

Appendix B

Public Scoping

Appendix B1

Notice of Preparation



State of California – Natural Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
Inland Deserts Region
3602 Inland Empire Boulevard, Suite C-220
Ontario, CA 91764
www.wildlife.ca.gov

GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor
CHARLTON H. BONHAM, Director



**Notice of Preparation and Public Scoping Meeting
for a Draft Environmental Impact Report**

Date: March 25, 2021
To: Responsible/Trustee Agencies and Interested Parties
From: California Department of Fish and Wildlife
Subject: Notice of Preparation (NOP) of a Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Operation and Maintenance of Pacific Gas & Electric's Pipelines in Southern California Deserts Project and Notice of Public Scoping Meeting

NOP Public Review Period: March 25, 2021, to April 24, 2021

Public Scoping Meeting (Online Webinar Format)

Date: April 7, 2021

Time: 1:00 p.m.

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

A. Introduction

In accordance with Section 15168 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), as the CEQA lead agency, will prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Operations and Maintenance (O&M) of Pacific Gas & Electric's Pipelines in Southern California Deserts Project (project). The project applicant, Pacific Gas & Electric Company (PG&E), has filed an application with CDFW for an Incidental Take Permit (ITP) under California Fish and Game Code Section 2081(b) and Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations, Sections 783.2–783.8, to authorize potential take of Mojave desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*) and Mohave ground squirrel (*Xerospermophilus mohavensis*) associated with its ongoing O&M activities within the California Mojave Desert. CDFW's need to contemplate an ITP triggers the need to comply with CEQA. Therefore, CDFW is serving as the lead agency by preparing an EIR and meeting obligations required under its certified regulatory program in compliance with CEQA for the issuance of an ITP.

As required by CEQA, this NOP is being sent to the California Governor's Office of Planning and Research, responsible and trustee agencies, and interested members of the public who submitted a request for such notices. The purpose of the NOP is to inform recipients that CDFW is beginning preparation of a Draft EIR for the proposed project and to solicit comments concerning the scope and content of the environmental information, including information relevant to an agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. Information that would be most useful at this time would be descriptions of the significant environmental issues, reasonable alternatives, and mitigation measures you would like to have explored further in the Draft EIR.

Conserving California's Wildlife Since 1870

This NOP includes background information on the project and the O&M program area (Section B), a description of the proposed project (Section C), a summary of potential project impacts (Section D), day and time of the virtual public scoping meeting (Section E), information on how to provide comments to CDFW (Section F), and where documents are available for public review (Section G).

In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15082(b), there will be a 30-day comment period for this NOP, beginning on March 25, 2021, and ending on April 24, 2021. CDFW welcomes agency and public input during the public review period. In the event that no response or well-justified request for additional time is received from any responsible, federal, or trustee agency by the end of the review period, CDFW may presume that such agencies have no comments.

B. Background and Project Location

B.1 Background

PG&E operates an extensive system of interconnecting natural gas pipelines within the Mojave Desert region. The pipeline system in this region consists of high-pressure transmission pipelines, distribution pipelines, and associated facilities that transport natural gas throughout California. In this region, natural gas delivery is made almost exclusively to commercial, military, industrial, and electric generation, and residential customers. PG&E's Pipelines in Southern California Deserts O&M Program (program) involves approximately 645 miles of transmission pipeline and associated facilities, which encompass facilities in San Bernardino and Kern Counties.

Maintenance and repair of the system is required by California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) General Order 112-F, which incorporates the U.S. Department of Transportation regulations provided by Title 49, Part 192 (Transportation of Natural and Other Gas by Pipeline) of the Code of Federal Regulations. In October 2011, the California legislature enacted Senate Bill (SB) 705, which declared "[i]t is the policy of the state that the commission and each gas corporation place safety of the public and gas corporation employees as the top priority." SB 705 was codified as Public Utilities Code (PUC) Sections 961 and 963(b)(3). Section 961 of the PUC mandates that gas operators must go beyond what is considered "adequate" to develop and implement gas safety plans that are "consistent with best practices in the gas industry." On April 20, 2012, the CPUC amended the scope of its Pipeline Safety Rulemaking to include compliance with the requirements of PUC Sections 961 and 963.4. The CPUC further directed each California natural gas corporation to develop and implement a plan for the safe and reliable operation of its gas pipeline facilities.

PG&E currently conducts O&M activities for the Pipelines in Southern California Deserts under an incidental take authorization (Biological Opinion for Maintenance Activities on the Pacific Gas and Electric Company Gas Pipeline System in the California Desert [6840, CA-063.50] [1-8-99-F-71]) for Mojave desert tortoise issued by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) through Section 7 consultation with the Bureau of Land Management in 2000. As part of Phase I of the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP), BLM adopted the Land Use Plan Amendment (LUPA) in September 2016. The BLM LUPA establishes management direction for the permitting of renewable energy and transmission facility development on approximately 10 million acres of BLM-managed lands in the DRECP area. In 2017, USFWS issued a programmatic Biological Opinion for Activities in the California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA), which requires implementation of the Conservation and Management Actions described in the LUPA for the CDCA.

PG&E proposes to complement its federal take coverage by pursuing a long-term state ITP from CDFW for its O&M activities in the Mojave Desert region. A state ITP would provide an enhanced conservation strategy while eliminating the time and expense involved in processing individual state ITPs.

An ITP application was submitted to CDFW on June 12, 2015, and was subsequently deemed complete on July 7, 2015. The ITP application included two threatened species — Mojave desert tortoise and Mohave ground squirrel. Issuance of an ITP is the discretionary action that has triggered the preparation of an EIR in accordance with CEQA. The ITP, 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.

B.2 O&M Program Area

The O&M activities would cover approximately 645 miles of pipelines in the Mojave Desert region located in San Bernardino and Kern counties (refer to Figure 1: O&M Program Overview Map). The western extent of the 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. The majority of the area includes land within the CDCA, but a small portion of the area is located between the eastern boundary of the CDCA and the Colorado River.

Of the approximately 645 miles of pipeline in the O&M program area, approximately 347 miles are located on BLM-managed land; 48 miles are located on military land; 1 mile is located on USFWS-managed lands; less than 1 mile is located on CDFW-managed lands; 3 miles are located on lands managed by the California State Lands Commission (CSLC); 244 miles are located on private, non-government-owned land; and less than 1 mile is located on land owned by Kern County. The six natural gas pipelines in the system are Line 300 A, Line 300 B, Line 311, Line 372, Line 313, and Line 314. Lines 300 A and B are two parallel, 34- to 36-inch-diameter high-pressure natural gas pipelines that run from the California-Arizona border to the San Francisco Bay Area. Several transmission pipelines, compressor stations, and associated facilities that transport natural gas to commercial, private, military, industrial, and utility electric generating customers are also in the O&M program area.

Table 1 summarizes the location by County, jurisdictions the pipelines cross, length of pipeline within each jurisdiction, and diameter of the pipelines within the O&M program area. In addition, Table 1 provides the total length of each pipeline, as well as the total number of miles that cross each jurisdiction.

Table 1. O&M Program Area – Pipeline Location and Overview

Pipeline	County (Location)	Land Owner Type – Occupied Area (Miles)							Pipeline Diameter (Inches)
		BLM	Military	USFWS	CDFW	CSLC	Private/ Other	Total	
Transmission, Distribution Feeder Mains, and Associated Facilities									
Line 300 A	SBC and KC (eastern portion)	135.6	20.5	—	—	1.1	68.3	225.5	34 to 36
Line 300 B	SBC and KC (eastern portion)	130.9	0.8	1.3	—	—	93.2	226.2	34 to 36
Line 311	SBC (western portion – begins at Line 300 A at the intersection of SR 58 and U.S. Highway 395 near Kramer Junction)	41.4	1.5	—	0.1	1.1	10.5	54.6	10 to 12
Line 372	SBC (begins at Line 311 and extends northwest almost to highway 178 near Ridgecrest)	2.9	0.8	—	—	—	—	3.7	10 to 12
Line 313	SBC (begins at Line 300 A, approximately 2.5 miles east of the community of Daggett [milepost 0] along I-40)	19.6	—	—	—	—	14.9	34.5	8 to 10
Line 314	SBC (begins at Line 300 A, approximately 2.5 miles west of Barstow [milepost 0]).	5.6	—	—	—	—	38.4	44	8 to 12
Distribution Feeder Mains and	SBC (western portion) and KC (eastern portion) (many branch off of Lines 300 A	10.5	24.2	—	0.1	1.1	20	55.9	0.75 to 10

Table 1. O&M Program Area – Pipeline Location and Overview

Pipeline	County (Location)	Land Owner Type – Occupied Area (Miles)							Pipeline Diameter (Inches)
		BLM	Military	USFWS	CDFW	CSLC	Private/ Other	Total	
Associated Facilities	located near PG&E's Topock Compressor Station and the communities of Ridgecrest, Edwards, Boron, Kramer Junction, and Amboy).								
Total		346.5	47.8	1.3	0.2	3.3	244.3	644.4	N/A

Notes: O&M = operations and maintenance; BLM = Bureau of Land Management; USFWS = U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; CDFW = California Department of Fish and Wildlife; CSLC = California State Lands Commission; SBC = San Bernardino County; KC = Kern County; SR = State Route; I = Interstate; N/A = not applicable.

C. Project Description

The proposed project covers the O&M activities (collectively referred to as O&M program) for approximately 645 miles of pipelines in the Mojave Desert region, 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 (ROWs); areas up to 0.25 miles beyond the ROWs, where needed; and their related equipment and facilities. In general, routine O&M activities would result in temporary disturbance in areas already previously disturbed, such as along existing pipeline ROWs and existing access roads. The majority 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.

The amount of ground disturbance would vary each year depending on the type and number of O&M activities scheduled. During the period of 2001 to 2017, the annual amount of temporary disturbance resulting from O&M activities has ranged from 0.53 acres to 37.206 acres, and permanent disturbance has ranged from 0.01 acres to 2.72 acres, according to the annual reports PG&E submitted to BLM and USFWS. Annual averages were approximately 9.67 acres of temporary disturbance and 0.89 acres of permanent disturbance. Between 2018 and early 2021, PG&E completed hydrotest and in-line inspection activities for an unprecedented length of pipeline. This large hydrotesting area is unusual and inconsistent with the O&M work that has typically been required in the O&M program area since 2001. It is not anticipated that hydrotesting on segments this large would be required in the next 30 years; therefore, the amount of disturbance resulting from current hydrotesting is not accounted for in the disturbance projections for required O&M activities in the next 30 years. As such, PG&E anticipates that approximately 40 acres of disturbance to Mojave desert tortoise habitat and up to approximately 10 acres of disturbance to Mohave ground squirrel habitat would occur annually under the proposed project. These estimates are derived from examining the amount of disturbance that has occurred between 2001 and 2017 and anticipating future maintenance needs for the pipelines.

PG&E expects the same O&M activities would continue at a similar frequency as they did from 2001 through 2017, a period of 16 years. 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.

PG&E would perform all O&M activities in accordance with federal, state, and local environmental, safety, and construction regulations and standards. Where applicable, PG&E would also conduct the work in accordance with landowner agreements.

Typical O&M activities, as well as the typical area of disturbance, duration, and frequency of activities in the O&M program area, are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Typical O&M Activities

O&M Activity	Type and Typical Area of Disturbance	Duration	Frequency
Pipeline Patrols	No additional disturbance	Approximately 30 days per year	Up to quarterly aerial patrols; quarterly to annual patrols on foot, all-terrain vehicles, and/or sport utility vehicles
Valve Inspections and Lubrication	No additional disturbance	Approximately 45 day per year	Several times per year
Telecommunication Site Inspections	No additional disturbance	Approximately 20 days per year	Monthly, but may be performed more frequently to maintain the system
Telecommunication Site Maintenance	Temporary staging areas are generally located within PG&E's ROWs or other disturbed areas, but may require additional workspace outside of disturbed area up to 0.25 acres	Approximately 20 days per year	Monthly
Road Surface Maintenance	No additional disturbance	Approximately 60 days per year	Yearly and as needed
ROW and Access Road Surface Repair	Temporary: 0–2 acres and/or Permanent: <0.1 acres	Varies depending on the type and length of repairs needed	Often required after heavy storms due to erosion and as a result of damage caused by off-road vehicles
Erosion Control	Temporary: 0.30 to 0.46 acres Permanent: <0.01 acres	Varies depending on the type of controls needed	Variable

Table 2. Typical O&M Activities

O&M Activity	Type and Typical Area of Disturbance	Duration	Frequency
Soil Stabilization	Temporary: 1 acres and/or Permanent: <0.1 acres	Typically, 7 days or less	Variable
Installation of Pig Launcher/Receiver Facilities	Temporary: 2.12 acres Permanent: 0.69 acres	6 to 8 weeks	4 to 6 installations
Installation of Deep-Well Anodes	Temporary: 0.02 to 0.32 acres	2 to 4 weeks	0 to 6 times per year
Thermoelectric Generators	Temporary: 0.06 to 0.14 acres Permanent: <0.01 acres	2 to 4 weeks	0 to 5 times per year
Installation of Magnesium Anodes	Temporary: <0.01 acres	1 to 3 days	0 to 10 times per year
Installation of Flex Anodes	Temporary: <0.01 to 0.02 acres	Approximately 4 weeks	<1 time per year
Installation or Replacement of Horizontal Anode Beds	Temporary: 0.02 to 0.32 acres	5 to 7 weeks	<1 time per year
Electronic Test System (ETS) Station and Cathodic Test Station (CTS) Installations	Temporary: 0.06 acres	ETS: 5 days CTS: 1 to 2 days	ETS: 5 to 10 times per year CTS: Up to 100 times per year
Hydrostatic Testing	Temporary: 0.23 acres	8 weeks	0 to 6 times per year for the duration of the permit
Internal Pipeline Inspection	Temporary: 0.11 to 0.23 acres	Inspections require 4 weeks of preparation, 24 hours for the inspection, and 2 weeks for demobilization; calibration tests take 5 to 10 days	Inspections: every 7 years Calibration tests: 5 to 10 required annually

Table 2. Typical O&M Activities

O&M Activity	Type and Typical Area of Disturbance	Duration	Frequency
Integrity Management	No additional disturbance	Surveys take approximately 10 days	Every 2 months or as indicated by the integrity management team
Water Diversion Channels	Permanent: <0.10 acres	2 days	Variable, but generally less than 2 times per year
Span Painting/Air-to-Soil Corrosion Protection	Temporary: <0.01 to 0.08 acres	Approximately 6 weeks	Variable
Below-Grade Pipe and Coating Inspection	Temporary: <0.01 to 0.57 acres	2 to 10 days	10 times per year
Valve/Pipeline Excavation and Recoating	Temporary: <0.01 to 0.28 acres	2 to 4 weeks	0 to 25 times per year
Valve Replacement/Automation	Temporary: 0.52 to 0.57 acres Permanent: 0.06 acres	4 to 5 weeks	0 to 10 times per year
Pipeline Segment Replacement	Temporary: 0.46 to 6.89 acres	Approximately 1 to 6 months	Frequency and length of pipeline segment replacement activities would vary annually
High-Pressure Regulator Deactivation	Temporary: <0.01 acres	Approximately 1 week	0 to 10 times per year
Activities that Could Extend Outside of Pipeline ROW Corridors	Temporary: 0.5 acre	N/A	N/A
Fire Response	Variable	Variable	Conducted on an as-needed basis

Note: O&M = operations and maintenance; PG&E = Pacific Gas & Electric Company; ROW = right-of-way; N/A = not applicable.

D. Potential Environmental Effects

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15063(a), CDFW has elected to proceed directly to the preparation of a Draft EIR rather than preparing an Initial Study. Therefore, no determinations have yet been made as to the significance of the project's potential impacts. Determinations will be made in the environmental analysis conducted in the Draft EIR after the issues are considered thoroughly. The impacts analysis in the EIR will be conducted in accordance with the CEQA Guidelines and will provide

a response to each threshold question in Appendix G, Environmental Checklist Form, of the CEQA Guidelines. An example of the Environmental Checklist Form can be found at the following website: https://califaep.org/docs/2019-Appendix_G_Checklist.pdf. This link is provided to assist the public and agencies in preparing written scoping comments.

Potential issues and impacts to the existing environment to be analyzed in the Draft EIR include the following environmental topics:

- Aesthetics
- Agriculture and Forestry
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Energy
- Geology and Soils (including Paleontological Resources)
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Mineral Resources
- Noise
- Population and Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Utilities /Service Systems
- Wildfire

The EIR will evaluate potential environmental effects of the proposed project, including PG&E's best management and standard practices, as well as applicant-proposed measures, during the environmental evaluation. Where needed, mitigation measures will be proposed to avoid and/or substantially lessen any significant adverse effects identified in the EIR's impact analysis.

The EIR will also address the cumulative environmental consequences of the proposed project in combination with other closely related past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects in the area. This will serve to satisfy CEQA requirements regarding regional cumulative effect concerns.

In compliance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6, the EIR will describe and evaluate the comparative merits of a reasonable range of alternatives to the proposed project. The EIR will also identify any alternatives that were considered but rejected by the lead agency as infeasible and briefly explain their reasoning. The EIR will provide an analysis of the no project alternative and will also identify the environmentally superior alternative. The alternatives to be analyzed in the EIR will be developed during the environmental review process and will consider input received during public scoping period.

E. Public Scoping Meeting

Rather than conducting an in-person meeting, the Governor's 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 scoping meeting will involve a presentation about the proposed project and the environmental review process and schedule. The purpose of the meeting is to facilitate the receipt of written comments about the scope and content of the environmental analysis to be addressed in the Draft EIR. The scoping meeting is for information gathering; it is not a public hearing, and no public testimony will be

taken. No decisions about the project will be made at the public scoping meeting. The meeting date, time, and the online address for 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

Everyone is encouraged to attend the teleconference online to express their concerns about the proposed project and to offer suggestions regarding the proposed project, including alternatives.

F. Submitting Comments

At this time, CDFW is soliciting comments on the NOP regarding your views on how the project may affect the environment. This information will be considered when preparing the Draft EIR's discussion of environmental topics, significant effects, mitigation measures, and alternatives. Because of time limits mandated by state law, comments should be provided no later than 5:00 p.m. on April 24, 2021 (the end of 30-day comment period, which starts on March 25, 2021).

You have several options for submitting comments: (1) online during the scoping meeting, (2) by U.S. mail, or (3) by email. Comments provided by email should include "PG&E O&M – NOP Scoping Comments" in the subject line, and the name and physical address of the commenter should be contained in the body of the email.

Please send all comments to:

California Department of Fish and Wildlife

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; include "PG&E O&M – NOP Scoping Comments" in the subject line

All comments on environmental issues received during the public comment period will be considered and addressed in the Draft EIR, which is anticipated to be available for public review in the fourth quarter of 2021.

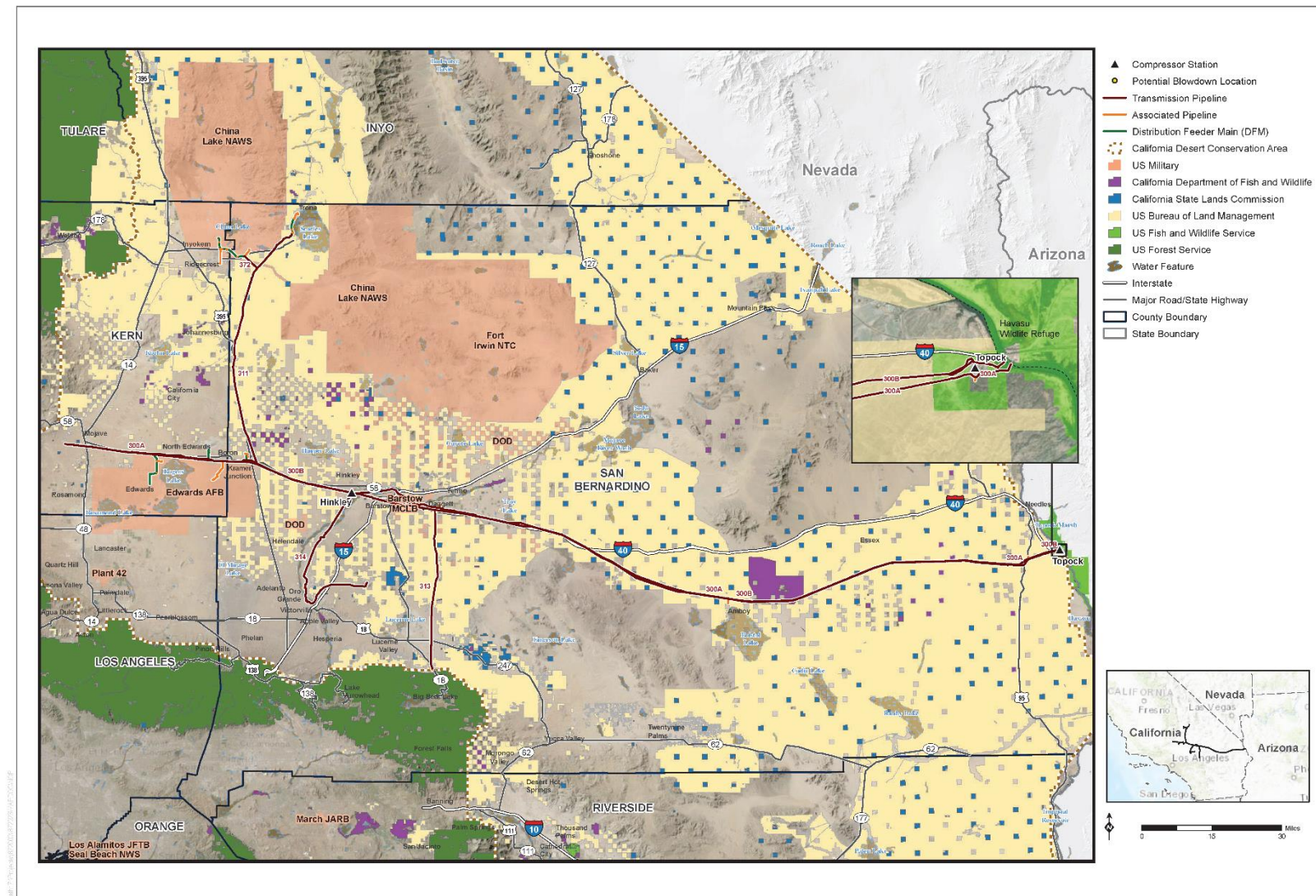
G. Location of Documents Available for Public Review

The NOP and all public review documents for this project will be available for review online at <https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Notices>.

Due to COVID-19, public libraries and county offices are currently closed or have limited office hours available. Instead, a hard copy of the NOP is available for review by appointment at the CDFW Inland Deserts Region Office, located at the following address:

CDFW Inland Deserts Region Office
3602 Inland Empire Boulevard, Suite C-220
Ontario, California 91764

*Notice of Preparation – Notice of Public Scoping Meeting
O&M of Pacific Gas & Electric's Pipelines in Southern California Deserts Project*



SOURCE: PG&E; Insignia Environmental

FIGURE 1

O&M Program Overview Map

Operation and Maintenance of Pacific Gas & Electric's Pipelines in Southern California Deserts

Appendix B2

Public Scoping Meeting Presentation



CEQA Review

Operation and Maintenance of Pacific Gas & Electric's
Pipelines in Southern California Deserts

PUBLIC MEETING – April 7, 2021 @ 1:00 PM

Overview

01 Purpose of Meeting

02 Key Players and their Roles

03 Objectives and Description
of the Proposed Project

04 Environmental Review
Process Pursuant to CEQA

05 Solicit Input of Potential
Issues of Concern

06 How to Prepare
Meaningful Comments

07 Tentative Schedule

08 Where to Submit Comments
on the Notice of Preparation



01

Purpose of Meeting

Why Are We Here?

Purpose of Meeting

- ✓ PG&E's Incidental Take Permit Application filed with CDFW
- ✓ Inform the public and responsible agencies about an upcoming project for which an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) will be prepared
- ✓ Inform the public about the environmental review process pursuant to CEQA
- ✓ Solicit input on the scope of environmental issues for EIR
- ✓ Solicit input on potential mitigation measures, alternatives, and cumulative projects



02

Key Players

Who's involved and
what are their Roles?

Who's Involved and What Are Their Roles?

- ✓ **Applicant**
Pacific Gas & Electric Company
Steve Willoughby, Land Planner
- ✓ **Lead Agency Under CEQA**
California Department of Fish & Wildlife
Ali Aghili, Senior Environmental Scientist Supervisor – Mojave Desert
Ashley Rosales, Environmental Scientist, Project Coordinator – Mojave Desert
- ✓ **Environmental Contractor for CDFW**
Dudek
Sarah Lozano, Principal
Rica Nitka, CEQA Planner

Other Key Agencies That May Be Involved

✓ **Local Agencies**

County of San Bernardino
County of Kern
City of California City
City of Barstow
City of Ridgecrest
City of Victorville
Town of Apple Valley

✓ **State Agencies**

CA State Lands Commission
CA Department of Transportation
CA State Water Resources Control Board
CA Regional Water Quality Control Board
CA State Historic Preservation Office

✓ **Federal Agencies**

Bureau of Land Management
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Department of Defense



03

Project Description

Objectives and Description of
the Proposed Project

Purpose

- ✓ Obtain long-term state Incidental Take Permit for ongoing operation and maintenance (O&M) activities



Desert tortoise
(*Gopherus agassizii*)



Mohave ground squirrel
(*Xerospermophilus mohavensis*)

PG&E's 2017 Gas Safety Plan

- ✓ Maintenance and repair of gas systems required by California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC)
- ✓ Gas safety plans required by state regulations
 - Public Utilities Code Section 961
 - CPUC-amended Pipeline Safety Rulemaking and additional guidance



PG&E's 2017 Gas Safety Plan

- ✓ PG&E puts safety first
 - Commitment to safe and reliable operations
 - Investments in process and infrastructure



Facilities

- ✓ 645 miles of natural gas pipelines and associated facilities



O&M Activities

- ✓ Internal Pipeline Inspection
- ✓ Valve/Pipeline Excavation and Recoating
- ✓ Installation of Anodes
- ✓ Valve Replacement and Automation
- ✓ Hydrostatic Testing
- ✓ Integrity Management
- ✓ Erosion Control
- ✓ Below-Grade Pipe and Coating Inspection
- ✓ Installation of Pig Launcher/Receiver Facilities
- ✓ Pipeline Segment Replacement
- ✓ Right-of-Way and Access Road Repair



04

Environmental Review Process Pursuant to CEQA

Steps in the Review Process

Environmental Review Process





05

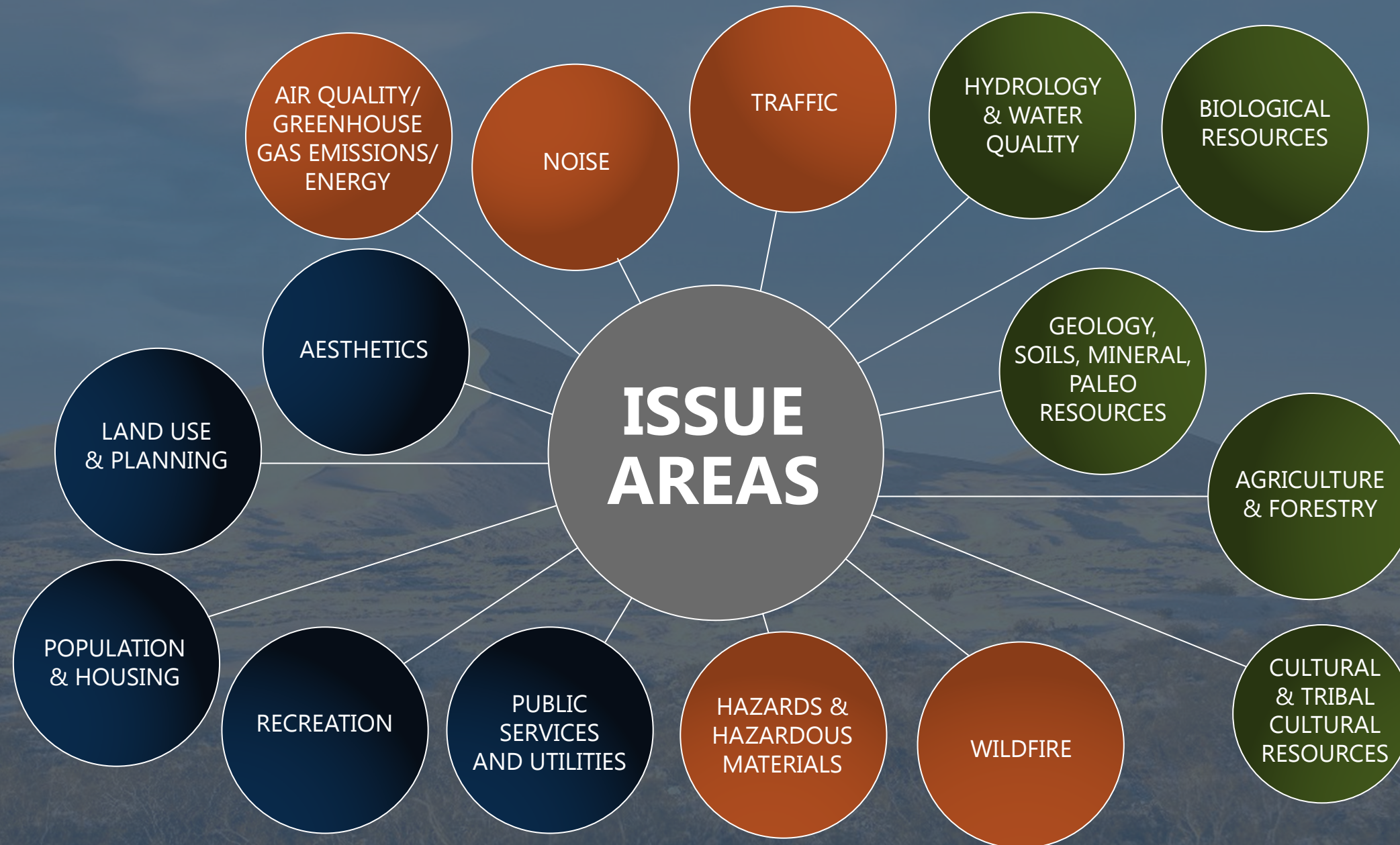
Solicit Input of Potential Issues of Concern

Compliance with the CEQA

Purpose of the EIR

- ✓ Provide full disclosure of significant effects and means to reduce, avoid, and minimize those effects
- ✓ Consider a reasonable range of alternatives
- ✓ Provide opportunity for public participation in the planning and decision-making process
- ✓ Ensure that decision makers have a solid basis to make a decision

Environmental Issue Areas



Alternatives and Cumulative Analysis

- ✓ All EIRs are required to analyze Alternatives and Cumulative Effects
- ✓ Reasonable Range of Alternatives, including “No Project” Alternative (always required)
- ✓ Cumulative Effects = proposed O&M activities + other projects in the area



06 How to Prepare Meaningful Comments

What would you like
evaluated in the EIR?

NOP Meaningful Comments





07

Tentative Schedule

Schedule and Opportunities for Public Input

✓ **Notice of Preparation – Public Scoping**

Close of State Clearinghouse Public Scoping
April 26, 2021

✓ **Completion of Draft EIR – Fall 2021**

45-Day public review period

✓ **Responses to Comments on Draft EIR – Winter 2022**

Sent to public agencies for 10-day review period

✓ **Certification of Final EIR– Winter/Spring 2022**



08

Where to Submit Public Comments

Providing Public Scoping Comments

Subject Line: PG&E O&M - NOP Scoping Comments

Email to:

Ashley.Rosales@wildlife.ca.gov

OR

Send to:

CDFW Inland Deserts Region Office
Attention: Ashley Rosales,
Project Coordinator
3602 Inland Empire Boulevard,
Suite C220
Ontario, California 91764



If handwritten, please **write** legibly

Providing Public Scoping Comments

Ends April 26, 2021

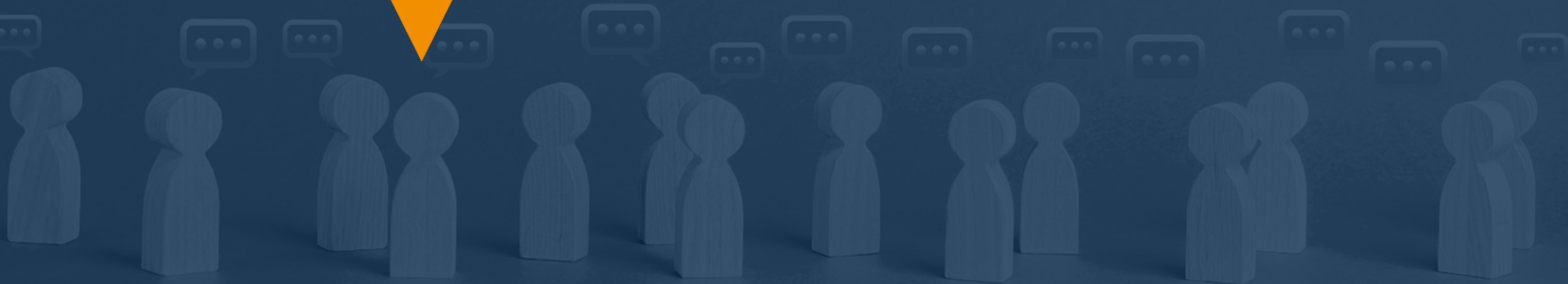
Please be sure to include your name, address,
and phone number on all comments





QUESTIONS?

We appreciate and
Value your participation





For More Information

VISIT THE CDFW WEBSITE

wildlife.ca.gov/Notices

EMAIL

Ashley.Rosales@wildlife.ca.gov

IN PERSON BY APPOINTMENT

CDFW Inland Deserts Region Office
3602 Inland Empire Boulevard, Suite C220
Ontario, California 91764

PHONE: 909.484.0523

OPEN: Monday - Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Appendix B3

Newspaper Notices

PROOF OF PUBLICATION

(2015.5 C.C.P.)

STATE OF CALIFORNIA,
County of San Bernardino

I am a citizen of the United States and a resident of the County aforesaid; I am over the age of eighteen years, and not a party to or interested in the above entitled matter. I am the principal clerk of the publisher of the DAILY PRESS, a newspaper of general circulation, published in the City of Victorville, County of San Bernardino, and which newspaper has been adjudicated a newspaper of general circulation by the Superior Court of the County of San Bernardino, State of California, under the date of November 21, 1938, Case number 43096, that the notice, of which the annexed is a printed copy (set in type not smaller than nonpareil), has been published in each regular and entire issue of said newspaper and not in any supplement thereof on the following dates, to-wit:

March 25

All in the year 2021.

I certify (or declare) under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Dated this: 25th day of March, 2021.

Signature

Leslie Jacobs

This space is the County Clerk's Filing Stamp

Proof of Publication of SCOPING NOTICE

SCOPING NOTICE

Operation and
Maintenance of
Pacific Gas &
Electric's
Pipelines in Southern
California Deserts
Project
Environmental
Impact Report

As lead agency, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) intends to prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the proposed Operation and Maintenance (O&M) of Pacific Gas & Electric's (PG&E's) Pipelines in Southern California Deserts Project. PG&E filed an Incidental Take Permit application with CDFW for two threatened species: Mojave desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*) and Mohave ground squirrel (*Xeromophilus mohavensis*). Issuance of the Incidental Take Permit is the discretionary action that has triggered preparation of an 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.

The proposed project involves PG&E's continued O&M activities of approximately 645 miles of pipelines in the Mojave Desert region of Southern California, 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

occurring 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.

As required by CEQA, CDFW has prepared a Notice of Preparation (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>. The 30-day scoping period is from March 25 through April 24, 2021.

CDFW is conducting a public scoping meeting online, through a webinar-type format. The meeting will provide an opportunity for agencies and the public to learn about the project and to share any concerns or comments they may have. The online meeting will be held on April 7, 2021, 1:00 p.m., and can be accessed online at rebrand.ly/Scoping-PGE-CA-Desert-Gas-Pipeline-CA (April 7, 2021)).


All scoping comments must be received by the end of the 30-day scoping period, on April 24, 2021. Send comments to CDFW, Inland Deserts Region, Attention: Ashley Rosales, Project Coordinator. Mailing Address: 3602 Inland Empire Boulevard, Suite C-220, Ontario, California 91764. Comments may also be sent via email to AAshley.Rosales@wildlife.ca.gov, with a subject line that states "PG&E O&M Draft EIR Comments".

Published in the
Daily Press
March 25, 2021
(Th-43)

Publish: March 24, 2021
#46409

State of California
County of Kern

03/25/2021

signed: 
03/25/2021

[illegible]

Dudek
Public Request
PG+E Pipeline

DECLARATION
OF PUBLICATION
(2015.5 C.C.P.)

That at all times, herein mentioned declarant is and was a citizen of the United States, over the age of twenty-one years, and not a party to nor interested in the within matter; that declarant is the principal clerk of the printer and the publisher of THE DAILY INDEPENDENT, a newspaper of general circulation printed and published daily in the City of Ridgecrest, Indian Wells Judicial District, County of Kern, State of California, which newspaper has been adjudged a newspaper of general circulation by the said Superior Court by order made and renewed July 8, 1952, in Civil Proceeding No. 58584 of said Court: that the instrument of which the annexed in a printed copy has been published in each regular and like issue of said newspaper (and not any supplement thereof) on the following dates, to-wit:

03-24-21

EXECUTED ON March 04, 2021, at
Ridgecrest California.

Declarant

(03/24/2021)

Appendix B4

NOP Comment Letters

Commenter	Summary of Comments	Applicable EIR Section
Native American Heritage Commission, March 29, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Compliance with AB 52 and SB 18, as well as any other applicable laws, is required. ▪ To adequately assess the existence and significance of tribal cultural resources and to plan for avoidance, minimization, preservation in place, or mitigation, the following is recommended: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Conduct an archaeological records search with California Historical Research Information System (CHRIS) Center. ○ If an archaeological survey is required, prepare a professional report detailing the finds and recommendations of the records search and field survey. ○ Contact the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) for a Sacred Lands File Search and a Native American Tribal Consultation List of appropriate tribes for consulting. ▪ Letter also includes what the lead agency should consider putting into their mitigation, monitoring, and reporting programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 4.5: Cultural Resources ▪ 4.15: Tribal Cultural Resources
Caltrans, April 16, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure that operation and maintenance (O&M) activities adhere to the Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) and California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) Joint Use Agreements and Consent to Common Use Agreements for pipeline facilities within state highway right-of-way. ▪ Work within rights-of-way has to meet Caltrans standards. Caltrans needs to be notified through some agreement language, or (in other cases) an encroachment permit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 4.14: Transportation
Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board, April 26, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The environmental impact report (EIR) needs to reference the Basin Plan in the hydrology and water quality analysis and project proponent must comply with all applicable water quality standards and prohibitions, including provisions of the Basin Plan. ▪ Project proponent must consult with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and perform the necessary jurisdictional determinations for surface waters within the study area. ▪ Project proponent needs to consult with the USACE and perform necessary jurisdictional determinations for surface waters within the study area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 4.4: Biological Resources ▪ 4.10: Hydrology and Water Quality

Commenter	Summary of Comments	Applicable EIR Section
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The EIR needs to list the permits that may be required (NPDES, CGP, NPDES for Limited Threat to Surface Waters, WDR, and/or 401 permit) and identify the specific O&M and/or minor construction activities that may trigger these permitting actions in the appropriate sections of the EIR. ▪ The EIR needs to identify the beneficial uses of surface waters within the study area, evaluate the impacts to water quality with respect to beneficial uses that could occur as a result of O&M activities, and provide alternatives to avoid impacts or describe specific mitigation measures that, when implemented, will minimize unavoidable impacts to a less-than-significant level. ▪ The EIR must ID, describe, and quantify all potential temporary and permanent impacts to surface waters. The EIR shall also include alternatives and other mitigation measures to reduce and/or eliminate such impacts. Unavoidable impacts must be minimized to the extent practicable and the project must be designed to maintain existing hydrologic features and patterns. All unavoidable impacts to waters of the state must be mitigated. ▪ The EIR must evaluate all potential stormwater impacts, particularly potential post-construction hydrologic impacts, and describe specific best management practices (BMPs) that, when implemented, will reduce those potential impacts to a less-than-significant level. Design alternatives that redirect these flows from surface waters to areas where they will dissipate by percolation into the landscape must be considered (where feasible). 	
San Bernardino County Department of Public Works, April 19, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Impacts associated with the project's occurrence in the Zone D area and mitigation should be discussed within the Draft EIR prior to adoption by the lead agency. ▪ Recommend that PG&E enforces Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and its current regulations for construction within a Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA). Impacts associated with the project following FEMA's regulations for construction within an SFHA and mitigation, should be discussed within the Draft EIR prior to adoption by the lead agency. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 4.10: Hydrology and Water Quality ▪ 4.16: Utilities and Services Systems

Commenter	Summary of Comments	Applicable EIR Section
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any encroachments on the District's right-of-way or facilities, including but not limited to access, fencing and grading, utility crossings, landscaping, new and/or alteration to drainage connections will require a permit from the District prior to start of construction. The necessity for permits, and any impacts associated with them, should be addressed in the Draft EIR prior to adoption and certification.	
Quechan Historic Preservation Officer (email), March 30, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Letter states that the tribe has no comments.	Not applicable

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NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE COMMISSION

March 29, 2021

Ashley Rosales
California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Inland Deserts Region
3602 Inland Empire Blvd., Ste C-220
Ontario, CA 91764

Re: 2021030571, Operation and Maintenance of Pacific Gas & Electric's Pipelines in Southern California Deserts Project, Kern and San Bernardino Counties

Dear Ms. Rosales:

The Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) has received the Notice of Preparation (NOP), Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) or Early Consultation for the project referenced above. The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Pub. Resources Code §21000 et seq.), specifically Public Resources Code §21084.1, states that a project that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource, is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment. (Pub. Resources Code § 21084.1; Cal. Code Regs., tit.14, §15064.5 (b) (CEQA Guidelines §15064.5 (b)). If there is substantial evidence, in light of the whole record before a lead agency, that a project may have a significant effect on the environment, an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) shall be prepared. (Pub. Resources Code §21080 (d); Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 5064 subd.(a)(1) (CEQA Guidelines §15064 (a)(1)). In order to determine whether a project will cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource, a lead agency will need to determine whether there are historical resources within the area of potential effect (APE).

CEQA was amended significantly in 2014. Assembly Bill 52 (Gatto, Chapter 532, Statutes of 2014) (AB 52) amended CEQA to create a separate category of cultural resources, "tribal cultural resources" (Pub. Resources Code §21074) and provides that a project with an effect that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment. (Pub. Resources Code §21084.2). Public agencies shall, when feasible, avoid damaging effects to any tribal cultural resource. (Pub. Resources Code §21084.3 (a)). **AB 52 applies to any project for which a notice of preparation, a notice of negative declaration, or a mitigated negative declaration is filed on or after July 1, 2015.** If your project involves the adoption of or amendment to a general plan or a specific plan, or the designation or proposed designation of open space, on or after March 1, 2005, it may also be subject to Senate Bill 18 (Burton, Chapter 905, Statutes of 2004) (SB 18). **Both SB 18 and AB 52 have tribal consultation requirements.** If your project is also subject to the federal National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. § 4321 et seq.) (NEPA), the tribal consultation requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (154 U.S.C. 300101, 36 C.F.R. §800 et seq.) may also apply.

The NAHC recommends consultation with California Native American tribes that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of your proposed project as early as possible in order to avoid inadvertent discoveries of Native American human remains and best protect tribal cultural resources. Below is a brief summary of portions of AB 52 and SB 18 as well as the NAHC's recommendations for conducting cultural resources assessments.

Consult your legal counsel about compliance with AB 52 and SB 18 as well as compliance with any other applicable laws.

CHAIRPERSON
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VICE CHAIRPERSON
Reginald Pagaling
Chumash

SECRETARY
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AB 52

AB 52 has added to CEQA the additional requirements listed below, along with many other requirements:

1. Fourteen Day Period to Provide Notice of Completion of an Application/Decision to Undertake a Project: Within fourteen (14) days of determining that an application for a project is complete or of a decision by a public agency to undertake a project, a lead agency shall provide formal notification to a designated contact of, or tribal representative of, traditionally and culturally affiliated California Native American tribes that have requested notice, to be accomplished by at least one written notice that includes:
 - a. A brief description of the project.
 - b. The lead agency contact information.
 - c. Notification that the California Native American tribe has 30 days to request consultation. (Pub. Resources Code §21080.3.1 (d)).
 - d. A "California Native American tribe" is defined as a Native American tribe located in California that is on the contact list maintained by the NAHC for the purposes of Chapter 905 of Statutes of 2004 (SB 18). (Pub. Resources Code §21073).
2. Begin Consultation Within 30 Days of Receiving a Tribe's Request for Consultation and Before Releasing a Negative Declaration, Mitigated Negative Declaration, or Environmental Impact Report: A lead agency shall begin the consultation process within 30 days of receiving a request for consultation from a California Native American tribe that is traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of the proposed project. (Pub. Resources Code §21080.3.1, subds. (d) and (e)) and prior to the release of a negative declaration, mitigated negative declaration or Environmental Impact Report. (Pub. Resources Code §21080.3.1 (b)).
 - a. For purposes of AB 52, "consultation shall have the same meaning as provided in Gov. Code §65352.4 (SB 18). (Pub. Resources Code §21080.3.1 (b)).
3. Mandatory Topics of Consultation If Requested by a Tribe: The following topics of consultation, if a tribe requests to discuss them, are mandatory topics of consultation:
 - a. Alternatives to the project.
 - b. Recommended mitigation measures.
 - c. Significant effects. (Pub. Resources Code §21080.3.2 (a)).
4. Discretionary Topics of Consultation: The following topics are discretionary topics of consultation:
 - a. Type of environmental review necessary.
 - b. Significance of the tribal cultural resources.
 - c. Significance of the project's impacts on tribal cultural resources.
 - d. If necessary, project alternatives or appropriate measures for preservation or mitigation that the tribe may recommend to the lead agency. (Pub. Resources Code §21080.3.2 (a)).
5. Confidentiality of Information Submitted by a Tribe During the Environmental Review Process: With some exceptions, any information, including but not limited to, the location, description, and use of tribal cultural resources submitted by a California Native American tribe during the environmental review process shall not be included in the environmental document or otherwise disclosed by the lead agency or any other public agency to the public, consistent with Government Code §6254 (r) and §6254.10. Any information submitted by a California Native American tribe during the consultation or environmental review process shall be published in a confidential appendix to the environmental document unless the tribe that provided the information consents, in writing, to the disclosure of some or all of the information to the public. (Pub. Resources Code §21082.3 (c)(1)).
6. Discussion of Impacts to Tribal Cultural Resources in the Environmental Document: If a project may have a significant impact on a tribal cultural resource, the lead agency's environmental document shall discuss both of the following:
 - a. Whether the proposed project has a significant impact on an identified tribal cultural resource.
 - b. Whether feasible alternatives or mitigation measures, including those measures that may be agreed to pursuant to Public Resources Code §21082.3, subdivision (a), avoid or substantially lessen the impact on the identified tribal cultural resource. (Pub. Resources Code §21082.3 (b)).

- 7. Conclusion of Consultation:** Consultation with a tribe shall be considered concluded when either of the following occurs:
- The parties agree to measures to mitigate or avoid a significant effect, if a significant effect exists, on a tribal cultural resource; or
 - A party, acting in good faith and after reasonable effort, concludes that mutual agreement cannot be reached. (Pub. Resources Code §21080.3.2 (b)).
- 8. Recommending Mitigation Measures Agreed Upon in Consultation in the Environmental Document:** Any mitigation measures agreed upon in the consultation conducted pursuant to Public Resources Code §21080.3.2 shall be recommended for inclusion in the environmental document and in an adopted mitigation monitoring and reporting program, if determined to avoid or lessen the impact pursuant to Public Resources Code §21082.3, subdivision (b), paragraph 2, and shall be fully enforceable. (Pub. Resources Code §21082.3 (a)).
- 9. Required Consideration of Feasible Mitigation:** If mitigation measures recommended by the staff of the lead agency as a result of the consultation process are not included in the environmental document or if there are no agreed upon mitigation measures at the conclusion of consultation, or if consultation does not occur, and if substantial evidence demonstrates that a project will cause a significant effect to a tribal cultural resource, the lead agency shall consider feasible mitigation pursuant to Public Resources Code §21084.3 (b). (Pub. Resources Code §21082.3 (e)).
- 10. Examples of Mitigation Measures That, If Feasible, May Be Considered to Avoid or Minimize Significant Adverse Impacts to Tribal Cultural Resources:**
- Avoidance and preservation of the resources in place, including, but not limited to:
 - Planning and construction to avoid the resources and protect the cultural and natural context.
 - Planning greenspace, parks, or other open space, to incorporate the resources with culturally appropriate protection and management criteria.
 - Treating the resource with culturally appropriate dignity, taking into account the tribal cultural values and meaning of the resource, including, but not limited to, the following:
 - Protecting the cultural character and integrity of the resource.
 - Protecting the traditional use of the resource.
 - Protecting the confidentiality of the resource.
 - Permanent conservation easements or other interests in real property, with culturally appropriate management criteria for the purposes of preserving or utilizing the resources or places.
 - Protecting the resource. (Pub. Resource Code §21084.3 (b)).
 - Please note that a federally recognized California Native American tribe or a non-federally recognized California Native American tribe that is on the contact list maintained by the NAHC to protect a California prehistoric, archaeological, cultural, spiritual, or ceremonial place may acquire and hold conservation easements if the conservation easement is voluntarily conveyed. (Civ. Code §815.3 (c)).
 - Please note that it is the policy of the state that Native American remains and associated grave artifacts shall be repatriated. (Pub. Resources Code §5097.991).
- 11. Prerequisites for Certifying an Environmental Impact Report or Adopting a Mitigated Negative Declaration or Negative Declaration with a Significant Impact on an Identified Tribal Cultural Resource:** An Environmental Impact Report may not be certified, nor may a mitigated negative declaration or a negative declaration be adopted unless one of the following occurs:
- The consultation process between the tribes and the lead agency has occurred as provided in Public Resources Code §21080.3.1 and §21080.3.2 and concluded pursuant to Public Resources Code §21080.3.2.
 - The tribe that requested consultation failed to provide comments to the lead agency or otherwise failed to engage in the consultation process.
 - The lead agency provided notice of the project to the tribe in compliance with Public Resources Code §21080.3.1 (d) and the tribe failed to request consultation within 30 days. (Pub. Resources Code §21082.3 (d)).

The NAHC's PowerPoint presentation titled, "Tribal Consultation Under AB 52: Requirements and Best Practices" may be found online at: http://nahc.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/AB52TribalConsultation_CalEPAPDF.pdf

SB 18

SB 18 applies to local governments and requires local governments to contact, provide notice to, refer plans to, and consult with tribes prior to the adoption or amendment of a general plan or a specific plan, or the designation of open space. (Gov. Code §65352.3). Local governments should consult the Governor's Office of Planning and Research's "Tribal Consultation Guidelines," which can be found online at: https://www.opr.ca.gov/docs/09_14_05_Updated_Guidelines_922.pdf.

Some of SB 18's provisions include:

1. Tribal Consultation: If a local government considers a proposal to adopt or amend a general plan or a specific plan, or to designate open space it is required to contact the appropriate tribes identified by the NAHC by requesting a "Tribal Consultation List." If a tribe, once contacted, requests consultation the local government must consult with the tribe on the plan proposal. **A tribe has 90 days from the date of receipt of notification to request consultation unless a shorter timeframe has been agreed to by the tribe.** (Gov. Code §65352.3 (a)(2)).
2. No Statutory Time Limit on SB 18 Tribal Consultation. There is no statutory time limit on SB 18 tribal consultation.
3. Confidentiality: Consistent with the guidelines developed and adopted by the Office of Planning and Research pursuant to Gov. Code §65040.2, the city or county shall protect the confidentiality of the information concerning the specific identity, location, character, and use of places, features and objects described in Public Resources Code §5097.9 and §5097.993 that are within the city's or county's jurisdiction. (Gov. Code §65352.3 (b)).
4. Conclusion of SB 18 Tribal Consultation: Consultation should be concluded at the point in which:
 - a. The parties to the consultation come to a mutual agreement concerning the appropriate measures for preservation or mitigation; or
 - b. Either the local government or the tribe, acting in good faith and after reasonable effort, concludes that mutual agreement cannot be reached concerning the appropriate measures of preservation or mitigation. (Tribal Consultation Guidelines, Governor's Office of Planning and Research (2005) at p. 18).

Agencies should be aware that neither AB 52 nor SB 18 precludes agencies from initiating tribal consultation with tribes that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with their jurisdictions before the timeframes provided in AB 52 and SB 18. For that reason, we urge you to continue to request Native American Tribal Contact Lists and "Sacred Lands File" searches from the NAHC. The request forms can be found online at: <http://nahc.ca.gov/resources/forms/>.

NAHC Recommendations for Cultural Resources Assessments

To adequately assess the existence and significance of tribal cultural resources and plan for avoidance, preservation in place, or barring both, mitigation of project-related impacts to tribal cultural resources, the NAHC recommends the following actions:

1. Contact the appropriate regional California Historical Research Information System (CHRIS) Center (http://ohp.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=1068) for an archaeological records search. The records search will determine:
 - a. If part or all of the APE has been previously surveyed for cultural resources.
 - b. If any known cultural resources have already been recorded on or adjacent to the APE.
 - c. If the probability is low, moderate, or high that cultural resources are located in the APE.
 - d. If a survey is required to determine whether previously unrecorded cultural resources are present.
2. If an archaeological inventory survey is required, the final stage is the preparation of a professional report detailing the findings and recommendations of the records search and field survey.
 - a. The final report containing site forms, site significance, and mitigation measures should be submitted immediately to the planning department. All information regarding site locations, Native American human remains, and associated funerary objects should be in a separate confidential addendum and not be made available for public disclosure.

- b. The final written report should be submitted within 3 months after work has been completed to the appropriate regional CHRIS center.
3. Contact the NAHC for:
- a. A Sacred Lands File search. Remember that tribes do not always record their sacred sites in the Sacred Lands File, nor are they required to do so. A Sacred Lands File search is not a substitute for consultation with tribes that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of the project's APE.
 - b. A Native American Tribal Consultation List of appropriate tribes for consultation concerning the project site and to assist in planning for avoidance, preservation in place, or, failing both, mitigation measures.
4. Remember that the lack of surface evidence of archaeological resources (including tribal cultural resources) does not preclude their subsurface existence.
- a. Lead agencies should include in their mitigation and monitoring reporting program plan provisions for the identification and evaluation of inadvertently discovered archaeological resources per Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, §15064.5(f) (CEQA Guidelines §15064.5(f)). In areas of identified archaeological sensitivity, a certified archaeologist and a culturally affiliated Native American with knowledge of cultural resources should monitor all ground-disturbing activities.
 - b. Lead agencies should include in their mitigation and monitoring reporting program plans provisions for the disposition of recovered cultural items that are not burial associated in consultation with culturally affiliated Native Americans.
 - c. Lead agencies should include in their mitigation and monitoring reporting program plans provisions for the treatment and disposition of inadvertently discovered Native American human remains. Health and Safety Code §7050.5, Public Resources Code §5097.98, and Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, §15064.5, subdivisions (d) and (e) (CEQA Guidelines §15064.5, subds. (d) and (e)) address the processes to be followed in the event of an inadvertent discovery of any Native American human remains and associated grave goods in a location other than a dedicated cemetery.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me at my email address: Nancy.Gonzalez-Lopez@nahc.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



Nancy Gonzalez-Lopez
Cultural Resources Analyst

cc: State Clearinghouse

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

DISTRICT 9
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BISHOP, CA 93514
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*Making Conservation
a California Way of Life.*

April 16, 2021

Ms. Ashley Rosales, Project Coordinator
CA Department of Fish and Wildlife, Inland Deserts Region
3602 Inland Empire Boulevard, Suite C-220
Ontario, CA 91764

File: Ker-58-var
NOP DEIR
SCH#: 2021030571

**Operation and Maintenance of Pacific Gas & Electric's Pipelines in Southern California
Deserts - Notice of Preparation (NOP) of a draft Environmental Impact Report**

Dear Ms. Rosales:

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) District 9 appreciates the opportunity to comment during the NOP phase for PG&E's operations and maintenance in San Bernardino (District 8) and Kern (District 9) counties. We offer the following:

- PG&E and Caltrans have previously entered into Joint Use Agreements and Consent to Common Use Agreements for pipeline facilities within State highway right-of-way (R/W). Please ensure that operations and maintenance activities adhere to those agreements. For further interaction regarding Kern area agreements, you may contact Julie Nellis at (760) 872-0721 or julie.nellis@dot.ca.gov.
- Work within the R/W will need to meet Caltrans standards. Per some agreement language, Caltrans need only be notified; in other cases, an encroachment permit is necessary. For further interaction regarding Kern project area notification, work standards, traffic control, permits, etc. you may contact Stephen Winzenread at (760) 874-8348 or stephen.winzenread@dot.ca.gov. The Caltrans Permit application may be found at: <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/traffic-operations/ep/applications>

We value a cooperative working relationship regarding project impacts to our State's transportation system. For any questions, feel free to contact me at (760) 874-8330 or gayle.rosander@dot.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Gayle J. Rosander".

GAYLE J. ROSANDER
External Project Liaison

c: State Clearinghouse
Rosa Clark, Caltrans D-8
Mark Reistetter, Caltrans D-9

"Provide a safe and reliable transportation network that serves all the people respects the environment"

Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board

April 26, 2021

File: Environmental Doc Review
San Bernardino and Kern Counties

Ashley Rosales, Project Coordinator
California Department of Fish and Wildlife
Inland Deserts Region
3602 Inland Empire Blvd., Ste C-220
Ontario, CA 91764
Ashley.Rosales@Wildlife.ca.gov

Comments on the Notice of Preparation (NOP) of a Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Operation and Maintenance of Pacific Gas & Electric's Pipelines in Southern California Deserts Project and Notice of Public Scoping Meeting, State Clearinghouse No. 2021030571

Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board (Water Board) staff received the Notice of Preparation (NOP) of an environmental document for the above-referenced project (Project) on March 25, 2021. The NOP was prepared by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) for Pacific Gas and Electric's (PG&E) operations and maintenance needs in the Mojave Region (central and eastern Kern County and San Bernardino County). The NOP, which included a brief project description and plan of activities, was submitted in compliance with provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Water Board staff, acting as a responsible agency, is providing these comments to specify the scope and content of the environmental information germane to our statutory responsibilities pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, California Code of Regulations, title 14, section 15096.

We feel that there are number of potentially significant impacts to water quality and hydrology resources that must be adequately addressed in the environmental review. Without adequate mitigation, Project implementation could result in significant adverse impacts to water quality and may result in cumulative impacts that have the potential to permanently alter the hydrological and ecological function of the aquatic water resources within the Project area, thereby adversely affecting beneficial uses of waters of the State. We trust that CDFW will consider our comments and value our position with respect to protecting and maintaining water quality within the Lahontan region.

PETER C. PUMPHREY, CHAIR | MICHAEL R. PLAZIAK, EXECUTIVE OFFICER

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Project is for the operations, maintenance, and minor construction needs of PG&E's gas transmission and distribution systems, specifically 645 miles of pipeline within the Mojave Desert region. The Project area encompasses the jurisdiction of multiple Regional Water Boards, the Lahontan Region and the Colorado River Region. The Project areas under the jurisdiction of the Lahontan Regional Water Board are eastern Kern County and those portions of San Bernardino County within the Lahontan Region. Our comments herein are applicable only to those areas within the jurisdiction of the Lahontan Regional Water Board.

AUTHORITY

All groundwater and surface waters are considered waters of the State. Surface waters include streams, lakes, ponds, and wetlands, and may be ephemeral, intermittent, or perennial. All waters of the State are protected under California law. State law assigns responsibility for protection of water quality in the Lahontan Region to the Lahontan Water Board. Some waters of the State are also waters of the U.S. The Federal Clean Water Act (CWA) provides additional protection for those waters of the State that are also waters of the U.S. The *Water Quality Control Plan for the Lahontan Region* (Basin Plan) contains policies that the Water Board uses with other laws and regulations to protect the quality of waters of the State within the Lahontan Region. The Basin Plan sets forth water quality standards for surface water and groundwater of the Region, which include designated beneficial uses as well as narrative and numerical objectives which must be maintained or attained to protect those uses. The [Basin Plan](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/lahontan/water_issues/programs/basin_plan/references.html) can be accessed via the Water Board's web site at http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/lahontan/water_issues/programs/basin_plan/references.html.

We request that the environmental document reference the Basin Plan in the hydrology and water quality analyses and require that the Project proponent comply with all applicable water quality standards and prohibitions, including provisions of the Basin Plan.

PERMITS

A number of activities associated with the Project may require permits issued by either the State Water Board or Lahontan Water Board because they have the potential to impact waters of the State. The required permits may include:

- Land disturbance of 1 acre or more may require a CWA, section 402(p) stormwater permit, including a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Construction Stormwater Permit obtained from the State Water Board, or an individual stormwater permit obtained from the Lahontan Water Board;

- Discharge of low threat wastes to a surface water, including, but not limited to, diverted stream flows, construction and/or dredge spoils dewatering, and well construction and hydrostatic testing discharge, may require an NPDES permit for Limited Threat Discharges to Surface Waters issued by the Water Board;
- Discharge of low threat wastes to land, including clear water discharges, small dewatering projects, and inert wastes, may require General Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs) for Discharges to Land with a Low Threat to Water Quality issued by the Water Board; and
- Streambed alteration and/or discharge of fill material to a surface water may require a CWA, section 401 water quality certification (WQC) for impacts to federal waters (waters of the U.S.), or dredge and fill WDRs for impacts to non-federal waters.

Some waters of the State are “isolated” from waters of the U.S.; determinations of the jurisdictional extent of the waters of the U.S. are made by the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). Projects that have the potential to impact surface waters will require the appropriate jurisdictional determinations. These determinations are necessary to discern if the proposed surface water impacts will be regulated under section 401 of the CWA or through dredge and fill WDRs issued by the Water Board.

We request that Project proponent consult with the USACE and perform the necessary jurisdictional determinations for surface waters within the Project area. In addition, we request that the environmental document list the permits that may be required, as outlined above, and identify the specific operations, maintenance, and/or minor construction activities that may trigger these permitting actions in the appropriate sections of the environmental document. Information regarding these permits, including application forms, can be downloaded from our web site at <http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/lahtantan/>.

POTENTIAL IMPACTS TO SURFACE WATERS

Surface waters are a significant resource, which perform a variety of important hydrologic and biogeochemical functions that affect water quality. In particular, riparian areas associated with both perennial streams and ephemeral drainages provide a natural buffer and help mitigate and control water quality impacts by removing pollutants and sediment from surface runoff. Truncation, realignment, channelization, lining, and/or infilling of surface water resources has the potential to impair a number of beneficial uses by reducing the available riparian habitat, thereby eliminating the natural buffer system to filter runoff and enhance water quality. In addition, the practice of channelizing, straightening, and lining streambeds changes a stream's hydrology by decreasing water storage capacity and increasing water flow velocity, which in turn leads to increases in the severity of peak discharges. These hydrologic changes tend to exacerbate flooding, erosion, scouring, sedimentation and may ultimately lead to

near-total loss of natural functions and values, thereby resulting in the increased need for engineered solutions to re-establish the disrupted flow patterns.

Beneficial Uses

The surface waters located within the Project area include the Mojave River and other surface waters, which are identified in the Basin Plan as lakes, perennial and intermittent streams, springs, wetlands, minor surface waters, and minor wetlands. Beneficial uses associated with these waterbodies include municipal and domestic supply (MUN), agricultural supply (AGR), groundwater recharge (GWR), freshwater replenishment (FRESH), navigation (NAV), rare threatened and endangered species (RARE), water contact recreation (REC-1), non-contact water recreation (REC-2), commercial and sportfishing (COMM), warm freshwater habitat (WARM), cold fresh water habitat (COLD), wildlife habitat (WILD), water quality enhancement (WQE), and flood peak attenuation/flood water storage (FLD). Truncation, realignment, channelization, lining, and/or infilling of these surface waters will result in changes in the stream channel functions and may adversely affect these beneficial uses, particularly GWR, RARE, WQE, FLD, and WILD.

The environmental document should identify the beneficial uses of surface waters within the Project area, evaluate the Project's potential impacts to water quality with respect to those beneficial uses, and provide alternatives to avoid those impacts or describe specific mitigation measures that, when implemented, will minimize unavoidable impacts to a less than significant level.

Hydrology

PG&E's existing gas transmission and distribution systems cross a hierarchy of surface waters within the Lahontan region from blue-line streams (as identified on United States Geologic Survey topographic maps), to surface drainages, washes, and swales with less well-defined but still obvious bed and bank features. We request that the environmental document include a map identifying all surface water resources within the vicinity of the Project area and include a narrative discussion of the delineation methods used to discern those surface water features in the field.

A number of the maintenance activities described in the NOP have the potential to hydrologically modify natural drainage systems. The environmental document must provide specific information regarding the potential impacts to surface waters with respect to the proposed activities. The environmental document must describe and quantify all impacts to surface waters and identify whether those impacts are either permanent or temporary. The environmental document should identify alternatives and other mitigation measures to reduce and/or eliminate such impacts. If impacts are unavoidable, then we request that the impacts be minimized to the extent practical and that the Project be designed such that it would maintain existing hydrologic features and patterns to the extent feasible. All unavoidable impacts to waters of the State must be

mitigated to ensure that no net loss of function and value will occur as a result of Project implementation.

Stormwater Management

Post-construction stormwater management must be considered a significant component in the environmental review process. Of particular concern is the collection of stormwater runoff into channels and the discharge of that stormwater to natural drainage systems. Without adequate design, the consequences of combining these flows will likely be aggradation and head-cutting upstream of the confluence and channel incision, increased sediment transport, and eventual widening downstream of the confluence. The environmental document must evaluate all potential stormwater impacts, particularly potential post-construction hydrologic impacts, and describe specific best management practices that, when implemented, will reduce those potential impacts to a less than significant level. Where feasible, we request that you consider design alternatives that redirect these flows from surface waters to areas where they will dissipate by percolation into the landscape.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the NOP for the Project. Early consultation with Water Board staff is encouraged as Project modifications may be required to avoid and minimize impacts to waters of the State. If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact me at (760) 241-7373 (amanda.lopez@waterboards.ca.gov) or Jan Zimmerman, Senior Engineering Geologist, at (760) 241-7376 (jan.zimmerman@waterboards.ca.gov).



Amanda Lopez, PG
Engineering Geologist

cc: State Clearinghouse (SCH No. 2021030571) (state.clearinghouse@opr.ca.gov)
Jean Bandura, State Water Board (jean.bandura@waterboards.ca.gov)
Elizabeth Payne, State Water Board (elizabeth.payne@waterboards.ca.gov)
Kai Dunn, Colorado River Region (kai.dunn@waterboards.ca.gov)



Department of Public Works

- Flood Control
- Operations
- Solid Waste Management
- Special Districts
- Surveyor
- Transportation

Brendon Biggs, M.S., P.E.
Director

David Doublet, M.S., P.E.
Assistant Director

April 19, 2021

File: 10(ENV)-4.01

Department of Fish and Wildlife
Inland Deserts Region
Attn: Ashley Rosales
3602 Inland Empire Boulevard, Suite C-220
Ontario, CA 91764
www.wildlife.ca.gov

Transmitted Via Email

RE: CEQA –NOTICE OF PREPARATION (NOP) OF A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR THE OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF PACIFIC GAS & ELECTRIC’S PIPELINES IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA DESERTS PROJECT AND NOTICE OF PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING

Dear Ms. Rosales:

Thank you for allowing the San Bernardino County Department of Public Works the opportunity to comment on the above-referenced project. **We received this request on March 29, 2021** and pursuant to our review, we have the following comments:

Flood Control Planning & Water Resources Division (Michael Fam, Chief, 909-387-8120):

1. According to the most recent FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM), Panels 06071C0525H, 0975H, 1000H, 1475H, 2025H, 2600H, 3200H, 3825H, 3850H, 3875H, 3895H, 3900H, 3916H, 3917H, 3936H, 3938H, 3939H, 3943H, 4505H, 4506H, 4515H, 4532H, 4551H, 4552H, 4556H, 4557H, 4600H, 4625H, 4650H, 4675H, 4700H, 5250H, 5350H, 5375H, 5400H, 5550H, 5575H, 5600H, 5625H, 5650H, 5665H, 5670H, 5680H, 5685H, 5690H, 5705H, 5805H, 5810H, 5815H, 5830H, 5835H, 5875H, 5925H, 6075H, 6100H, 6125H, 6150H, 6175H, 6200H, 6225H, 6600H, 7305H, dated August 28, 2008; 3915J, 3918J, 4500J, 5150J, 5820J, dated September 2, 2016, the Project lies within Zones A, AO, AE, D, X-shaded (500-yr. floodplain), X-unshaded, and the Regulatory Floodway. Impacts associated with the project’s occurrence in the Zone D area and mitigation, should be discussed within the Draft EIR prior to adoption by the Lead Agency.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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2. We also recommend that PG&E enforces FEMA's and its current regulations for construction within a Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA). Impacts associated with the project's following FEMA's regulations for construction within a SFHA and mitigation, should be discussed within the Draft EIR prior to adoption by the Lead Agency.

Permits/Operations Support Division (Sameh Basta, Chief, 909-387-7995):

1. Portions of the Project may be adjacent to San Bernardino County Flood Control District (SBCFCD) right-of-way and facilities. Any encroachments on the District's right-of-way or facilities, including but not limited to access, fencing and grading, utility crossings, landscaping, new and/or alteration to drainage connections will require a permit from the SBCFCD prior to start of construction. The necessity for permits, and any impacts associated with them, should be addressed in the Draft EIR prior to adoption and certification. If you have any questions regarding this process, please contact the FCD Permit Section at (909) 387-1863.

We respectfully request to be included on the circulation list for all project notices, public reviews, or public hearings. In closing, I would like to thank you again for allowing the San Bernardino County Department of Public Works the opportunity to comment on the above-referenced project. Should you have any questions or need additional clarification, please contact the individuals who provided the specific comment, as listed above.

Sincerely,



MICHAEL R. PERRY
Supervising Planner
Environmental Management

MRP:AJ:ms

From: Quechan Historic Preservation Officer <historicpreservation@quechantribe.com>

Sent: Tuesday, March 30, 2021 1:28 PM

To: Rosales, Ashley@Wildlife <Ashley.Rosales@Wildlife.ca.gov>

Subject: PG&E O&M - NOP Scoping Comments

This email is to inform you that we have no comments on this project. We defer to the more local Tribes and support their decisions on the project.

Thank you,

H. Jill McCormick, M.A.

Quechan Indian Tribe

Historic Preservation Officer

P.O. Box 1899

Yuma, AZ 85366-1899

Office: 760-572-2423

Cell: 928-261-0254

E-mail: historicpreservation@quechantribe.com

