such as strong currents, winds, and fog further complicate passage, while environmental risks like oil spills and pollution, along with strict regulations, create additional constraints. Geopolitical tensions between Spain, Morocco,¹¹ and issues surrounding the status of Gibraltar, along with piracy and smuggling, contribute to security concerns and potential disruptions in the region.

(G.) Suez Canal

The Suez Canal, handling between 10% and 12% of global trade,¹² is one of the busiest waterways in the world. Its narrow width and single-lane format often leads to delays, especially during peak seasons. Events such as the 2021 *Ever Given* blockage highlighted the canal's vulnerabilities, causing massive

trade disruptions,¹³ while its shallow depth makes it prone to weather-related issues, further increasing the risk of accidents. The canal's strategic importance also makes it a focal point for geopolitical tensions, including conflicts involving the Houthis and the Gaza Crisis,¹⁴ as well as threats from piracy and terrorism. Additionally, environmental concerns have arisen due to the potential spread of invasive species by ships passing through the waterway.

(H.) Other Transit Constraints

The Commission notes that other significant constraints affecting U.S. shipping may arise quickly in the global maritime environment. For example, when the Singapore-flagged containership *Dali* struck a bridge in Baltimore, Maryland in March 2024, six people were killed and maritime access to the Port of Baltimore was blocked, a situation that persisted for many weeks and led to losses that have been estimated to reach as high as \$4 billion.¹⁵

(I.) Initiation of Investigation

The Commission will investigate whether constraints in global maritime chokepoints have created unfavorable shipping conditions caused by the laws, regulations or practices of foreign governments or the practices of foreign-flag vessel owners or operators. The Commission "has extensive regulatory duties under the various acts it is charged with administering," and conducting investigations is "essential to the proper exercise" of those duties." 46 CFR 502.281. In particular, the Commission is authorized to initiate investigations on its own motion "when in its discretion the Commission determines that information is required for the purpose of rulemaking or is necessary or helpful in the determination of its policies or the carrying out of its duties, including whether to institute formal proceedings directed toward determining whether

any of the laws which the Commission administers have been violated." 46 CFR 502.282. Among the Commission's duties are to identify in its annual report to Congress "any otherwise concerning practices by ocean common carriers" with certain characteristics identified by Congress. 46 U.S.C. 46106(b)(7). Accordingly, the Commission, upon issuing an Order of Investigation, may authorize its representatives to conduct such an investigation; may hold investigational hearings; may issue orders or subpoenas to gather testimony or documentary evidence; may order that testimony be taken by deposition; and may order the filing of reports or answers to written questions. 46 CFR 502.283 through 502.288; *see generally* 46 CFR part 502, subpart R (Nonadjudicatory Investigations).

At the early stage of the investigation, the Commission will focus on providing a route for interested parties to provide information, perspectives, and proposed solutions. Discussion of remedial measures or any other actions, if needed, would occur later in the process, and would be accompanied by the opportunity for additional public comment.

III. Investigation and Initial Request for Comments

The Commission has determined that the above-described situation meets the threshold requirements for consideration under the relevant regulatory authority. *See* 46 CFR part 502, subpart R. The Commission has therefore determined to initiate an investigation. *See* 46 CFR 502.282. The Commission has designated its General Counsel to lead the investigation. The General Counsel will update the Commission quarterly on the status of constraints in the maritime chokepoints identified herein, as well as any similar issues that may arise, and may propose that the Commission initiate one or more specific proceedings under 46 U.S.C. 42101 and related statutes. To that end, the Commission issues this Order of Investigation. *See* 46 CFR 502.283.

Interested persons are requested to submit written comments containing experiences, arguments, and/or data relevant to the above-described maritime chokepoints, particularly concerning the effects of laws, regulations, practices or other actions by foreign governments, and/or the practices of owners or operators of foreign-flag vessels, on shipping conditions in these chokepoints. The Commission's jurisdiction under 46 CFR 502.282 is broad, and the agency welcomes comments not only from

¹⁰ *Container Ship and Oil Tanker Collide in Strait of Gibraltar*, Containerlift (Dec. 4, 2024), <https://www.containerlift.co.uk/container-ship-and-oil-tanker-collide-in-strait-of-gibraltar/>.

¹¹ *Spain and Morocco: Spain's permissiveness towards its southern neighbor*, University of Navarra, Global Affairs and Strategic Studies (Apr 19, 2023), <https://en.unav.edu/web/global-affairs/espana-y-marruecos-la-permisividad-espanola-ante-el-vecino-del-sur>.

¹² *The Importance of the Suez Canal to Global Trade*, New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, (Apr. 18, 2021), <https://www.mfat.govt.nz/en/trade/mfat-market-reports/the-importance-of-the-suez-canal-to-global-trade-18-april-2021#>.

¹³ Natasha Turak, *Suez Canal Blockage Could Cause Problems for the Globe: Here's What You Need to Know*, CNBC (Mar. 25, 2021), <https://www.cnbc.com/2021/03/25/suez-canal-cargo-ship-blockage-could-cause-problems-for-the-globe.html>.

¹⁴ Kamali et al., *Red Sea Attacks Disrupt Global Trade*, International Monetary Fund, IMFBlog (Mar 7, 2024), <https://www.imf.org/en/Blogs/Articles/2024/03/07/Red-Sea-Attacks-Disrupt-Global-Trade>.

¹⁵ Campbell Robertson and Peter Eavis, *Justice Department Files \$100 Million Claim in Fatal Baltimore Bridge Collapse*, N.Y. Times (Sept. 18, 2024), <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/09/18/us/justice-department-suit-baltimore-bridge-collapse.html>; Jane Byron, *The Baltimore bridge collapse: a \$4 billion question*, Lockton (July 9, 2024) <https://global.lockton.com/news-insights/the-baltimore-bridge-collapse-a-4-billion-question>.

government authorities and container shipping interests, but also from tramp operators, bulk cargo interests, vessel owners, individuals and groups with relevant information on environmental and resource-conservation considerations, and anyone else with relevant information or perspectives on these matters.

In particular, the Commission welcomes information and perspectives on the following:

1. What are the causes, nature, and effects, including financial and environmental effects, of constraints on one or more of the maritime chokepoints described above?
2. To what extent are constraints caused by or attributable to the laws, regulations, practices, actions, or inactions of one or more foreign governments?
3. To what extent are constraints caused by or attributable to the practices, actions, or inactions of owners or operators of foreign-flag vessels?
4. What will likely be the causes, nature, and effects, including financial and environmental effects, of any continued transit constraints during the rest of 2025?
5. What are the best steps the Commission might take, over the short term and the long term, to alleviate transit constraints and their effects?
6. What are the obstacles to implementing measures that would alleviate the above transit constraints and their effects, and how can these be addressed?

As the Commission proceeds with this investigation, it may determine to request additional comment or gather information through other means as authorized under 46 CFR part 502, subpart R.

By the Commission.

David Eng,
Secretary.

[FR Doc. 2025-04042 Filed 3-13-25; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6730-02-P

FEDERAL MEDIATION AND CONCILIATION SERVICE

Stakeholder Survey for Qualitative Feedback on Agency Service Delivery

AGENCY: Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS).

ACTION: 60-Day notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS), invites the public and other Federal Agencies to

take this opportunity to comment on the following information collection request, Stakeholder Survey for Qualitative Feedback on Agency Service Delivery. This information collection request will be submitted for approval to the Office of Management Budget (OMB) in compliance with the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA). This collection was developed to improve the quality of service the Federal Mediation and Conciliation provides to clients.

DATES: Comments must be submitted on or before May 13, 2025.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments, identified by Stakeholder Survey for Qualitative Feedback on Agency Service Delivery, through one of the following methods:

- *Email:* register@fmcs.gov;
- *Mail:* Office of the General Counsel, One Independence Square, 250 E St. SW, Washington, DC 20427.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Karen Pierce, 202-606-3672, kpierce@fmcs.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Copies of the agency questions are available at the following links:

- Collective Bargaining Mediation Survey Questions
- Grievance Mediation Survey Questions
- Relationship Development Facilitation Survey Questions
- Relationship Development and Training Survey Questions

I. Request for Comments

FMCS solicits comments to:

- i. Evaluate whether the proposed collections of information are necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility.
- ii. Enhance the accuracy of the agency's estimates of the burden of the proposed collection of information.
- iii. Enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected.
- iv. Minimize the burden of the collections of information on those who are to respond, including the use of appropriate automated, electronic collection technologies or other forms of information technology.

II. Information Collection Request

Agency: Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service.

Title: Stakeholder Survey for Qualitative Feedback on Agency Service Delivery.

OMB Number: 3076-0017.

Type of Request: Extension without change of a currently approved collection.

Affected Public: Federal government, Private Sector, to include businesses or other for-profits and not-for-profit institutions, and State and local governments.

Frequency: Annually.

Burden: The total annual burden estimate is that FMCS will receive approximately 1,213 responses per year that will take about 3 minutes each to complete.

Information Collection Requirement

Purpose and Description of Data Collection

This information collection provides a means to garner qualitative client and stakeholder feedback in an efficient, timely manner, in accordance with the Administration's commitment to improving service delivery. This feedback will provide insights into client or stakeholder perceptions, experiences, and expectations. The surveys will provide notice of issues with service, or focus attention on areas where communication, training or changes in operations might improve delivery of products or services.

Use of Results

The surveys are not statistical surveys that yield quantitative results that can be generalized to the population of study. These collections will allow for ongoing, collaborative, and actionable communication between the Agency and its clients and stakeholders. It will also allow feedback to contribute directly to improving program management. Responses will be assessed to plan and inform efforts to improve or maintain the quality of service offered to the public. Collecting this information is critical for ensuring quality service offered to the public.

III. The Official Record

The official records are electronic records.

Dated: March 10, 2025.

Alisa Zimmerman,

Deputy General Counsel.

[FR Doc. 2025-04062 Filed 3-13-25; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6732-01-P

FEDERAL RETIREMENT THRIFT INVESTMENT BOARD

Notice of Board Meeting

DATES: March 25, 2025 at 9 a.m. ET.

ADDRESSES: Telephonic. Dial-in (listen only) information: Number: 1-202-599-1426, Code: 525 175 495#; or via web: <https://www.frtib.gov/>.