



**Notice of Public Scoping
for the
Environmental Impact Report for the Operation and Maintenance of
Pacific Gas & Electric's Pipelines in Southern California Deserts Project**

LEAD AGENCY: California Department of Fish and Wildlife

Contact: Ashley Rosales 760.219.9452

Pacific Gas & Electric Company (PG&E) has filed an Incidental Take Permit application with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) for two threatened species: Mojave desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*) and Mohave ground squirrel (*Xerospermophilus mohavensis*). Issuance of the Incidental Take Permit is the discretionary action that has triggered the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The Incidental Take Permit, if issued, would authorize project-related incidental take of Mojave desert tortoise and Mohave ground squirrel subject to certain conditions under the California Endangered Species Act.

Project Location: The proposed project is located in the Mojave Desert region in San Bernardino and Kern Counties. The western extent of the operation and maintenance (O&M) program area is located southwest of the City of Mojave, and the eastern terminus of the O&M program area is located adjacent to the Colorado River, approximately 11.5 miles southeast of the City of Needles (refer to Figure 1 in the Notice of Preparation [NOP]).

Project Description: The proposed project involves PG&E's O&M of approximately 645 miles of pipelines, which encompasses high-pressure gas pipelines and facilities. The gas transmission system consists of gas pipelines; compressor stations; associated gas transmission and distribution facilities; rights-of-way; areas up to 0.25 miles beyond the rights-of-way, where needed; and their related equipment and facilities. Most of the O&M activities in the O&M program area would result in temporary and short-term impacts to expose the pipeline for inspection or repair, or to access a given facility. The O&M activities proposed would not result in large new permanent disturbance areas. The pipeline system has been in place for more than 70 years, and O&M activities have been conducted since the pipeline system was installed. Since 2001, PG&E has been gathering data on temporary and permanent disturbance resulting from O&M activities. Therefore, the type, number, and frequency of ongoing O&M activities would continue to be a part of the baseline conditions in the O&M program area.

Availability of the Notice of Preparation for Public Review: As required by CEQA, CDFW has prepared an NOP. The purpose of the NOP is to inform recipients that CDFW is beginning the preparation of the EIR and to solicit comments concerning the scope and content of the environmental review. The NOP includes an introduction to the proposed project, a description of the proposed project and its location, a summary of potential project impacts, and information on how to provide comments to CDFW. The NOP may be viewed online at <https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Notices>. In accordance with Governor's Executive Order N-80-20, public notices are not required to be made physically publicly available but are required to be posted on the lead or responsible agency's website for the same length of time that would be required for physical posting.

Public Scoping Meeting: Rather than conducting an in-person meeting, Executive Order N-25-20 allows state agencies to hold meetings via teleconferencing while still meeting state transparency requirements. Therefore, CDFW will conduct the public scoping meeting online, through a webinar-type format. The meeting date, time, and website of the project’s scoping meeting are as follows:

Date: April 7, 2021; **Time:** 1:00 p.m.

Scoping Meeting Login: rebrand.ly/Scoping-PGE-CA-Desert-Gas-Pipeline-OM

Public Comment Period: By this notice, CDFW is announcing the opening of the 30-day comment period (March 25, 2021, to April 24, 2021). All written comments must be received by close of business April 24, 2021, by 5:00 p.m. (end of the 30-day public review period).

Submitting Scoping Comments: Comments on the Notice of Preparation must be addressed to:

California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Inland Deserts Region

Attention: Ashley Rosales, Project Coordinator

Mailing Address: 3602 Inland Empire Boulevard, Suite C-220, Ontario, California 91764

OR via email: Ashley.Rosales@wildlife.ca.gov (subject line: “PG&E O&M Draft EIR Comments”)

The project site is not located on any list of places containing hazardous materials.