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# **REC 2 – RECREATION FACILITY USE ASSESSMENT INTERIM TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM**

**KERN RIVER NO. 1 HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT  
*FERC PROJECT NO. 1930***

***PREPARED FOR:***



**February 2025**

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## List of Acronyms

FERC	Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
Forest Service	United States Forest Service
KR1	Kern River No. 1
Project	Kern River No. 1 Hydroelectric Project Relicensing, FERC Project No. 1930
QR Code	Quick Response Code
REC 2 TSP	REC 2 – Recreation Facility Use Assessment Technical Study Plan
SCE	Southern California Edison
SPD	Study Plan Determination
SR-178	State Route 178
TSP	Technical Study Plan
TWG	Technical Working Group

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

This REC 2 – Recreation Facility Use Assessment Interim Technical Memorandum provides the methods and findings of the REC 2 – Recreation Facility Use Assessment Technical Study Plan (REC 2 TSP). The REC 2 TSP was conducted in support of Southern California Edison’s (SCE) Kern River No. 1 (KR1) Hydroelectric Project (Project) relicensing, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) Project No. 1930. The REC 2 TSP was included in SCE’s Revised Study Plan submitted to FERC on February 13, 2024 (SCE 2024). In its March 14, 2024, Study Plan Determination (SPD), FERC approved the REC 2 TSP with modifications (FERC 2024).

The recreation facility use assessments began in May 2024 and are ongoing. Data collection and analysis through October 2024 is summarized below.

## 2.0 STUDY OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the recreation facility use assessment, as outlined in the REC 2 TSP (SCE 2024), include the following:

- Characterize recreation use at the developed public recreation facilities in the Project vicinity (non-Project facilities).
- Characterize dispersed recreation use at undeveloped sites along the bypass reach accessible from State Route 178 (SR-178) (non-Project facilities).
- Characterize recreation use along Project trails that provide access to the lower Kern River or to an existing United States Forest Service (Forest Service) trail in the vicinity of the Project.
- Estimate future recreation use in the vicinity of the Project using existing use data and published recreation trends information.
- Document potential public safety issues and existing programs and measures that are implemented by SCE to protect public health and safety.

## 3.0 STUDY AREA AND STUDY SITES

The study area includes the four developed day use areas in the vicinity of the Project (non-Project facilities), five undeveloped river access points along SR-178 (along the bypass reach)<sup>1</sup> (non-Project facilities), and five Project trails; a total of 14 sites. Refer to Appendix A for Maps 3-1a–g depicting the location of the following study sites.

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<sup>1</sup> A bypass reach is a segment of a river downstream of a diversion facility where Project operations result in the diversion of a portion of the water from the river.

The four non-Project developed day use facilities are:

- Democrat Raft Take-out Boating Site
- Upper Richbar Day Use Area
- Lower Richbar Day Use Area
- Live Oak Day Use Area

The five non-Project undeveloped river access points along SR-178 (from upstream to downstream):

- River Access Site 1 (Near SR-178 postmile KER 24.0)
- River Access Site 2 (Near SR-178 postmile KER 21.0)
- River Access Site 3 (Between SR-178 postmile KER 18.0 and KER 19.0)
- River Access Site 4 (Near SR-178 postmile KER 18.0)
- River Access Site 5 (Near SR-178 postmile KER 17.0)

The five Project trails<sup>2</sup> are:

- Democrat Gage Trail
- Cow Flat Creek Trail
- Lucas Creek Trail
- Dougherty Creek Trail
- Stark Creek Trail

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<sup>2</sup> The REC 2 TSP included “Steel Flume Trail” as a Project trail that connects to the Powerhouse Trail. In August 2024, field staff confirmed that the portion of the Steel Flume Trail that connects to SR-178 is no longer present on the landscape (was not visible/identifiable).

## **4.0 METHODS**

Study implementation followed the methods described in the REC 2 TSP (SCE 2024).

### **4.1 STUDY PLAN VARIANCES**

There are two variances from the REC 2 TSP approved with modifications in FERC's SPD (FERC 2024):

- The REC 2 TSP indicated that the survey technicians intercepting recreation users would use a survey form that includes questions for two user groups: day users and whitewater boaters, and that the survey form for users identifying as whitewater boaters would be designed to reflect collection of information aligned with the REC 3 – Whitewater Boating TSP objectives. The intercept survey form for day users (refer to Appendix B) includes a question to identify whether intercepted recreationists are whitewater boating and asks a follow-up question about whether the flows in the river affected the users' ability to participate in their recreation activity (whitewater boating/rafting), but does not include the full suite of questions associated with collecting all the information necessary to meet the REC 3 – Whitewater Boating TSP objectives. These objectives are being met through implementation of the REC 3 – Whitewater Boating TSP, a process that included distribution of an online structured interview survey questionnaire, and follow-up structured interviews with individuals that have direct experience whitewater boating the bypass reach.
- The REC 2 TSP indicated that on each day a vehicle count is conducted survey technicians would complete the count during two of three randomly selected shifts per day and would conduct the counts twice per shift: once while travelling west to east (upstream) on SR-178, and once while travelling east to west (downstream) on SR-178. Due to factors of both safety and timing, survey technicians conducted counts only once per shift according to the following methodology: survey technicians generally begin each shift at the Democrat Raft Take-out Boating Site and conduct counts and intercept surveys at each consecutive site heading west (downstream) on SR-178 until they reach the KR1 Powerhouse. Survey technicians then turn around and return to the Democrat Raft Take-out Boating Site to prepare for their next shift. This methodology allows for safe access to each of the river-side (right side of the road) developed and undeveloped recreation areas to complete the counts. As a result, vehicle counts are conducted once per shift rather than twice per shift.

## **4.2 CHARACTERIZE RECREATION USE AT DEVELOPED RECREATION FACILITIES AND AT UNDEVELOPED LOCATIONS IDENTIFIED AS POTENTIAL RIVER ACCESS POINTS ALONG THE BYPASS REACH**

To characterize recreation use at developed recreation facilities and at undeveloped locations identified as river access points along SR-178/the bypass reach, SCE has completed the following:

- Utilized existing information to characterize likely recreation use activities undertaken by visitors at developed public recreation day use facilities and at undeveloped river access points along the SR-178.
- In collaboration with the Recreation Technical Working Group (TWG), confirmed five undeveloped river access points along the SR-178 at which to conduct vehicle counts and opportunistic in-person intercept surveys.
- In collaboration with the Recreation TWG, developed survey forms (in English and Spanish) to collect information from day users at developed recreation sites at the undeveloped river access points along SR-178. Refer to Appendix B for the day use survey forms.

Following the above steps, SCE initiated field surveys involving (1) on-the-ground vehicle counts, and (2) opportunistic in-person intercept surveys (intercept surveys), at the five undeveloped river access points along SR-178. In addition, SCE installed a physical tamper-proof survey box at each of the day use facilities (four survey boxes in total). SCE initiated vehicle counts and intercept surveys on May 15, 2024. The vehicle counts and intercept surveys will continue to be implemented until the end of the survey period in April 2025. SCE installed the survey boxes in January 2025. The following describes the methodology being used to conduct the vehicle counts and intercept surveys; and provides additional information about the survey boxes.

- **Vehicle Counts:**
  - During the vehicle counts, the following information is being collected: date, time, and number of vehicles parked at each facility.
  - The vehicle counts are being conducted as follows:
    - At developed recreation sites that are open year-round: Democrat Raft Take-out Boating Site and Upper Richbar Day Use Area
      - Survey technicians are counting the number of vehicles observed four days per month (two randomly selected weekdays and two randomly selected weekend days) for one year May 2024–April 2025 (total of 48 days).



- Survey technicians also counted the number of vehicles observed on Memorial Day Weekend (Saturday, May 25, 2024), Fourth of July Holiday (Thursday, July 4, 2024), and on Labor Day Weekend (September 2, 2024), bringing the total days that will be surveyed over the course of the study period to 51.
- Survey technicians worked and are working in teams of two: one person driving and one person counting.
- At developed recreation sites that are open only for part of the year (generally May to October): Lower Richbar Day Use Area and Live Oak Day Use Area
  - A survey technician counted the number of vehicles observed four days per month (two randomly selected weekdays and two randomly selected weekend days) when the sites were open.<sup>3</sup>
  - Survey technicians also counted the number of vehicles observed on Memorial Day Weekend (Saturday, May 25, 2024), Fourth of July Holiday (Thursday, July 4, 2024), and on Labor Day Weekend (September 2, 2024), bringing the total days that were surveyed over the course of the study period to 31.
  - Survey technicians worked in teams of two: one person driving and one person counting.
- At the undeveloped river access points along SR-178:
  - Survey technicians are counting the number of vehicles observed four days per month (two randomly selected weekdays and two randomly selected weekend days) for one year May 2024–April 2025 (total of 48 days).
  - Survey technicians also counted the number of vehicles observed on Memorial Day Weekend (Saturday, May 25, 2024), Fourth of July Holiday (Thursday, July 4, 2024), and on Labor Day Weekend (September 2, 2024), bringing the total days that will be surveyed over the course of the study period to 51.
  - Survey technicians worked and are working in teams of two: one person driving and one person counting.

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<sup>3</sup> Lower Richbar Day Use Area and Live Oak Day Use Area were closed during the first three survey periods in May 2024 (May 15, 17 and 19). Both day use areas were open during vehicle counts and intercept surveys conducted on May 25, 2024 and during counts/intercept surveys conducted through late October. Both sites were closed during the first counts in November.

- The selected days per month during which data has been collected did not and will not include days when it is raining or when substantive precipitation is forecast, or days when SR-178 is closed for access.<sup>4</sup>
- On each day a vehicle count is conducted, the vehicle count is being completed during two of three randomly selected shifts:
  - Shift 1 (7 a.m. to 11 a.m.)
  - Shift 2 (11 a.m. to 3 p.m.)
  - Shift 3 (3 p.m. to 7 p.m.)
- The vehicle count is conducted once per shift resulting in a total of two vehicle counts conducted per site on each of the survey days.<sup>5</sup> Generally survey technicians begin each shift at the Democrat Raft Take-out Boating Site and drive west (downstream).
- **Opportunistic in-person intercept surveys:**
  - Opportunistic in-person intercept surveys are being conducted by two bilingual (Spanish/English) survey technicians. Opportunistic in-person surveys are conducted on the same day and using the same methodology as the vehicle counts (i.e., two of three randomly selected shifts/day), but by a different pair of survey technicians than are conducting the vehicle counts. Surveys are being conducted with reference to a survey intercept form (in Spanish and English).
  - Survey technicians opportunistically intercept recreation users in parking lots or other safe-to-access locations during the vehicle counts to conduct surveys using the day use survey form. The following describes the methodology for conducting the surveys at both the developed recreation sites and at the undeveloped river access points along SR-178.
    - At the developed day use sites:
      - The survey technicians park at the developed recreation site and complete a walking circuit of the parking lot facilities (picnic tables and barbeques), and adjacent river locations to seek recreationists to participate in the survey.

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<sup>4</sup> On May 15, 2024, vehicle counts were conducted at all sites just once (during one shift) due to a mid-day closure of SR-178 after a fire ignition up canyon from Democrat Dam.

<sup>5</sup> During some of the initial vehicle count survey days in May (May 15, 17 and 19) technicians counted vehicles more than twice per day at some sites (up to three times) and only once per day at some sites. By May 25, survey technicians had established a standard methodology for completing the counts (once per shift/ two shifts per day).

- Survey technicians remain at the site for no less than 15-minutes if there are scant visitors present, and no more than 30-minutes if the developed recreation area is busy. If a survey technician is engaged in conducting a survey that extends beyond the 30-minute period, the technician finishes the survey before departing.
- If a recreationist declines to partake in the survey the field technician records the declined survey and distributes a postcard-size version of the survey flyer (in English and Spanish) with an online access code (Quick Response Code or QR code).
- At the undeveloped river access points along SR-178:
  - During each vehicle count shift, survey technicians may conduct opportunistic in-person surveys once at each of the five locations if it is safe to pull to the shoulder to conduct the survey.
  - If deemed safe, survey technicians seek recreationists in and around the parking area and adjacent river locations to participate in the survey. If a recreationist declines to partake in the survey the field technician records the declined survey and distributes a postcard-size version of the survey flyer (in English and Spanish) with an online access code (QR code).
- **Survey Boxes**
  - SCE received approval from the Forest Service to install physical tamper-proof survey boxes (survey boxes) at each of the developed recreation sites on December 16, 2024. The survey boxes were installed in January 2025 and include self-survey forms in English and in Spanish (refer to Appendix B). The box signage also includes a QR code to allow visitors to complete the survey form online, if preferred. The survey boxes will be maintained for one year (365 days).

Results of this data collection will be provided in the revised draft REC 2 Technical Memorandum.

### 4.3 CHARACTERIZE RECREATION USE AT SELECT PROJECT TRAILS

To characterize recreation use at select Project trails, SCE has completed the following:

- In collaboration with the Recreation TWG, SCE confirmed the five trailheads at which to locate survey boxes.<sup>6</sup>
- In collaboration with the Recreation TWG, SCE developed survey forms (in English and Spanish) to collect information from trail users. Refer to Appendix B for the Project trails survey forms. SCE also developed a set of maps to include beneath the lid of each survey box to support accurate trail survey results.
- To characterize recreation use at select Project trails, SCE is in the process collecting data via the following methods:
  - Use of temporary infrared trail cameras (trail cameras). SCE installed trail cameras on November 14, 2024 along each select Project trail within approximately 400 yards of each trailhead. SCE is collecting the trail camera data for a 12-month period (through November 15, 2025). The trail cameras are and will continue to be regularly serviced by SCE, and the data from each camera downloaded and input into a database.
  - Use of self-survey boxes. Concurrent with installation of the survey boxes at each of the four developed recreation sites (see Section 4.2 above), SCE installed survey boxes along each of the Project trails in January 2025. The survey boxes include self-survey forms in English and in Spanish (refer to Appendix B), maps to orient trail users to their location relative to the questions on the survey forms, and signage to direct trail users to complete the survey form within the survey box. The signage also includes a QR code to allow visitors to complete the survey form online, if preferred. The survey boxes will be maintained for one year (365 days).
  - Interviewing individuals that frequent the Project area. SCE is in the process of talking to SCE personnel, Sequoia National Forest recreation planners, and other interested stakeholders that frequent the Project area. This data gathering is ongoing.

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<sup>6</sup> The five trails are: Democrat Gage Trail; Cow Flat Creek Trail; Lucas Creek Trail; Dougherty Creek Trail; and Stark Creek Trail. The trails leading up to the KR1 Forebay (Penstock/Forebay Trails across SR-178 from the KR1 Powerhouse) were considered as a location for installation of a trail survey box, but after further review, these trails were excluded as an installation location due to security and safety concerns. The Penstock/Forebay Trails are included on the Project trail survey form and in the survey box map included in the lid of each trail survey box so that individuals have the opportunity to note if they used those trails in the past.

#### **4.4 ESTIMATE FUTURE RECREATION USE AND DEMAND**

To estimate future recreation use and demand SCE will:

- Utilize census data and information available in current relevant federal, state, and local comprehensive plans (including the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan and supporting survey information) to identify population projections and to document outdoor recreation use trends and needs.
- Utilize the recreation use data collected in this study along with trends and population projections to estimate future recreation needs over the license period (assumed to be 50 years).
- Determine whether future public recreation needs can be met in the vicinity of the Project.

This information will be provided in the revised draft REC 2 Technical Memorandum.

#### **4.5 DOCUMENT PUBLIC SAFETY**

To document public safety SCE will:

- Identify and describe existing programs and measures implemented by SCE to protect public health and safety (i.e., buoy lines, fencing, signage, and alarms). The inventory will include a description of the condition of the existing safety features.
- Characterize the number, type, and location of safety incidents related to recreation that have occurred in the vicinity of the Project over the past ten years. This effort will be conducted by reviewing existing records and databases maintained by the FERC and the Forest Service and by consulting with SCE staff.

This information will be provided in the revised draft REC 2 Technical Memorandum.

#### **5.0 RESULTS SUMMARY**

Vehicle counts and day use surveys began in May 2024 and will continue to be conducted every month for a 12-month period, through April 2025. This data summary reflects the data collected from the beginning of the survey period – in May 2024 through the end of October 2024. Surveys were conducted at least four times per month—two weekdays and two weekends—and were also conducted on the Saturday of Memorial Day weekend, on the Fourth of July, and on the Monday of Labor Day weekend. The counts and surveys were conducted at:

- The four developed day use facilities: Democrat Raft Take-out Boating Site; Upper Richbar Day Use Area; Lower Richbar Day Use Area; and Live Oak Day Use Area
- The five undeveloped river access points along SR-178.

## 5.1 VEHICLE COUNT: DATA SUMMARY

Survey technicians counted vehicles parked at one of four developed day use areas or at one of five undeveloped river access points along SR-178 on a total of 27 survey days between May 15 and October 27. A total of 653 vehicles were recorded during these vehicle counts, an average of 24 vehicles counted per day when counting occurred.<sup>7</sup>

**Distribution of vehicles by weekday, weekend and holiday:** Vehicles were counted on 12 weekend days, on 12 weekdays, and three holiday days. On average, 27 vehicles were counted on a weekend day, 13 vehicles were counted on a weekday and 60 were counted on a holiday weekend day. A total of seven of the vehicles counted over the survey period had boat racks on their vehicle.

**Distribution of vehicles by month:** Based only on weekend days and weekdays (not holiday weekend days), more vehicles were counted on the average day in June than during the other months in the survey period. Table 5-1 provides the average number of vehicles counted per day by month.

**Table 5-1. Average Number of Vehicles Parked Per Day by Month**

Month 2024	Average No. Vehicles Counted/Day
May	19
June	23
July	16
August	20
September	20
October	22

Source: Survey data collected from May to October 2024.

Note: Average excludes vehicles counted during holiday weekend days.

<sup>7</sup> This total represents the aggregate of vehicle counts per site per day. On most days the vehicle count was completed at each site once per each of two shifts. For example: Shift 1, 7 a.m. to 11 a.m. and Shift 2, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

**Distribution of vehicles by location:** More vehicles parked at Upper Richbar Day Use Area than at other sites (37 percent of the total vehicles), followed by Democrat Raft Take-out Boating Site (25 percent of total vehicles), Lower Richbar (12 percent of total vehicles), and Live Oak (5 percent of total vehicles). Collectively 21 percent of total vehicles counted parked at the five undeveloped river access points along SR-178. Table 5-2 illustrates the total number of vehicles parked at each developed day use facility and at each of the five undeveloped river access points along SR-178 on weekends, Table 5-3 the total number parked on weekdays, and Table 5-4 the total number parked on a holiday weekend.

**Table 5-2. Number of Parked Vehicles by Site on Weekends, including Informal Parking Spots**

Month 2024	Total Vehicles	Site								
		Dem	URB	LRB	LO	RS1	RS2	RS3	RS4	RS5
May	49	4	25	5	1	3	4	0	7	0
June	64	13	19	11	4	0	0	6	6	5
July	50	11	17	6	3	5	2	1	1	4
August	57	11	17	9	5	0	2	4	4	5
September	48	11	18	8	4	0	0	1	4	2
October	50	17	20	4	2	0	0	0	3	4
<b>May–Oct 2024 Totals</b>	<b>318</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>20</b>

Source: Survey data collected from May to October 2024.

Note: Three cars with boat racks were observed on weekends from May–October. Two at Democrat and one at River Access Site 4.

Key: Dem = Democrat Raft Take-out Boating Site  
 LO = Live Oak Day Use  
 LRB = Lower Richbar Day Use  
 RS1 = River Access Site 1  
 RS2 = River Access Site 2  
 RS3 = River Access Site 3  
 RS4 = River Access Site 4  
 RS5 = River Access Site 5  
 URB = Upper Richbar Day Use

**Table 5-3. Number of Parked Vehicles by Site on Weekdays, including Informal Parking Spots**

Month 2024	Total Vehicles	Site								
		Dem	URB	LRB	LO	RS1	RS2	RS3	RS4	RS5
May	25	3	6	1	1	10	2	0	2	0
June	29	13	8	3	1	0	0	0	2	2
July	14	4	5	3	2	0	0	0	0	0
August	21	4	6	4	0	1	0	1	2	3
September	30	9	6	3	2	0	1	2	4	3
October	36	10	18	2	2	0	2	1	0	1
<b>May–Oct 2024 Totals</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>

Source: Survey data collected from May to October 2024.

Note: Three cars with boat racks were observed on weekdays from May–October. One at Democrat and two at Upper Richbar.

Key: Dem = Democrat Raft Take-out Boating Site  
 LO = Live Oak Day Use  
 LRB = Lower Richbar Day Use  
 RS1 = River Access Site 1  
 RS2 = River Access Site 2  
 RS3 = River Access Site 3  
 RS4 = River Access Site 4  
 RS5 = River Access Site 5  
 URB = Upper Richbar Day Use

**Table 5-4. Number of Parked Vehicles by Site on Holidays, including Informal Parking Spots**

Holiday	Total Vehicles	Site								
		Dem	URB	LRB	LO	RS1	RS2	RS3	RS4	RS5
Memorial Day Weekend (Saturday May 25, 2024)	70	10	36	4	4	4	2	0	3	7
Fourth of July Holiday (Thursday July 4, 2024)	79	30	30	9	3	1	0	0	3	3
Labor Day Weekend (Monday September 2, 2024)	31	11	12	3	0	4	0	1	0	0
<b>May–Oct 2024 Totals</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>10</b>

Source: Survey data collected from May to October 2024.

Note: One car with a boat rack was observed on July 4, 2024 at Democrat.

Key: Dem = Democrat Raft Take-out Boating Site  
 LO = Live Oak Day Use  
 LRB = Lower Richbar Day Use  
 RS1 = River Access Site 1  
 RS2 = River Access Site 2  
 RS3 = River Access Site 3  
 RS4 = River Access Site 4  
 RS5 = River Access Site 5  
 URB = Upper Richbar Day Use



**Volume of vehicles compared to capacity:** Across all developed recreation day use facilities, there are a total of 91 designated parking spaces (refer to REC 1 – Facility Condition Assessment for details on parking capacity per facility). Additionally, the five undeveloped river access points along SR-178 are estimated to accommodate up to 25 vehicles. Therefore, in total, surveyors tracked the occupancy of 116 parking spaces during their observations. Based on the average number of vehicles counted per survey day (24), 20 percent of the total parking capacity was occupied on an average day when vehicle counts occurred.

- At Democrat Raft Take-out Boating Site between 6 percent and 21 percent of the estimated parking was filled on average (Table 5-5).
- At Upper Richbar Day Use Area between 4 percent and 26 percent of the estimated parking was filled on average (Table 5-6).
- At Lower Richbar Day Use Area between 6 percent and 21 percent of the estimated parking was filled on average (Table 5-7).
- At Live Oak Day Use Area between 1 percent and 6 percent of the estimated parking was filled on average (Table 5-8).
- Among the undeveloped river access points along SR-178 between 10 percent and 27 percent of the estimated parking was filled on average (Table 5-9).

The data indicates that at no point during the survey period did surveyors observe any of the developed day use parking lots fill to capacity, however in a follow-up interview with the survey technician overseeing in-person interviews at the day use areas, the survey technician said they remembered the day use areas being particularly busy during holiday periods (especially during Memorial Day weekend and 4<sup>th</sup> of July weekend) with lines of vehicles entering and exiting the smaller day use areas (Live Oak Day Use Area and Lower Richbar Day Use Area).

**Table 5-5. Percentage of Available Parking Filled at Democrat Rafting Take-out Boating Site**

	<b>Weekends</b>	<b>Weekdays</b>	<b>Holidays</b>
Average Percentage of Parking Filled	13%	6%	21%
Maximum Percentage of Parking Filled	36%	14%	73%

Source: Survey data collected from May to October 2024.

Note: Democrat Raft Take-out Boating site has 22 estimated parking spots.

**Table 5-6. Percentage of Available Parking Filled at Upper Richbar Day Use Area**

	<b>Weekends</b>	<b>Weekdays</b>	<b>Holidays</b>
Average Percentage of Parking Filled	12%	4%	26%
Maximum Percentage of Parking Filled	36%	7%	55%

Source: Survey data collected from May to October 2024.

Note: Upper Richbar Day Use Area has 42 estimated parking spots.

**Table 5-7. Percentage of Available Parking Filled at Lower Richbar Day Use Area**

	<b>Weekends</b>	<b>Weekdays</b>	<b>Holidays</b>
Average Percentage of Parking Filled	17%	6%	21%
Maximum Percentage of Parking Filled	55%	27%	64%

Source: Survey data collected from May to October 2024.

Note: Lower Richbar Day Use Area has 11 estimated parking spots.

**Table 5-8. Percentage of Available Parking Filled at Live Oak Day Use Area**

	<b>Weekends</b>	<b>Weekdays</b>	<b>Holidays</b>
Average Percentage of Parking Filled	4%	1%	6%
Maximum Percentage of Parking Filled	13%	6%	19%

Source: Survey data collected from May to October 2024.

Note: Live Oak Day Use Area has 16 parking spots.

**Table 5-9. Percentage of Available Parking Filled at Undeveloped River Access Points Along SR-178 (cumulative)**

	<b>Weekends</b>	<b>Weekdays</b>	<b>Holidays</b>
Average Percentage of Parking Filled	17%	10%	27%
Maximum Percentage of Parking Filled	133%	250%	150%

Source: Survey data collected from May to October 2024.

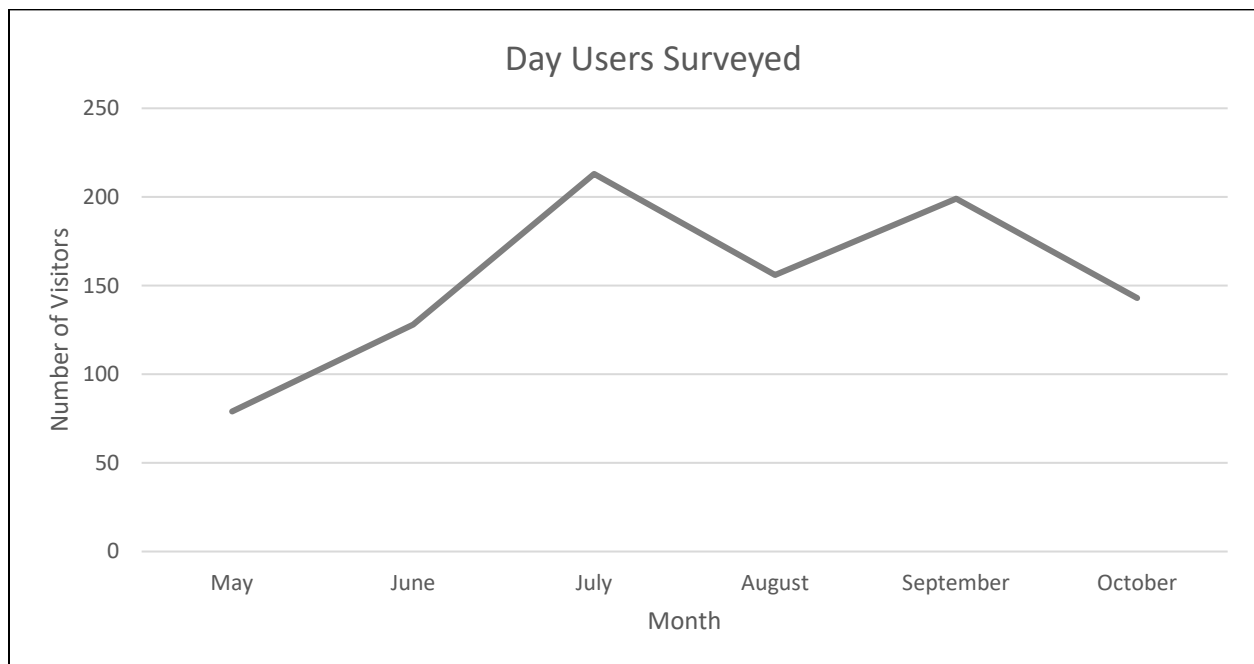
Note: Among the five undeveloped river access points along SR-178 there is an estimated capacity for 25 vehicles to park. Parking capacity estimates were surpassed at River Access Site 1 (parking capacity 2 vehicles) and River Access Site 3 (parking capacity 3 vehicles) on some survey days.

## 5.2 DAY USE SURVEY FORM: DATA SUMMARY

From May to October 2024, survey technicians collected or received 251 survey forms representing 918 individual day users. Peak visitation occurred during the month of July, followed by September. Figure 5-1 illustrates the number of day users surveyed by month. The average group size of day users was three to four people. Table 5-10 indicates the number of respondents that participated in the survey at each developed day use area. No day users were surveyed at the five undeveloped river access points. As shown, 38 percent of surveys were completed by day users encountered at Democrat Raft Take-out Boating Site, 39 percent at Upper Richbar Day Use, 15 percent at Lower Richbar Day Use, and 8 percent at Live Oak Day Use.

- **Demographics:** The survey results from May to October 2024 yielded the following information about day users:
  - Survey respondents ranged in age from under 16 to over 70. Approximately 24 percent of respondents were between 30 and 39 years of age and another 23 percent of respondents between 40 and 49 years of age (Table 5-11).
  - Most respondents (51 percent) identified their ethnicity as White, followed by Latino (43 percent), Asian (6 percent), and other ethnicity (less than 1 percent) (Table 5-12).
  - Sixty six percent (66 percent) of respondents indicated their total household income was between \$41,000 to \$80,000 (Table 5-13), while approximately 20 percent indicated their household income was less than \$40,000, and 14 percent indicated their household income was greater than \$81,000.
  - Only 25 percent of respondents elected to identify their home zip code. Of these all (100 percent) had a zip code from within California; 69 percent indicated their home zip code as within the Bakersfield area (available zip codes 93301-93390).
- **Primary Recreation Activity:** Picnicking was the most described primary recreation activity (45 percent), followed by hiking, walking, or trail use (17 percent) and fishing (16 percent). Twenty-two percent (22 percent) of respondents indicated they were participating in a water-related activity. This activity was primarily fishing (16 percent), with just 4 percent of respondents indicating their primary activity was whitewater rafting or boating, and 2 percent indicating their primary activity was swimming or wading. Of respondents who identified a water-related activity as their primary recreation activity that day, none reported that flows had a negative impact on their experience (five people did not respond to how flows impacted their experience). See Table 5-14 for a complete list of day user primary activity by percentage.

- **Scenic Quality:** All respondents rated the scenic quality of the lower Kern River area as good or very good between May and October 2024. Specifically, of the 251 survey responses, 35 percent of day users rated the scenic quality as “good” and 65 percent as “very good.”
- **Day User Satisfaction:** Most respondents listed their satisfaction in all areas as neutral, satisfied, or very satisfied. Primary complaints in satisfaction included cleanliness of bathrooms and maintenance of the road down to the Democrat Raft Take-out Boating Site. See Table 5-15 for satisfaction of day users by percentage.
- **Anglers:** In the angler specific portion of the survey 78 of 251 respondents indicated they had previously fished on the lower Kern River. One individual indicated flows negatively affected their angling experience. The individual stated that flows were too high in summer, too low in winter, and too low in the fall. Of anglers surveyed, spin fishing with bait was the most popular fishing gear and tackle. Respondents fished most frequently during the fall (34 percent of respondents), and only slightly less frequently in the winter (30 percent of respondents) and spring (28 percent of respondents). Significantly less respondents indicated they fished in the summer, only 8 percent. Most respondents identified that they fished primarily for fun rather than food. Table 5-16, Table 5-17, and Table 5-18 summarize responses to the angler-specific portion of the survey.



**Figure 5-1. Day Users Surveyed by Month, May–October 2024**

**Table 5-10. Number of Respondents that Participated in the Survey by Site**

Democrat Raft Take-out Boating Site		Upper Richbar Day Use Area		Lower Richbar Day Use Area		Live Oak Day Use Area	
People	Percent	People	Percent	People	Percent	People	Percent
344	38%	360	39%	139	15%	75	8%

Source: Survey data collected from May to October 2024.

**Table 5-11. Day User Age Distribution by Percent**

U16	16-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70+
14.1%	8.4%	14.2%	24.4%	23.3%	12.3%	3.0%	0.3%

Source: Survey data collected from May to October 2024.

**Table 5-12. Day User Ethnicity by Percent**

Latino	White	Asian	Other (Mixed Ethnicity)
43%	51%	6%	1%

Source: Survey data collected from May to October 2024.

**Table 5-13. Day User Total Household Income by Percent**

Less than \$40,000	\$41,000-\$80,000	\$81,000 and above	Did not respond
20%	66%	14%	1%

Source: Survey data collected from May to October 2024.

**Table 5-14. Day User Primary Recreation Activity**

Type of Activity	Percentage of Day Users Participating in Activity	Number of Day Users Participating in Activity
Picnicking	53%	488
Hiking/Walking/Trail use	17%	151
Fishing	16%	146
Scenic Driving	6%	58
Whitewater boating/rafting	4%	37
Swimming/wading	2%	19
Viewing Wildlife	1%	11
No Response	1%	8

Source: Survey data collected from May to October 2024.

**Table 5-15. Day User Satisfaction by Percent**

Category	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
Overall satisfaction of your trip	0%	0%	0.8%	68.4%	30.8%
Satisfaction of your primary activity	0%	0%	0.4%	55.8%	43.8%
Cost of facility access fee	0%	0%	3.6%	66.0%	30.4%
River access	0%	0.4%	3.2%	63.5%	32.9%
Number of people encountered/crowdedness	0%	0%	4.0%	68.3%	27.7%
Available parking when you arrived	0%	0.8%	1.6%	61.6%	35.9%
Feeling of safety	0%	0%	1.6%	73.5%	24.9%
Adequacy of site access for persons with disabilities	0%	0.4%	6.0%	63.9%	29.7%
Scenery at this site/area	0%	0.5%	2.8%	66.3%	30.5%
Maintenance (physical condition) of facilities	0.8%	2.8%	25.4%	49.2%	21.8%
Cleanliness of facilities	0.4%	6.0%	28.1%	43.8%	21.7%
Access to restrooms, shower, and drinking water	0%	0.8%	8.1%	71.7%	19.4%
Informational/education opportunities	0%	0%	6.8%	71.9%	21.3%
Flows in the river	0%	0%	2.5%	72.1%	25.4%

Source: Survey data collected from May to October 2024.

**Table 5-16. Anglers Tackle Type by Percent**

Spin Fish with Lures	Spin Fish with Bait	Fly Fish
35%	40%	25%

Source: Survey data collected from May to October 2024.

**Table 5-17. Fishing Frequency by Season**

Spring (March–May)	Summer (June–August)	Fall (September–November)	Winter (December–February)
28%	8%	34%	30%

Source: Survey data collected from May to October 2024.

**Table 5-18. Primary Reason for Fishing by Percentage**

Food	Fun	No Response
36%	63%	1%

Source: Survey data collected from May to October 2024.

## 6.0 STUDY SPECIFIC CONSULTATION

The following study specific consultation was conducted:

- **Day use area intercept survey form and Project Trail survey form:** In collaboration with the Recreation TWG, SCE developed survey forms (in English and Spanish) to collect information from (1) day users at developed and undeveloped sites and (2) from visitors utilizing the select Project trails. Refer to Appendix B for the day use and Project trail survey forms.
- **Identification of undeveloped river access locations to survey:** In collaboration with the Recreation TWG, SCE confirmed five undeveloped river access locations along SR-178 at which to conduct vehicle counts and opportunistic in-person intercept surveys.
- **Survey boxes.** SCE received approval from the Forest Service to install survey boxes at each of the developed recreation sites and at trailheads on December 16, 2024 (refer to Appendix C). See Appendix B for the survey form. In collaboration with the Recreation TWG SCE confirmed the five trailheads at which to install the survey boxes.
- **Trail cameras:** SCE received approval from the Forest Service to install infrared trail cameras to monitor activity on the five Project trails on October 22, 2024 (refer to Appendix C).

## 7.0 OUTSTANDING STUDY PLAN ELEMENTS

Three outstanding study plan elements remain for the Recreation Facility Use Assessment:

- **In-person Surveys and Vehicle Counts:** Opportunistic in-person surveys and vehicle count surveys will continue to be collected through April 2025.
- **Trail Cameras:** In November 2024, SCE installed infrared trail cameras at five discrete locations to capture use. Data will be collected for one year.
- **Survey Boxes:** Nine survey boxes were installed at both trailheads and developed day use areas in January 2025. The survey boxes will be maintained for one year.

The anticipated schedule to complete the outstanding study plan elements are identified in Table 7-1.

**Table 7-1. Schedule for Completion of Outstanding Study Plan Elements**

Date	Activity
April 2025	Completion of day use surveys and vehicle counts
November 2025	Completion of trail camera study plan element
January 2026	Completion of survey box study plan element
February 2026	Removal of survey boxes at trailheads and developed day use areas
August 2025	Distribute revised draft technical memo <sup>1</sup> to stakeholders
October 2025-November 2025	Resolve stakeholder comments
December 2025	Distribute revised technical memo in Draft License Application
March 2026	File final technical memo with FERC, inclusive of all data

<sup>1</sup> Technical memo will include data available at the time of preparation.

## 8.0 REFERENCES

FERC (Federal Energy Regulatory Commission). 2024. Study Plan Determination for the Kern River No. 1 Hydroelectric Project. March 14.

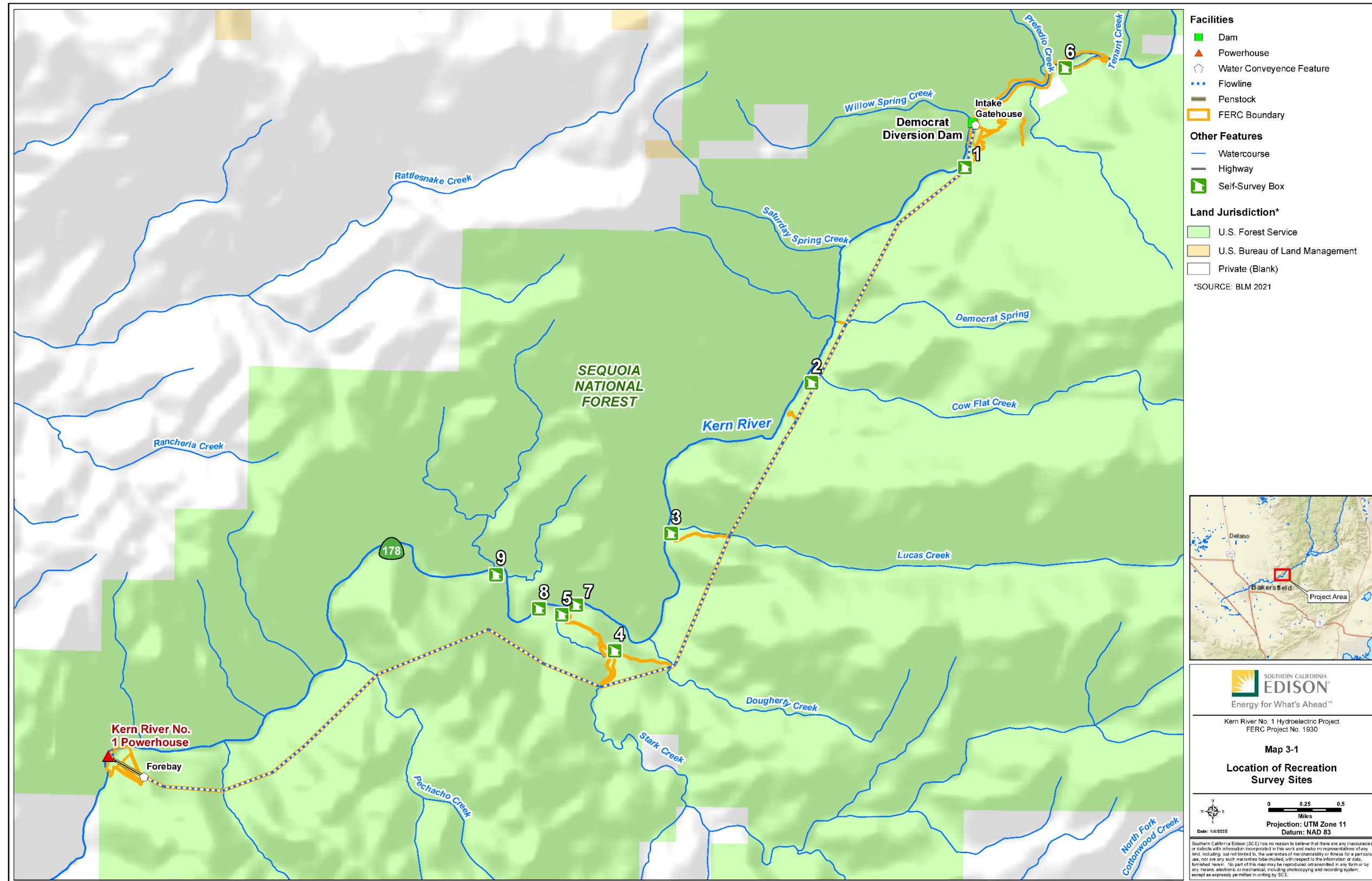
Forest Service (United States Forest Service). 2024. Democrat Raft Take-out Boating Site. Accessed: October 2024. Available online: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/recarea/sequoia/recarea/?recid=79690>

SCE (Southern California Edison). 2024. Kern River No. 1 Hydroelectric Project (FERC Project No. 1930) Revised Study Plan. February 13.



# **APPENDIX A**

## **Maps**



C:\Users\laclarel\OneDrive - Stantec\Documents\CON01\datagis\_projects\237800343\03\_datagis\_cad\map\Kern River 1\Recreation\Map\SC\_E\_Kern1\_SelfSurveyBoxes\_17111\_02.mxd

**Map 3-1. Location of Recreation Survey Sites**



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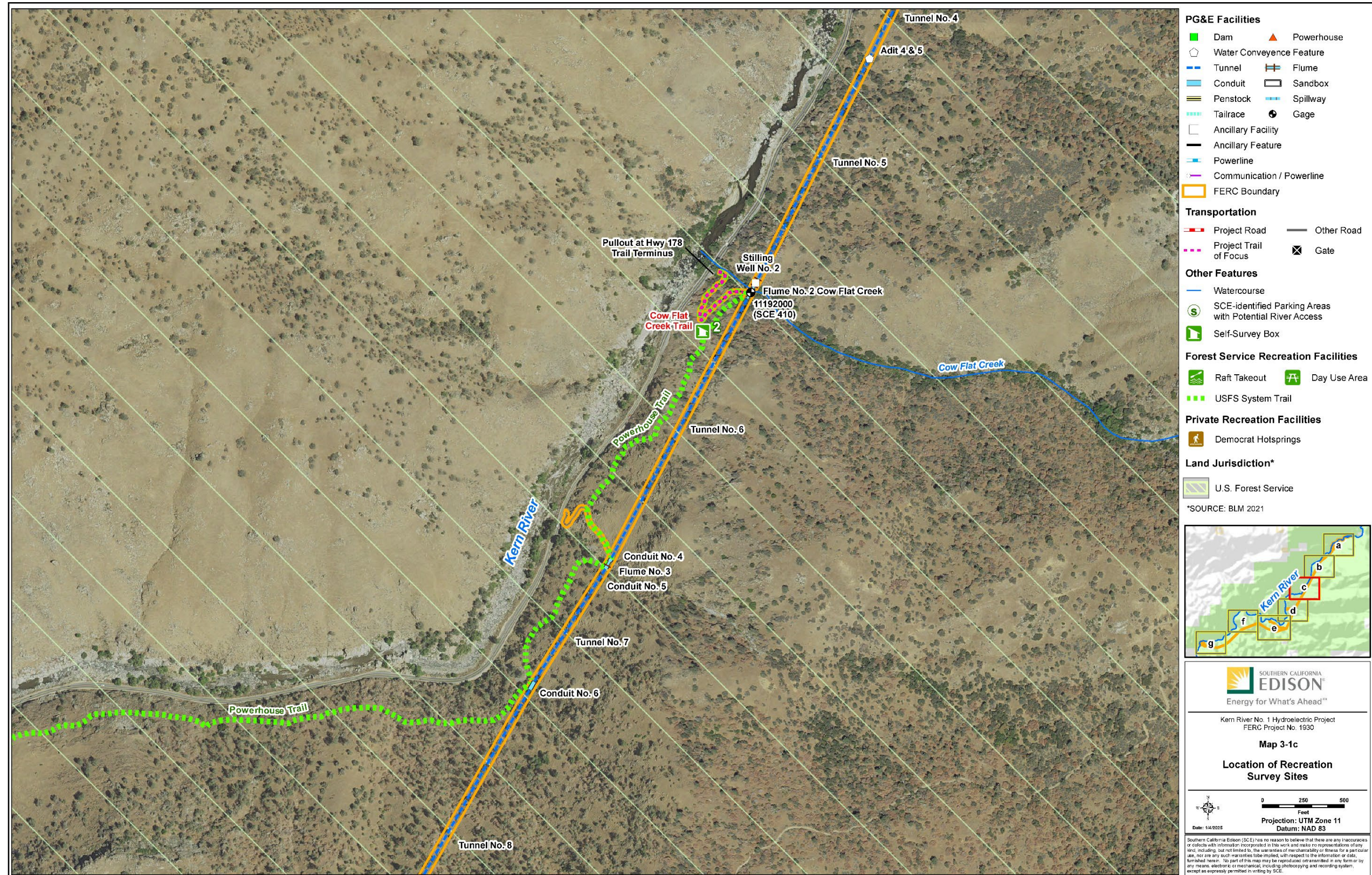
Map 3-1a. Location of Recreation Survey Sites



C:\Users\laclarel\OneDrive - Stantec\Documents\CON01\datagis\_projects\237800343\03\_datagis\_cad\map\Kern River 1\Recreation\Map\Map\Kern1\_Prog\Trails\_Focused\_17/11/1\_05.mxd

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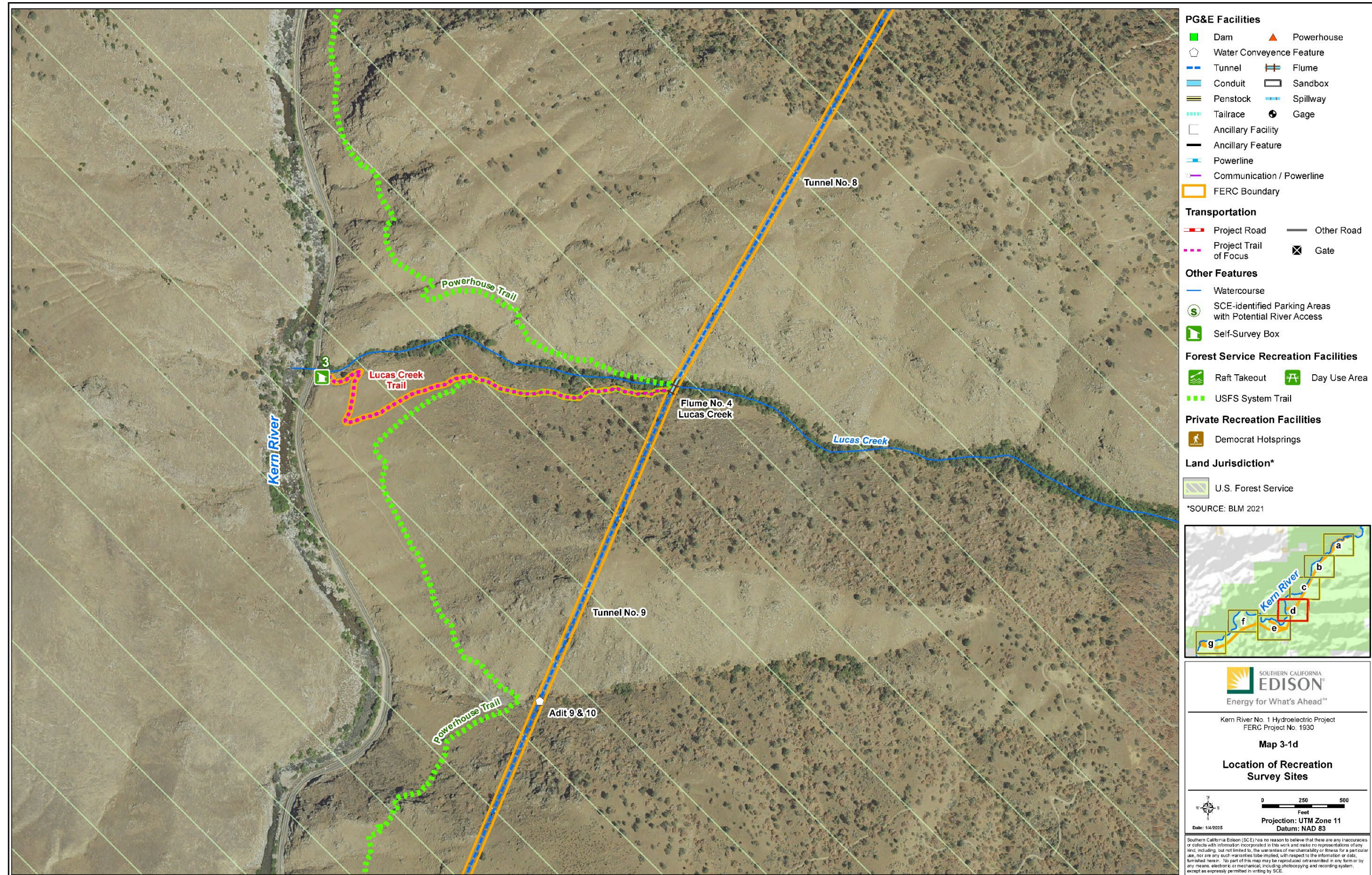
Map 3-1b. Location of Recreation Survey Sites



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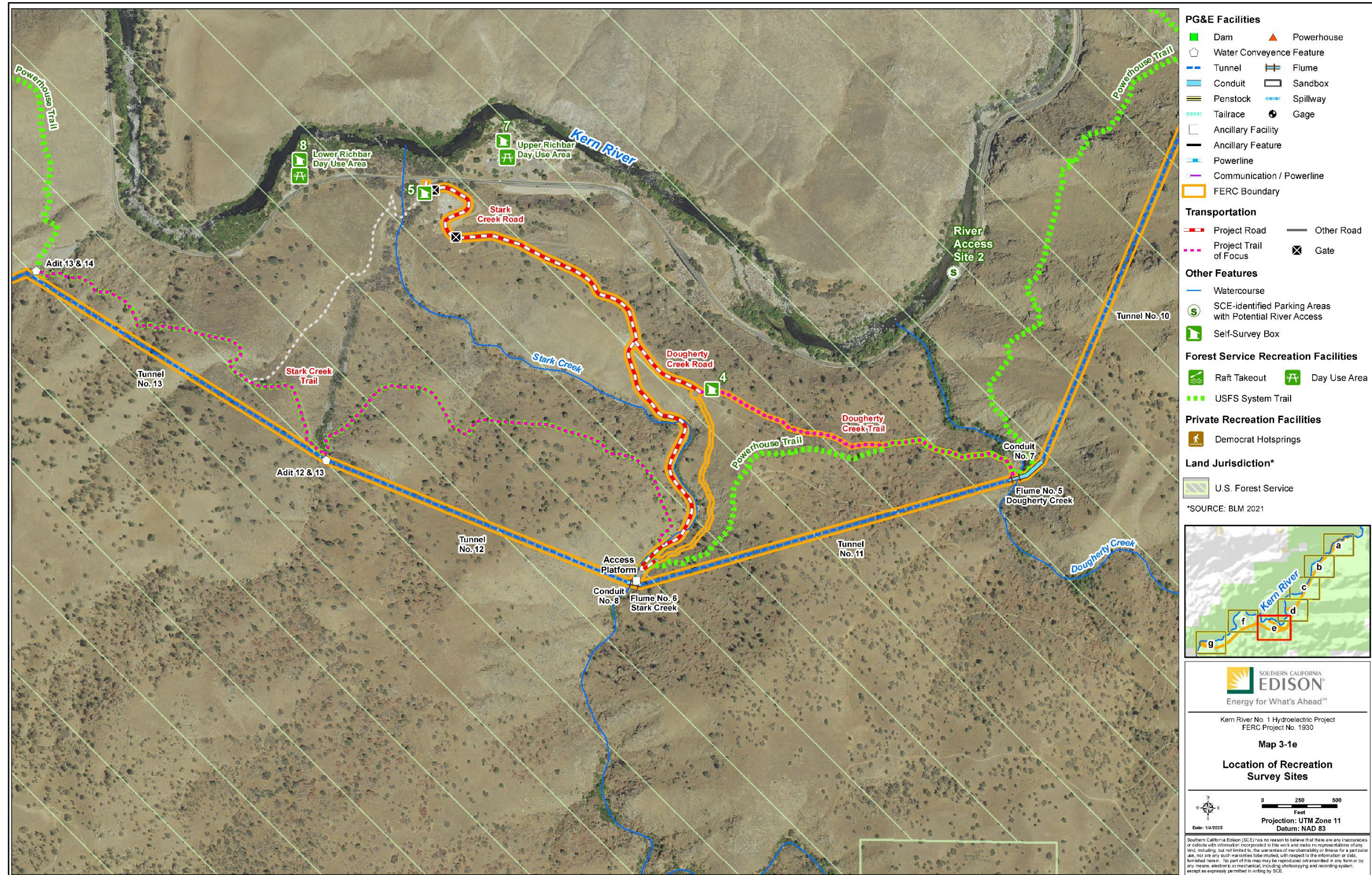
Map 3-1c. Location of Recreation Survey Sites



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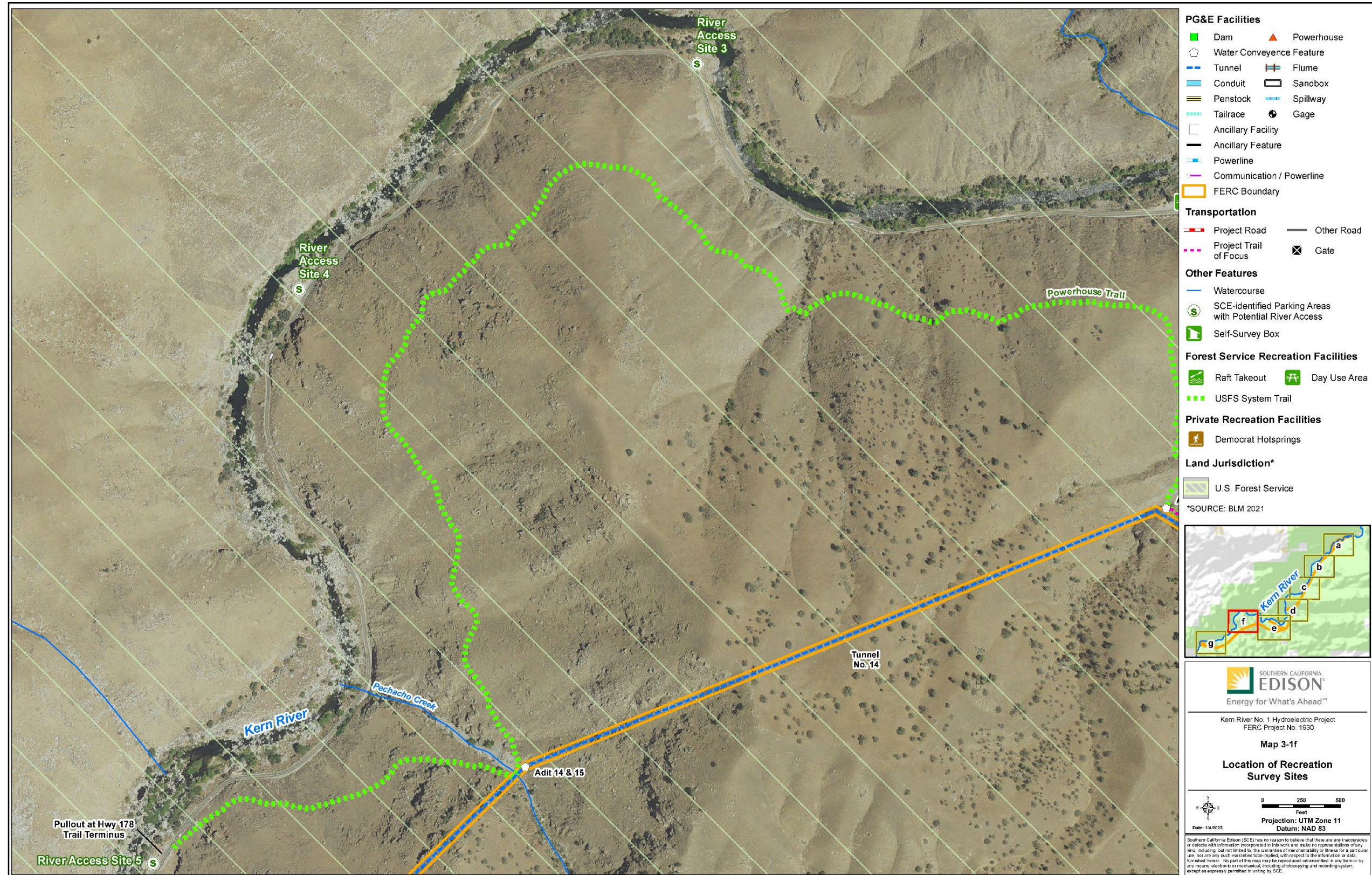
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Map 3-1d. Location of Recreation Survey Sites



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Map 3-1e. Location of Recreation Survey Sites

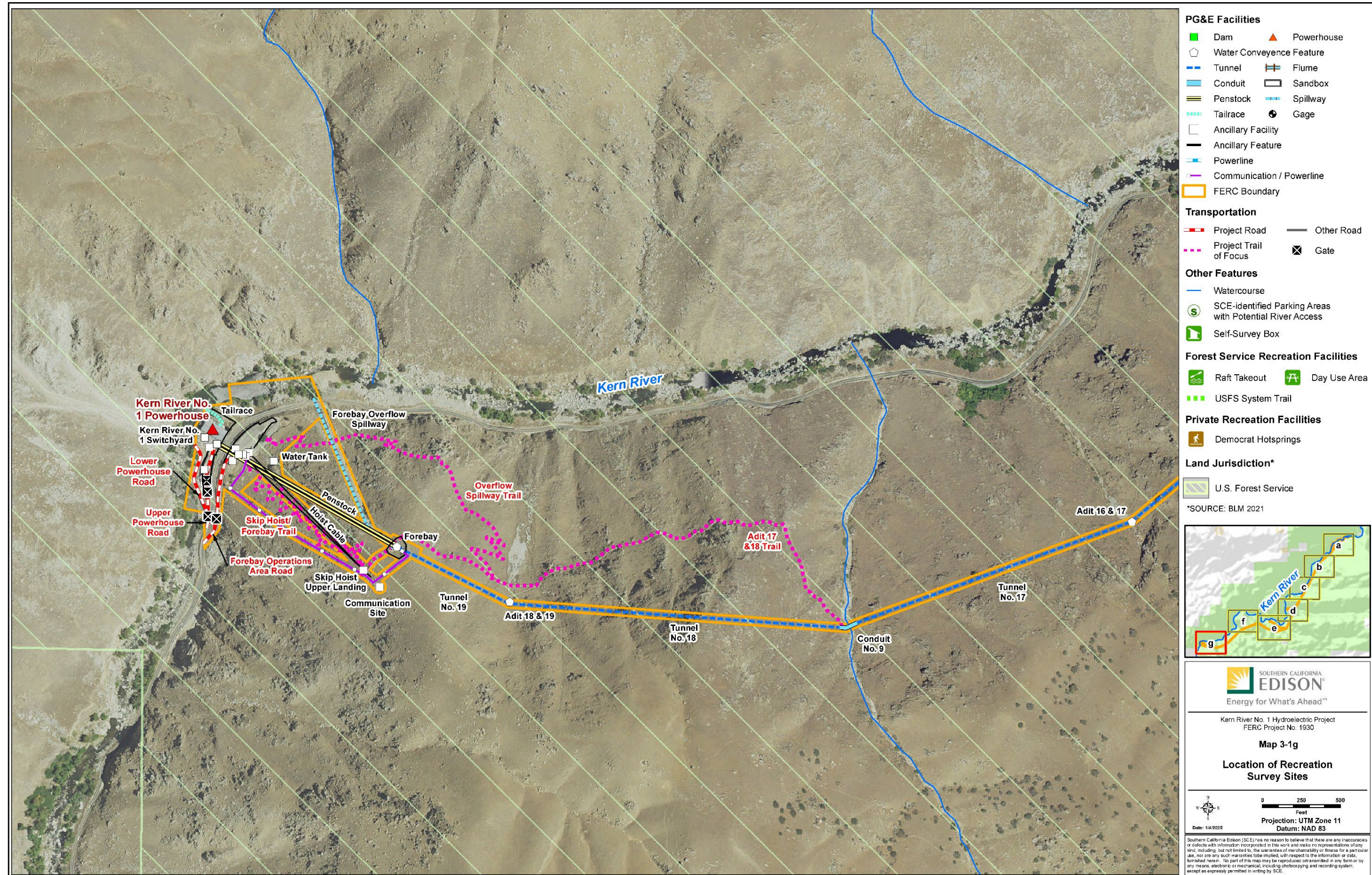


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Map 3-1f. Location of Recreation Survey Sites





Map 3-1g. Location of Recreation Survey Sites

## **APPENDIX B**

### **Day Use Survey Forms (English and Spanish)**

English

**Kern River No. 1 Recreation Sites**

**Day-Use Survey (day use sites)**

**Kern River No. 1 Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 1930)**

Southern California Edison (SCE), in collaboration with the U.S. Forest Service is soliciting input from day users along the lower Kern River to better understand recreation use. This recreation study is part of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission relicensing of the Kern River No.1 (P-1930) Hydroelectric Project. We request your help by completing the survey below. If you are traveling with multiple people, only one person in your party needs to fill out the survey. Participation is voluntary and responses will remain anonymous.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time at beginning of trip: \_\_\_\_\_ a.m./p.m.

**Select Current Day Use Facility Location:**

- Democrat Raft Take-out Boating Site       Upper Richbar Day Use Area
- Lower Richbar Day Use Area       Live Oak Day Use Area

**Section 1 – Demographics**

- What is your home zip code? \_\_\_\_\_
- List the number of individuals in your group that fall within each of these age categories:  
 \_\_\_\_ Under 16    \_\_\_\_ 16–19    \_\_\_\_ 20–29    \_\_\_\_ 30–39    \_\_\_\_ 40–49    \_\_\_\_ 50–59    \_\_\_\_ 60–69    \_\_\_\_ 70+
- What is your ethnicity?  
 Spanish/Latino Origin     Black     White     Asian/Pacific Islander     Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- What is your total household income?  
 Less than \$40,000     \$41,000–\$80,000     81,000 and above

**Section 2 – User Activities**

- What is the primary recreation activity that you are undertaking today? Circle one.  
 Fishing                      Hiking/Walking/Trail use                      Whitewater boating/rafting                      Swimming/wading  
 Picnicking                      Scenic driving                      Viewing wildlife  
 Please write-in your secondary recreation activity (as applicable) and any activity you are undertaking not listed.

6. How would you rate your overall satisfaction or dissatisfaction with your recreation experience today?

	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
1. Overall satisfaction of your trip					
2. Satisfaction of your primary activity					
3. Cost of facility access fees					
4. River access					
5. Number of people encountered/crowdedness					
6. Available parking when you arrived					
7. Feeling of safety					
8. Adequacy of site access for persons with disabilities					
9. Scenery at this site/area					
10. Maintenance (physical condition) of facilities					
11. Cleanliness of facilities					
12. Access to restroom/shower/drinking water					
13. Informational/educational opportunities					
14. Flows in the river					

If you marked Very Dissatisfied (1) or Dissatisfied (2) for any above, please explain:

7. How many recreation trips have you made to the lower Kern River in the past 12 months?

\_\_\_\_\_ trip(s) in the last 12 months

8. If you participated in a water-related activity, did the flows in the river affect your ability participate? Circle one.

**YES** (select reason below)

**NO** flow did not affect planned activities

**NA**-did not partake

If yes, circle one: flow was too high flow was too low other explain: \_\_\_\_\_

**Section 3 – Surrounding Landscapes**

9. How would you rate the scenic quality of the lower Kern River area in general?

	Very Poor	Poor	Neutral	Good	Very Good
General scenic quality of area					

If your rating was Very Poor (1) or Poor (2), please explain:

**Section 3 Angling Experiences**

10. Have you fished along the lower Kern River before?

**Yes** (please respond to the following questions)

**No** (survey complete)

a. What type of fishing tackle do you typically use to fish in the lower Kern River? (Circle all that apply)

Spin Fish with Lures

Spin with Bait

Fly Fish

b. Do you fish for fun or to catch food to eat (check one)? If you plan to eat your fish but are mostly fishing for fun, circle **Fun**. If you enjoy fishing but are mostly fishing to catch food, circle **Food**.

Food

Fun

c. What was your primary reason for selecting this location to fish?

\_\_\_\_\_

d. How often have you fished this reach, the lower Kern River, in each season over the past 12 months?

Spring (March – May) # \_\_\_\_\_

Summer (June – August) # \_\_\_\_\_

Fall (September – November) # \_\_\_\_\_

Winter (December – February) # \_\_\_\_\_

11. Have river flows affected your angling experience in the lower Kern River? Circle one.

YES

NO

12. If yes, please indicate in which season your experience has been affected and provide a reason.

a. Spring (Mar–May) Reason: too low / too high / other: \_\_\_\_\_

b. Summer (Jun–Aug) Reason: too low / too high / other: \_\_\_\_\_

c. Fall (Sep–Nov) Reason: too low / too high / other: \_\_\_\_\_

d. Winter (Dec–Feb) Reason: too low / too high / other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Áreas de Recreación del Río Kern No. 1**

**Encuesta sobre uso diurno (lugares de uso diurno)**

**Proyecto Hidroeléctrico del Río Kern No. 1 (FERC No. 1930)**

Southern California Edison (SCE), en colaboración con el Servicio Forestal de los Estados Unidos, está solicitando la opinión de los usuarios diurnos del río Kern para entender mejor su uso para fines recreativos. Este estudio de recreación es parte de la renovación de la licencia de la Comisión Federal Reguladora de Energía para el Proyecto Hidroeléctrico del Río Kern No.1 (P-1930). Solicitamos su ayuda respondiendo a la encuesta de abajo. Si su paseo es con varias personas, solo una persona de su grupo debe llenar la encuesta. La participación es voluntaria y las respuestas permanecerán en el anonimato.

**Fecha:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Hora al inicio del paseo:** \_\_\_\_\_ **a.m./p.m.**

**Seleccione la actual ubicación de la instalación de uso diurno:**

- Área de punto de llegada de balsas Democrat
- Zona de uso diurno Upper Richbar
- Zona de uso diurno Lower Richbar
- Zona de uso diurno Live Oak

**Sección 1 – Datos demográficos**

- ¿Cuál es el código postal de su domicilio? \_\_\_\_\_
- Indique el número de personas en su grupo que calzan dentro de cada una de estas categorías etarias:  
 \_\_\_\_ <16    \_\_\_\_ 16–19    \_\_\_\_ 20–29    \_\_\_\_ 30–39    \_\_\_\_ 40–49    \_\_\_\_ 50–59    \_\_\_\_ 60–69    \_\_\_\_ >70
- ¿Cuál es su etnicidad?  
 latina/hispana     negra     blanca     asiática/isleña del Pacífico     otra: \_\_\_\_\_
- ¿Cuál es el ingreso total de su hogar?  
 Menos de \$40 000     \$41 000–\$80 000     \$81 000 o más

**Sección 2 – Actividades del usuario**

- ¿Cuál es la actividad recreativa principal que está realizando hoy? Encierre en un círculo una.  
 Pesca                      Senderismo/caminata/uso de sendero                      Rafting/canotaje en rápidas  
 Nado/vadeoPicnic                      Conducción escénica                      Observar la vida silvestre

Por favor, indique su actividad de recreación secundaria (según corresponda) y cualquier actividad que esté llevando a cabo no listada arriba. \_\_\_\_\_

- ¿Cómo calificaría su satisfacción o insatisfacción general respecto a su experiencia recreativa de hoy?

	Muy insatisfecho	Insatisfecho	Neutro	Satisfecho	Muy satisfecho
1. Satisfacción general de su paseo					
2. Satisfacción con su actividad principal					
3. Costo de entrada a instalaciones					
4. Acceso al río					
5. Número de personas que encontró/aglomeraciones					
6. Estacionamiento disponible al llegar					
7. Sensación de seguridad					
8. Adecuación del acceso al lugar para personas con discapacidad					
9. Paisaje en este lugar/zona					
10. Mantenimiento (estado físico) de las instalaciones					
11. Limpieza de las instalaciones					
12. Acceso a baños/duchas/agua potable					
13. Oportunidades informativas/educativas					
14. Caudales del río					

Si marcó Muy insatisfecho o Insatisfecho en cualquiera de las anteriores, por favor explique por qué:

7. ¿Cuántos paseos recreativos a la parte baja del río Kern ha hecho en los últimos 12 meses?

\_\_\_\_\_ paseo(s) en los últimos 12 meses

8. Si participó en una actividad asociada con agua, ¿los caudales del río afectaron su capacidad de participar? Encierre en un círculo una.

**SÍ** (seleccione abajo el motivo)    **NO**, el caudal no afectó las actividades planeadas    **NA**, no participé

Si respondió Sí, encierre en un círculo una de estas opciones:

El caudal era muy alto    El caudal era muy bajo    Otra (explicar): \_\_\_\_\_

### Sección 3 – Paisajes circundantes

9. ¿Cómo calificaría la calidad escénica de la zona de la parte baja del río Kern en general?

	Muy mala	Mala	Neutro	Buena	Muy buena
Calidad escénica general de la zona					

i su calificación fue Muy mala o Mala, por favor explique por qué:

### Sección 3 Experiencias de pesca con caña

10. ¿Ha pescado antes a lo largo de la parte baja del río Kern?

Sí (por favor, responda a las preguntas a continuación)     No (aquí termina la encuesta)

a. ¿Qué tipo de aparejos de pesca suele utilizar para pescar en la parte baja del río Kern? (Encierre en un círculo todos los que apliquen)

Spinning con señuelos    Spinning con carnada    Mosca

b. ¿Está pescando por diversión o para comer (marcar una)? Si piensa comer sus pescados pero mayormente está pescando por diversión, encierre en un círculo **Diversión**. Si le gusta la pesca, pero principalmente pesca para **comer**, encierre en un círculo **Comida**.

Comida    Diversión

c. ¿Cuál fue la razón principal para elegir este lugar para pescar?

¿Con qué frecuencia ha pescado en este tramo de la parte baja del río Kern en cada temporada en los últimos \_\_\_\_\_ 12 \_\_\_\_\_ meses?

Primavera (Mar–May)    veces     Verano (Jun–Ago)    veces  
 Otoño (Sep–Nov)    veces     Invierno (Dic–Feb)    veces

11. El caudal del río ha afectado su experiencia de pesca en la parte baja del río Kern? Encierre en un círculo una.

SÍ    NO

12. Si respondió Sí, indique en qué temporada se vio afectada su experiencia y señale el motivo.

- a. Primavera (Mar–May)    Motivo: muy bajo / muy alto / otro: \_\_\_\_\_  
b. Verano (Jun–Ago)    Motivo: muy bajo / muy alto / otro: \_\_\_\_\_  
c. Otoño (Sep–Nov)    Motivo: muy bajo / muy alto / otro: \_\_\_\_\_  
d. Invierno (Dic–Feb)    Motivo: muy bajo / muy alto / otro: \_\_\_\_\_

**Kern River No. 1 Recreation Project Trails**

**Day-Use Survey (trails)**

**Kern River No. 1 Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 1930)**

Southern California Edison (SCE), in collaboration with the U.S. Forest Service is soliciting input from day users of trails along the lower Kern River to better understand recreation use. This recreation study is part of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission relicensing of the Kern River No.1 (P-1930) Hydroelectric Project. We request your help by completing the survey below. If you are traveling with multiple people, only one person in your party needs to fill out the survey. Participation is voluntary and responses will remain anonymous.

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Time at beginning of trip:** \_\_\_\_\_ **a.m./p.m.**

**Select Current Trail Location:**

- Democrat Gage Trail    Cow Flat Trail    Lucas Creek Trail    Dougherty Creek Trail
- Stark Creek Trail    Penstock/Forebay Trails

**Section 1 – Demographics**

1. What is your home zip code? \_\_\_\_\_
2. List the number of individuals in your group that fall within each of these age categories:  
 \_\_\_\_ Under 16   \_\_\_\_ 16–19   \_\_\_\_ 20–29   \_\_\_\_ 30–39   \_\_\_\_ 40–49   \_\_\_\_ 50–59   \_\_\_\_ 60–69   \_\_\_\_ 70+
3. What is your ethnicity?  
 Spanish/Latino Origin    Black    White    Asian/Pacific Islander    Other: \_\_\_\_\_
4. What is your total household income?  
 Less than \$40,000    \$41,000–\$80,000    81,000 and above

**Section 2 – Trail Experience**

5. How would you rate your experience on this trail compared to other trails along the lower Kern River?

	Much Worse	Worse	Same	Better	Much Better
Experience on this trail compared to other trails in the area					

6. What is the reason for your rating?

\_\_\_\_\_

7. Would you consider returning to this trail    YES    NO

What is the basis for your answer?

\_\_\_\_\_

8. Are there any improvements that you would recommend for this trail?    YES    NO

What improvements do you recommend?

\_\_\_\_\_

9. Do you have any additional comments about the trail?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Section 3 – User Activities**

10. On this trip are you?  Hiking/Walking  Biking  Horseback Riding  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

11. How long are you planning to hike today? \_\_\_\_\_

12. Are you using this trail to get to another trail today? If so, what other trail: \_\_\_\_\_

13. What is the purpose of your visit today? (Check only one main activity in the first column.)

Check only <u>one</u> main activity	Check all other activities	Type of activities
		Exercise
		Viewing scenery/wildlife
		Spending time with friends/family
		Exploring new areas/trails
		River access (Democrat Gage Trail only)
		Other (please specify below)

If you selected "other" please describe the recreation activity or activities that you are undertaking.

14. In the last 12 months, have you utilized any of the trails listed in the table below (see map beneath lid of survey box)? If yes, please indicate in the table the number of times you visited each site during each season.

Trail	Number of Visits				
	Spring (Mar–May)	Summer (Jun–Aug)	Fall (Sep–Nov)	Winter (Dec–Feb)	Total #
Democrat Gage Trail					
Cow Flat Trail					
Dougherty Creek Trail					
Lucas Creek Trail					
Stark Creek Trail					
Penstock/Forebay Trails					

### Section 3 – Surrounding Landscapes

15. What scenic feature most attracted you to this trail? Select top feature:

- General scenery such as rock outcrops, mountains, and valleys
- Views of the lower Kern River
- Scenery was not a consideration when selecting this location
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

16. In general, how would you rate the scenic quality of the area as seen from the trail?

	Very Poor	Poor	Neutral	Good	Very Good
General scenic quality of area					

If your rating was Very Poor (1) or Poor (2), please explain:

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**Senderos del Proyecto de Recreación del Río Kern No. 1**

**Encuesta sobre uso diurno (senderos)**

**Proyecto Hidroeléctrico del Río Kern No. 1 (FERC No. 1930)**

Southern California Edison (SCE), en colaboración con el Servicio Forestal de los Estados Unidos, está solicitando la opinión de los usuarios diurnos de los senderos del río Kern para entender mejor su uso para fines recreativos. Este estudio de recreación es parte de la renovación de la licencia de la Comisión Federal Reguladora de Energía para el Proyecto Hidroeléctrico del Río Kern No.1 (P-1930). Solicitamos su ayuda respondiendo a la encuesta de abajo. Si recorre la zona con varias personas, solo una persona de su grupo debe llenar la encuesta. La participación es voluntaria y las respuestas permanecerán en el anonimato.

**Fecha:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Hora al inicio del paseo:** \_\_\_\_\_ **a.m./p.m.**

**Seleccione la ubicación actual del sendero:**

- Sendero Democrat Gage       Sendero Cow Flat       Sendero Lucas Creek       Sendero Dougherty Creek
- Sendero Stark Creek       Senderos Penstock/Forebay

**Sección 1 – Datos demográficos**

1. ¿Cuál es el código postal de su domicilio? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Indique el número de personas en su grupo que calzan dentro de cada una de estas categorías etarias:  
 \_\_\_\_ <16    \_\_\_\_ 16–19    \_\_\_\_ 20–29    \_\_\_\_ 30–39    \_\_\_\_ 40–49    \_\_\_\_ 50–59    \_\_\_\_ 60–69    \_\_\_\_ >70
3. ¿Cuál es su etnicidad?  
 latina/hispana     negra     blanca     asiática/isleña del Pacífico     Otra: \_\_\_\_\_
4. ¿Cuál es el ingreso total de su hogar?  
 Menos de \$40 000     \$41,000–\$80,000     \$81,000 o más

**Sección 2 – Experiencia con los senderos**

5. ¿Cómo calificaría su experiencia en este sendero en comparación con otros senderos a lo largo de la parte baja del río Kern?

	Mucho Peor	Peor	Igual	Mejor	Mucho Mejor
Experiencia en este sendero en comparación con otros senderos del área					

6. ¿Por qué motivo dio esa calificación?  
 \_\_\_\_\_
7. ¿Consideraría regresar a este sendero?       SÍ       NO  
 ¿En qué se basa su respuesta?  
 \_\_\_\_\_
8. ¿Hay alguna mejora que recomendaría para este sendero?       SÍ       NO  
 ¿Qué mejoras recomienda?  
 \_\_\_\_\_
9. ¿Tiene algún comentario adicional sobre el sendero?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Sección 3 – Actividades del usuario**

10. ¿Qué está haciendo en este paseo?  Senderismo/caminata  Ciclismo  Cabalgata  
 Otro: \_\_\_\_\_

11. ¿Cuánto tiempo tiene planeado caminar hoy? \_\_\_\_\_

12. ¿Está utilizando este sendero para llegar a otro hoy? De ser así, ¿cuál es el otro sendero?: \_\_\_\_\_

13. ¿Cuál es el propósito de su visita de hoy? (Marque solo una actividad principal en la primera columna)

Marque solo una actividad principal	Marque todas las demás actividades	Tipo de actividad
		Hacer ejercicio
		Observar el paisaje/la naturaleza
		Pasar tiempo con amigos/familia
		Explorar nuevas áreas/senderos
		Acceder al río (solo el sendero Democrat Gage)
		Otra (específiquela a continuación)

Si seleccionó "Otra", describa la actividad o actividades recreativas que está realizando.

14. En los últimos 12 meses, ¿ha utilizado alguno de los senderos indicados en la tabla de abajo (ver el mapa que está debajo de la tapa de la urna de la encuesta)? En caso afirmativo, indique en la tabla el número de veces que visitó cada lugar durante cada temporada.

Sendero	Número de visitas				
	Primavera (marzo–mayo)	Summer (Jun–Aug)	Primavera (marzo–mayo)	Winter (Dec–Feb)	Primavera (marzo–mayo)
Sendero Democrat Gage					
Sendero Cow Flat					
Sendero Dougherty Creek					
Sendero Lucas Creek					
Sendero Stark Creek					
Senderos de la tubería forzada/cámara de carga					

### Sección 3 – Paisajes circundantes

15. ¿Qué elemento escénico le atrajo más a este sendero? Seleccione la principal:

- Paisaje general como afloramientos rocosos, montañas y valles
- Vistas de la parte baja del río Kern
- El paisaje no fue un factor que se consideró a la hora de seleccionar esta ubicación
- Otra: \_\_\_\_\_

16. En general, ¿cómo calificaría la calidad escénica del área que se ve desde el sendero?

	Muy mala	Mala	Neutra	Buena	Muy Buena
Calidad escénica general de la zona					

Si su calificación fue Muy mala o Mala, sírvase explicar por qué:

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## **APPENDIX C**

### **Forest Service Approval of Infrared Trail Camera Installation**



Forest Service

Sequoia National Forest  
Giant Sequoia National Monument

220 East Morton Avenue  
Porterville, CA 93257  
559-784-1500  
TDD: 559-781-6650  
FAX: 559-781-4744  
[www.fs.usda.gov/sequoia/](http://www.fs.usda.gov/sequoia/)

**File Code:** 2720

**Date:** October 22, 2024

Meg Richardson  
Hydro Relicensing Project Manager  
2244 Walnut Grove Avenue  
Rosemead, CA 91770

**RE: Kern River No. 1 Hydroelectric Project (P-1930) Relicensing: REC 2 – Recreation Facility Use Assessment Trail Camera Prop**

Dear Ms. Richardson:

I reviewed your proposal for the temporary installation of infrared cameras as a means of capturing trail use along the lower Kern. This data collection is need for the REC 2 - Recreation Facility Use Assessment Technical Study Plan (REC 2 TSP) for the Kern River No. 1 Hydroelectric Project Relicensing (Project) and was approved by FERC in March 2024.

The REC 2 TSP proposes the temporary installation of infrared cameras as a means of capturing trail use along the lower Kern River between the Democrat Dam impoundment (upstream) and the SCE KR1 Powerhouse (downstream). The temporary infrared cameras are located on United States Forest Service Sequoia National Forest (USFS-SQF) lands outside of the FERC Project boundary. At each of five Project trails (trails established by and/or used primarily by SCE to access Project infrastructure) one infrared camera is proposed to be installed by placing it on the ground within 400 yards of the trailhead at a discrete location. No ground disturbance is anticipated; trimming of ground cover may be required to ensure the infrared cameras capture recreation use. Infrared cameras are to be installed for one year. The objective is to characterize recreation use along Project trails that provide access to the lower Kern River or to an existing Forest Service trail in the vicinity of the Project.

As described, this proposal falls within a category of actions that are normally excluded from documentation in an environmental assessment (EA) or environmental impact statement (EIS) [40 CFR 1501.4 and 36 CFR 220.5(a)]. Decisions may be categorically excluded from documentation in an EIS or EA when they are within one of the categories identified by the U.S. Department of Agriculture in 7 CFR part 1b.3. This proposal falls within category 7 CFR 1b.3(a)(3) which includes inventories, research activities, and studies, such as resource inventories and routine data collection when such actions are clearly limited in context and intensity. Based on an assessment of resource conditions, there are no extraordinary circumstances that would preclude use of a categorical exclusion; therefore, the project is categorically excluded from documentation. A case file or decision memo is not required.

After reviewing your proposal for compliance with regulations found at 36 CFR 251.50(e), I have determined that your proposed use, as you have described, will have nominal effects on the lands,

resources, and programs of the National Forest, therefore a special use permit is not required.

If your proposed use changes from what you have described, please contact Special Use Permit Administrator Marie (Angie) Attencio at (760) 549-9978 so that we may determine whether your use continues to qualify for a permit waiver. Likewise, if any factor associated with National Forest System lands, resources, or programs (such as the discovery of an endangered species in the area) changes and there is no longer a basis for the nominal effects determination, I or someone from my office will contact you in writing to rescind the nominal effects determination. If this happens, there may be alternative mechanisms to permit your activity.

If you propose to conduct the same activity next year, please contact my office again to ensure that your use continues to qualify for a permit waiver.

As a reminder, your use must comply with all federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and policies. We ask that you pay special attention to current Kern River Ranger District fire restrictions. I recommend you carry a copy of this letter with you to verify that I have determined that your use, as described above, does not require a special use authorization.

Please contact my office if you have any questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,

**ANTHONY  
EDWARDS** Digitally signed by  
ANTHONY EDWARDS  
Date: 2024.10.22  
22:59:53 -07'00'

ANTHONY EDWARDS  
Forest Supervisor

cc: Brian Block/Acting District Ranger, Kern River Ranger District;  
Billy Brown; Karen Miller