
North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board

March 6, 2013

In the Matter of
Water Quality Certification
for

PG&E – Arcata 12-kV Distribution Line Reconductoring Project
WDID No. 1B12150WNHU

APPLICANT: Pacific Gas and Electric Company
RECEIVING WATER: Wetlands
HYDROLOGIC UNIT: Eureka Plain Hydrologic Unit No. 110.00
COUNTY: Humboldt
FILE NAME: PG&E – Arcata Reconductoring Project

BY THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER:

1. On August 2, 2012, the Pacific Gas and 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 associated with the PG&E Arcata 12-kV Distribution Line Reconductoring Project (project). The Regional Water Board provided public notice of the application pursuant to title 23, California Code of Regulations, section 3858 on September 17, 2012, and posted information describing the project on the Regional Water Board's website. We did not receive any public comments on this project.
2. The project involves reconductoring (replacing existing wire) approximately 20,500 linear feet of the PG&E Arcata 1105 electric distribution line (1105 line) such that the capacity will be increased from 415 amperes to 677 amperes. The increased capacity will allow PG&E to transfer 360 amperes from the 1106 line to the reconducted 1105 line to alleviate the 1106 line, which is at risk of overloading due to ongoing growth in the Arcata and McKinleyville areas. The project includes installation of a closed delta voltage regulator and two overhead switches. PG&E is also replacing approximately 125 distribution line poles (DLPs) and adding DLPs where existing DLPs are spaced too far apart.
3. Reconductoring will consist of one or more of the following activities at each location: 1) existing DLP will be removed and a replacement pole will be installed insitu or immediately adjacent; 2) existing DLP will be removed and a replacement pole will be installed nearby; 3) DLP addition or removal; 4) existing anchor will be removed and

replacement anchor will be added insitu or immediately adjacent; or 5) anchor addition or removal. Existing DLPs are located approximately 8 to 10 feet from adjacent roads. New or replacement DLPs will be 1-foot diameter, and new or replacement anchors will be 4-inch diameter. Utility trucks with 22-inch diameter augers will be used to remove and install the DLPs. All utility trucks and associated equipment will remain on adjacent paved roads. All construction activities will occur within the existing distribution line and/or road right-of-ways.

4. The project will result in permanent impacts to 9.6 square feet of wetlands, and 13.4 square feet and 16 linear feet of streambank associated with drainage channels located adjacent to the roadways. Project activities will also result in temporary impacts to 868.8 square feet of wetlands, and 964.8 square feet and 213 linear feet of streambank associated with drainage channels located adjacent to the roadways.
5. The Applicant has applied for authorization from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to perform the project under Nationwide Permit Nos. 3, 12, and 33 pursuant to Clean Water Act, section 404. A Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDF&W) is not required.
6. On December 12, 2012, the County of Humboldt adopted a mitigated negative declaration (SCH No. 2012082014) for the project in order to comply with CEQA. The Regional Water Board has considered the environmental document and any proposed changes incorporated into the project or required as a condition of approval to avoid significant effects to the environment.
7. Compensatory mitigation is required for the project's temporary and permanent impacts to wetlands and other waters of the United States. Compensatory mitigation involves offsite creation of 108 square feet of a new three parameter wetland and offsite enhancement of 2,588 square feet of existing wetland. Offsite mitigation will be conducted on the Applicant's property located between the railroad grade and Highway 101 near the Humboldt Bay Power Plant in King Salmon. Non-compensatory mitigation includes onsite restoration of all temporary impacts and implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs) for use of heavy equipment in wetlands and drainage channels.
8. 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, and does not otherwise authorize degradation of the waters affected by this project.
9. 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: Wetlands in the Eureka Plain Hydrologic Unit No. 110.00

Filled or Excavated Area: Area Temporarily Impacted: 868.8 square feet of wetlands and 964.8 square feet of streambank on drainage channels adjacent to roads
Area Permanently Impacted: 9.6 square feet of wetlands and 13.4 square feet of streambank on drainage channels adjacent to roads

Total Linear Impacts: Length Temporarily Impacted: 213 linear feet of streambank on drainage channels adjacent to roads
Length Permanently Impacted: 16 linear feet of streambank on drainage channels adjacent to roads

Dredge Volume: None

Latitude/Longitude: North End: 40.90888 N/124.10590 W
South End: 40.86738 N/124.09083 W

Compensatory Mitigation: Offsite creation of 108 square feet of new wetland and offsite enhancement of 2,588 square feet of existing wetland

Expiration: March 6, 2018

Accordingly, based on its independent review of the record, the Regional Water Board certifies that the PG&E – Arcata Reconductoring Project (WDID No. 1B12150WNHU), 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.

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.

2. 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.
3. Regional Water Board staff shall be notified 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.
4. All project work shall be conducted as described in this Order and in the application submitted by the Applicant. 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).
5. All activities and BMPs shall be implemented according to the submitted application and the conditions in this certification. BMPs for erosion, sediment and turbidity control shall be implemented and in place at commencement of, during and after any ground clearing activities or any other project activities that could result in erosion or sediment discharges to surface water.
6. The Applicant shall prioritize the use of wildlife-friendly biodegradable (not photo-degradable) erosion control products wherever feasible. The Applicant shall not use or allow the use of erosion control products that contain synthetic materials within waters of the United States or waters of the State at any time. The Applicant shall not use or allow the use of erosion control products that contain synthetic netting 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, personnel shall remove the netting or product and replace it with wildlife-friendly biodegradable products. The Applicant shall request approval from the Regional Water Board if an exception from this requirement is needed for a specific location.
7. 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.
8. Disturbance or removal of existing vegetation shall not exceed the minimum necessary to complete the project.
9. 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.

10. The Applicant shall implement the mitigation measures described in the Hydrology and Water Quality, and Biological Resources sections of the mitigated negative declaration (SCH No. 2012082014) that were determined to be necessary to mitigate or avoid significant environmental effects.
11. The Applicant shall implement the mitigation, monitoring and reporting measures contained in the *Wetland Mitigation and Monitoring Plan for the Arcata 12-kV Distribution Line Reconductoring Project, February 2013* (WMMP). Mitigation implementation shall be completed by the end of 2014 in accordance with the schedule contained in the WMMP. The Applicant shall monitor the mitigation areas (Enhancement Area and Creation Area) on an annual basis, with at least one site visit during the spring or summer months, for a minimum of three years following completion of the mitigation project. Results of annual Enhancement Area and Creation Area monitoring shall be summarized in a report and submitted to the Regional Water Board annually. The first annual report shall be submitted by February 1, 2015. A final monitoring report shall be submitted following completion of the monitoring period that documents achievement of the performance standards and containing observations and photos of the mitigation areas that shall be taken throughout the monitoring period. Final performance monitoring shall occur no sooner than three years after completion of mitigation activities and no later than five years from the date of mitigation implementation. If the success criteria defined in Sections 3.1.1 and 3.2.1 of the WMMP are met for two successive years prior to the end of the five-year monitoring period, a final report demonstrating successful mitigation shall be submitted and annual monitoring may cease. If final performance monitoring indicates that the mitigation activities have not met the performance standards, the Applicant shall submit a revised mitigation, monitoring, and reporting plan within 90 days of completing the final performance monitoring.
12. The Applicant shall provide Regional Water Board staff access to the project site to document compliance with this certification.
13. 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.
14. 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.
15. Spill kits are required at each fueling location and at each location where power equipment will be working within waters of the State. In the event of an unauthorized release of fuel (spill or leak) to waters of the State, the Applicant shall immediately stop work and conduct the following measures:
 - a) notify the appropriate agencies including the Regional Water Board, CDF&W, and the Office of Emergency Services (OES) at 1(800) 852-7550;
 - b) utilize the appropriate spill kits for containment and cleanup of the release;

- c) collect samples within the immediate area of release, 50 feet downstream, and downstream to the full extent of the release if the release reaches surface waters; and,
 - d) analyze required surface water samples for all appropriate constituents including but not limited to total petroleum hydrocarbons as diesel (TPH-D), total petroleum hydrocarbons as gasoline (TPH-G), and benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene, total xylenes (BTEX).
16. Any potentially hazardous waste(s) (solids, liquids, or slurries) derived or encountered during this project shall undergo the appropriate characterization to demonstrate compliance with all applicable waste disposal laws and regulations.
 17. The Applicant shall provide a copy of 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.
 18. The Applicant shall comply with all applicable water quality standards as detailed in the Basin Plan.
 19. 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.
 20. 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.
 21. 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.

22. 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).
23. The authorization of this certification for any dredge and fill activities expires on March 6, 2018. 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 Dean Prat at (707) 576-2801.

Original Signed By

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: Ms. Trixie Martelino, PG&E, 3401 Crow Canyon Road, San Ramon, CA 94583

cc: Ms. Krista Orr, Stillwater Sciences, 2855 Telegraph Avenue, Suite 400, Berkeley, CA 94705

Electronic
Copy to:

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, District Engineer, 601 Startare Drive,
Box 14, Eureka, CA 95501
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Regulatory Functions, 1455 Market Street, San Francisco, CA 94103-1398