




MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 22, 2023

TO: Commissioner Newsha K. Ajami
 President, San Francisco Public Utilities Commission

FROM: Dennis J. Herrera 
 General Manager

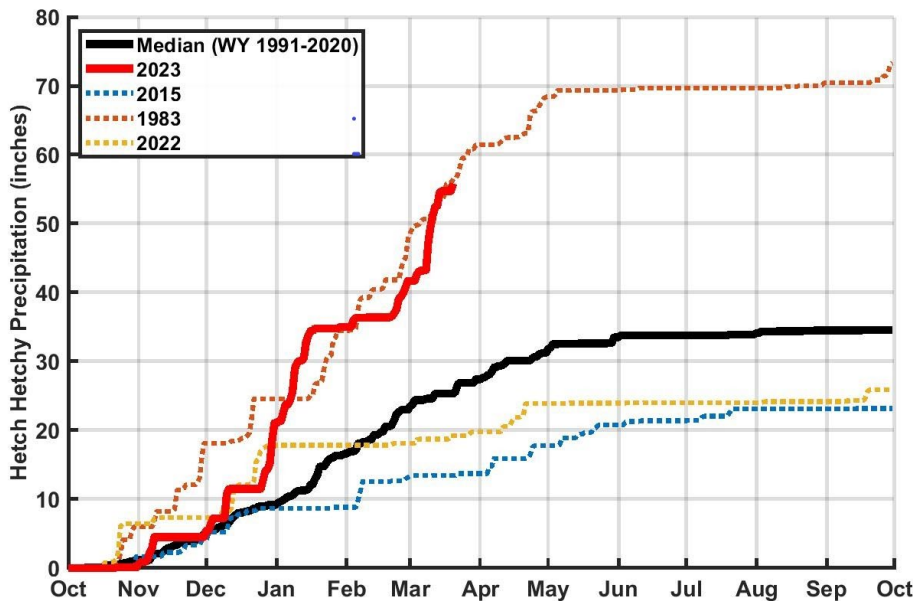
SUBJECT: Declaration of Emergency – Repair of Hetch Hetchy Water and Power Roads due to March Storms

In accordance with Chapter 6, Article IV, Section 6.6(D) and Section 21.15(a) of the Administrative Code of the City and County of San Francisco, I am declaring an emergency on behalf of the Public Utilities Commission.

Above normal precipitation from November 2022 to March 2023 has significantly impaired the City’s road infrastructure to essential facilities. Under the terms of the federal Raker Act, the City is obligated to maintain these roads. The following figure shows precipitation at Hetch Hetchy during Water Year 2023 compared to the historical median and the wettest year on record (1983). A series of storms occurring March 10 to March 15 brought heavy rainfall to upcountry locations, which were already covered in snow. The additional precipitation combined with early snowmelt and already saturated soils after the December and January series of atmospheric river events resulted in countless rockslides and multiple road failures, some occurring along steep embankments, creating a risk to both employee and public safety. More precipitation is expected, and we expect the coming snowmelt this spring to be intense.

- London N. Breed**
Mayor
- Newsha K. Ajami**
President
- Sophie Maxwell**
Vice President
- Tim Paulson**
Commissioner
- Anthony Rivera**
Commissioner
- Kate H. Stacy**
Commissioner
- Dennis J. Herrera**
General Manager





Cherry Lake Road has multiple slides – the top of Intake Grade (Intake) is most concerning. The road at Intake descends steeply to the Tuolumne River canyon floor and has been eroded and undercut at multiple locations, reducing the roadbed to a single vehicle width. The road has many additional hazard locations with overhanging rocks, active slide areas, and potential rockfalls. Continued precipitation jeopardizes the remaining roadbed. In addition to the risk to employees and public safety, Cherry Lake Road failure would eliminate road access to Intake 230kV Switchyard, Kirkwood Powerhouse, Holm Powerhouse, Cherry Lake Dam, Lake Eleanor Dam, and Cherry Lake Compound, including access for SFPUC employee residents of those facilities.

Also, a section of Hetch Hetchy Road failed completely in a steep location and is not passable. (See photo in Attachment A.). The road provides primary access to O’Shaughnessy Dam from Early Intake.

According to Chapter 6.60 of the Administrative Code, an “actual emergency” means a sudden, unforeseeable and unexpected occurrence involving a clear and imminent danger, demanding immediate action to prevent or mitigate loss of or damage to life, health, property, or essential public services. An “actual emergency” shall also mean the discovery of any condition involving a clear and imminent danger to public health or safety, demanding immediate action.”

According to Section 21.15(a) of the Administrative Code, “The Board of Supervisors hereby declares that an actual emergency shall exist when it becomes necessary to immediately procure Commodities or Services to make repairs, to safeguard the lives or property of the citizens or the property of the City or to maintain public health or welfare as a result of extraordinary

conditions created by war, epidemic, weather, fire, flood, earthquake or other catastrophe, or the breakdown of any plant equipment, structure, street or public work.”

This emergency declaration is for contracting and emergency procurement authority to repair the road failures on Cherry Lake Road and Hetch Hetchy Road. The current estimate for repairs is \$20 million based on already observed damage as well as ongoing damage assessment work and expected damages to occur as a result of short-term wet weather and anticipated snowmelt runoff from the historic snowpack in the High Sierra.

The immediate- and high- priority field activities include: (1) removing rocks and debris from the roadway; (2) placing traffic safety barricades to protect the public; (3) clearing damaged/blocked culverts and diverting runoff; (4) installing visqueen to protect the remaining roadbed from erosion; and (5) removing additional hazard rocks from above the roadway. Repairs are being prioritized for immediate action using Job Order Contract task orders and near-term action using emergency construction contracts. Professional service contract task orders will be used for planning, design, environmental, and construction management.

I am therefore declaring the existence of an emergency. I trust that this meets with your concurrence and approval.

CONCUR AND APPROVE:

Newsha Khodatalab Ajami

Newsha K. Ajami – President,
San Francisco Public Utilities Commission

cc: Commissioners Sophie Maxwell, Timothy Paulson, Anthony Rivera, and
Kate H. Stacy
Margaret Hannaford
Steven Ritchie
Moccasin Records

Attachment A
Hetch Hetchy Road Failure – Stanislaus National Forest

