September 5, 2012

In the Matter of

Water Quality Certification

for

Pacific Gas & Electric Company
Ackerman Creek External Corrosion Direct Assessment Project
WDID No. 1B12108WNME

APPLICANT:	Pacific Gas & Electric Company
RECEIVING WATER:	Ackerman Creek
HYDROLOGIC UNIT:	Ukiah Hydrologic Subarea No. 114.31, Russian River Hydrologic Area 114.00
COUNTY:	Mendocino
FILE NAME:	PG&E Ackerman Creek External Corrosion Direct Assessment

BY THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER:

1. On June 5, 2012, Pacific Gas & Electric Company (Applicant) filed an application for water quality certification (certification) under section 401 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. § 1341) with the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, North Coast Region (Regional Water Board) for activities related to the PG&E Ackerman Creek External Corrosion Direct Assessment Project (Project). The Project involves inspection and any necessary repairs of a gas pipeline crossing under Ackerman Creek. The Regional Water Board provided public notice of the application pursuant to title 23, California Code of Regulations, section 3858 on August 10, 2012, and posted information describing the project on the Regional Water Board's website. We did not receive any public comments on this project. Project is located on Ackerman Creek, along the west side of North State Street between Orr Springs Road and Hensley Creek Road, in the City of Ukiah, latitude 39.179180°N, and longitude 123.210067°W, in Mendocino County. The proposed

project will cause permanent impacts to 60 square feet of bed and bank of Ackerman Creek, Ukiah Hydrologic Subarea No. 114.31, Russian River Hydrologic Area 114.00.

2. The project includes excavation of soil around 12 feet of gas pipeline, inspection, testing, conducting necessary repairs of the gas pipe, and backfilling excavation with native soils and returning the surface to pre-excavation grade. No trees or vegetation will be removed.

3. Project is scheduled to start during the dry season of 2012. In-stream work should be completed by October 15, or by date determined by resource agencies.

4. The Applicant has applied for a Streambed Alteration Agreement from the California Department of Fish and Game. The Applicant has applied to US Army Corps of Engineers for a Clean Water Act Section 404 Permit.

5. The North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board), as lead California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) agency, will submit a Notice of Exemption for Categorical Exemption 15301(b)-Existing Facilities concurrent with issuance of this Order, and will file it with the State Clearinghouse, pursuant to CEQA guidelines.

6. This discharge is also regulated under State Water Resources Control Board Order No. 2003-0017-DWQ, "General Waste Discharge Requirements for Dredge and Fill Discharges That Have Received State Water Quality Certification," which requires compliance with all conditions of this water quality certification. **http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/board_decisions/adopted_orders/water_quality/2003/wqo/wqo2003-0017.pdf**

Receiving Water:	Ukiah Hydrologic Subarea No. 114.31 Russian River Hydrologic Area 114.00
Filled or Excavated Area:	Area Temporarily Impacted: 60 square feet of bed and bank of Ackerman Creek
Latitude/Longitude:	39.179180°N, 123.210067°W
Expiration:	September 5, 2017

Accordingly, based on its independent review of the record, the Regional Water Board certifies that the Pacific Gas & Electric Company Ackerman Creek External Corrosion Direct Assessment Project (WDID No. 1B12108WNME), as described in the application, will comply with sections 301, 302, 303, 306 and 307 of the Clean Water Act, and with applicable provisions of state law, provided that the Applicant complies with the following terms and conditions:

All conditions of this order apply to the Applicant (and all their employees) and all contractors (and their employees), sub-contractors (and their employees), and any other entity or agency that performs activities or work on the project as related to this Water Quality Certification.

1. This certification action is subject to modification or revocation upon administrative or judicial review, including review and amendment pursuant to Water Code section 13330 and title 23, California Code of Regulations, section 3867.

2. This certification action is not intended and shall not be construed to apply to any discharge from any activity involving a hydroelectric facility requiring a Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) license or an amendment to a FERC license unless the pertinent certification application was filed pursuant to title 23, California Code of Regulations, section 3855, subdivision (b) and the application specifically identified that a FERC license or amendment to a FERC license for a hydroelectric facility was being sought.

3. The validity this certification is conditioned upon total payment of any fee required under title 23, California Code of Regulations, section 3833, and owed by the Applicant.

4. PG&E will restore area to original condition to extent possible.

5. The Regional Water Board shall be notified annually and in writing at least five working days (working days are Monday – Friday) prior to the commencement of ground disturbing activities, with details regarding the construction schedule, in order to allow staff to be present onsite during construction, and to answer any public inquiries that may arise regarding the project.

6. The Russian River is identified as impaired for sediment and temperature under Clean Water Act Section 303(d). At present, total maximum daily loads (TMDLs) have not been established for this water body. If TMDLs are established and implementation plans are adopted for this watershed prior to the expiration date of the requested Certification, the Regional Water Board may revise the provisions of that Certification to address actions identified in such action plans. Erosion is identified as a source contributing to the sediment impairment. Removal of riparian vegetation is identified as a source contributing to temperature impairment. Activities that will be authorized by this Order are designed to reduce removal of riparian vegetation and reduce sediment discharges from erosion. Accordingly, this Order is consistent with, and implements, BMPs that would attenuate sediment and temperature adverse impacts.

7. If groundwater is encountered during construction, it will be discharged to an upland location where it cannot flow into Waters of the State. BMPs that may be used include: storage tanks, sediment desilting basins, and water filters. Additionally, BMPs such as the use of washed gravel, sand bags, straw, and/or silt fences will be used as necessary to control velocity of the land discharge and erosion. Groundwater shall not be discharged to waters of the State.

8. Pursuant to Regional Water Board Resolution R1-2004-0087, Total Maximum Daily Load Implementation Policy Statement for Sediment-Impaired Receiving Waters within the North Coast Region (Sediment TMDL Implementation Policy), the Executive Officer is directed to "rely on the use of all available authorities, including existing regulatory standards, and permitting and enforcement tools to more effectively and efficaciously pursue compliance with sediment-related standards by all dischargers of sediment waste."

9. The federal antidegradation policy requires that state water quality standards include an antidegradation policy consistent with the federal policy. The State Water Board established California's antidegradation policy in State Water Board Resolution No. 68-16. Resolution No. 68-16 incorporates the federal antidegradation policy where the federal policy applies under federal law. Resolution No. 68-16 requires that existing quality of waters be maintained unless degradation is justified based on specific findings. The Regional Water Board's Basin Plan implements, and incorporates by reference, both the State and federal antidegradation policies. This Order is consistent with applicable federal and State antidegradation policies, as it does not authorize the discharge of increased concentrations of pollutants or increased volumes of treated wastewater.

10. If necessary, Applicant shall prioritize use of wildlife-friendly 100% biodegradable erosion control products/BMPs. For purposes of this Order, photodegradable synthetic products are not considered biodegradable. Applicant shall not use or allow the use of erosion control products, that contain synthetic (e.g., plastic or nylon) netting or materials for permanent erosion control (i.e., erosion control materials to be left in place for two years or after the completion date of the project). If the Applicant finds that erosion control netting or products have entrapped or harmed wildlife, the Applicant shall remove the netting or product and replace it with wildlife-friendly biodegradable products. Applicant shall remove any remaining synthetic netting or materials remaining at the end of two years, or sooner.

11. No debris, soil, silt, sand, bark, slash, sawdust, rubbish, cement or concrete washings, oil or petroleum products, or other organic or earthen material from any construction or associated activity of whatever nature, other than that authorized

by this Order, shall be allowed to enter into or be placed where it may be washed by rainfall into waters of the State. When operations are completed, any excess material or debris shall be removed from the work area.

12. All activities and BMPs shall be implemented according to the submitted application and the conditions in this certification.

13. A copy of this Order and the application documents submitted by the Applicant for this certification shall be provided to all contractors and subcontractors conducting the work, and shall be in their possession at the work site.

14. The Applicant shall provide Regional Water Board staff access to the project site to document compliance with this certification.

15. If, at any time, an unauthorized discharge to surface water (including wetlands, lakes, rivers or streams) occurs, or any water quality problem arises, the associated project activities shall cease immediately until adequate BMPs are implemented including stopping work. The Regional Water Board shall be notified promptly and in no case more than 24 hours after the unauthorized discharge or water quality problem arises.

16. Prior to implementing any change to the project that may have a significant or material effect on the findings, conclusions, or conditions of this Order, the Applicant shall obtain the written approval of the Regional Water Board Executive Officer. If the Regional Water Board is not notified of a significant alteration to the project, it will be considered a violation of this Order, and the Applicant may be subject to Regional Water Board enforcement action(s).

17. All project work shall be conducted as described in this Order and in the application submitted by the Applicant. If the Regional Water Board is not notified of a significant alteration to the project, it will be considered a violation of this Order, and the Applicant may be subject to Regional Water Board enforcement actions.

18. The Applicant shall provide a copy of this Order and State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) Order No. 2003-0017-DWQ to any contractor(s), subcontractor(s), and utility company(ies) conducting work on the project, and shall require that copies remain in their possession at the work site. The Applicant shall be responsible for ensuring that all work conducted by its contractor(s), subcontractor(s), and utility companies is performed in accordance with the information provided by the Applicant to the Regional Water Board.

19. The Applicant shall implement the project in accordance with the project described in the application and the findings above, and shall comply with all applicable water quality standards as detailed in the Basin Plan.

20. Disturbance or removal of existing vegetation shall not exceed the minimum necessary to complete the project.

21. Fueling, lubrication, maintenance, storage, and staging of vehicles and equipment shall not result in a discharge or threatened discharge to any waters of the State including dry portions of the shoreline. At no time shall the Applicant or its contractors allow use of any vehicle or equipment, which leaks any substance that may impact water quality.

22. The Regional Water Board may add to or modify the conditions of this Order, as appropriate, to implement any new or revised water quality standards and implementation plans adopted and approved pursuant to the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act or section 303 of the Clean Water Act.

23. In the event of any violation or threatened violation of the conditions of this Order, the violation or threatened violation shall be subject to any remedies, penalties, process or sanctions as provided for under applicable state or federal law. For the purposes of section 401(d) of the Clean Water Act, the applicability of any state law authorizing remedies, penalties, process or sanctions for the violation or threatened violation constitutes a limitation necessary to assure compliance with the water quality standards and other pertinent requirements incorporated into this Order. In response to a suspected violation of any condition of this certification, the State Water Board may require the holder of any federal permit or license subject to this Order to furnish, under penalty of perjury, any technical or monitoring reports the State Water Board deems appropriate, provided that the burden, including costs, of the reports shall bear a reasonable relationship to the need for the reports and the benefits to be obtained from the reports. In response to any violation of the conditions of this Order, the Regional Water Board may add to or modify the conditions of this Order as appropriate to ensure compliance.

24. In the event of any change in control of ownership of land presently owned or controlled by the Applicant, the Applicant shall notify the successor-in-interest of the existence of this Order by letter and shall forward a copy of the letter to the Regional Water Board at the above address.

    To discharge dredged or fill material under this Order, the successor-in-interest must send to the Regional Water Board Executive Officer a written request for transfer of the Order. The request must contain the requesting entity's full legal name, the state of incorporation if a corporation, and the address and telephone number of the person(s) responsible for contact with the Regional Water Board.

    The request must also describe any changes to the project proposed by the successor-in-interest or confirm that the successor-in-interest intends to implement the project as described in this Order.

25. Except as may be modified by any preceding conditions, all certification actions are contingent on: a) the discharge being limited to and all proposed mitigation being completed in strict compliance with the Applicant's project description, and b) compliance with all applicable requirements of the Water Quality Control Plan for the North Coast Region (Basin Plan).

26. The authorization of this certification for any dredge and fill activities expires on September 5, 2017. Conditions and monitoring requirements outlined in this Order are not subject to the expiration date outlined above, and remain in full effect and are enforceable.

If you have any questions or comments, please call Stephen Bargsten at (707) 576-2653.

Original Signed By

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Matthias St. John
Executive Officer

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Weblink: State Water Resources Control Board Order No. 2003-0017 -DWQ, General Waste Discharge Requirements for Dredge and Fill Discharges That Have Received State Water Quality Certification can be found at: http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/board_decisions/adopted_orders/water_quality/2003/wqo/wqo2003-0017.pdf

Original to: Mr. Ernie Ralston, PG&E, P.O. Box 770000-N10A, San Francisco, CA 94177

Email to: eer2@pge.com