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# State Water Resources Control Board

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### NEGATIVE DECLARATION Pursuant to Section 21080(c) Public Resources Code

To: Office of Planning & Research  
State Clearinghouse  
1400 Tenth Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814

From: State Water Resources Control Board  
Division of Water Quality  
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**Project Title:** 401 Water Quality Certification for the Gas Pipeline 210-A and 210-B  
In-Line Inspection and Repair Project (Project)

**Applicant:** Pacific Gas & Electric Company  
Patricia Sanchez, Project Manager  
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San Francisco, CA 94105

**Project Description:** The Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) proposes to inspect Gas Lines 210A and 210B in Solano County. Pipeline inspections are required by a federal regulation (Code of Federal Regulations, title 49, Part 192, Subpart O) which states that all underground pipelines in High Consequence Areas (HCAs) must be inspected. In-Line Inspection of natural gas pipelines is accomplished by inserting a cylindrical inspection tool known as a "pig" into one end of the pipeline and removing it at the other end. Before Line 210A can be inspected, PG&E must fabricate and install launching equipment, and replace a mainline valve at the Mile Post (MP) 1.38. To accommodate installation of the launching equipment and mainline valve replacement at MP 1.38, PG&E must expand the existing valve lot to the west by an area of 50 feet by 190 feet. This additional area will be fenced and graveled.

Line 210B runs adjacent to and is offset from Line 210A by approximately 10 feet. In-Line Inspection of Line 210B is scheduled for Spring 2011. Prior to inspecting Line 210B, PG&E will similarly fabricate and install launching equipment and replace a mainline valve at MP 1.38. All work on Line 210B at MP 1.38 will be conducted within the proposed 190 feet by 50 feet area to be expanded for the 210A upgrade. Additionally, PG&E will replace the mainline valve at MP 4.88. This work will require temporary excavation outside of the proposed fenced and graveled valve lot.

**Determination:** The State Water Resources Control Board has determined that the proposed project has the potential for significant effects to the environment, but that the proposed project would pose less than significant impacts to resources with mitigation. A combination of avoidance, minimization and compensatory mitigation measures are specified in the attached Initial Study. Based upon review of the Initial Study, additional mitigation measures were proposed by California Department of Fish and Game

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(CDFG) and are also specified in the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan. All mitigation measures are listed in the Terms and Conditions below.

**Terms and Conditions:**

In order to minimize the potential for the Project to adversely affect sensitive biological resources, PG&E is required to implement the following protective measures during construction.

1. PG&E shall ensure that biological monitors are onsite during all ground-disturbing work within sensitive biological areas, such as the seasonal wetlands located adjacent to MP 4.88 and MP 1.38. Temporary work areas will be clearly flagged and marked. To the extent feasible, all work within sensitive biological areas will be conducted during the dry season.
2. PG&E shall avoid the potential for adverse effects to water quality in seasonal wetlands or habitat within the Project footprint by implementing temporary Best Management Practices (BMPs) outlined in the California Stormwater Quality Association's Construction Handbook (CASQA, 2003). PG&E's BMPs will minimize any wind- or water-related erosion. Protective measures shall include:
  - a) No discharge of pollutants from vehicle and equipment cleaning will be allowed into storm drains, wetlands, or water courses.
  - b) Vehicle and equipment fueling and maintenance operations must be at least 100 feet from seasonal wetlands and other aquatic habitat.
  - c) Dust control will be implemented, including the use of water trucks to control dust in disturbed areas, rocking temporary access road entrances and exits, and placement of geotextile mats and rock on access roads.
  - d) Disturbed work areas will be restored to pre-project conditions and will be reseeded, as appropriate.
3. To minimize effects of the Project on vernal pool fairy shrimp, vernal pool tadpole shrimp, California tiger salamander, and pappose tarplant, PG&E will purchase mitigation credits at a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)-approved mitigation bank. Permanent impacts to seasonal wetlands will be mitigated for by the purchase of appropriate mitigation bank ratio as dictated by the Draft Solano County Habitat Conservation Plan.
4. Project-related vehicles shall observe a 15-mile-per-hour (mph) speed limit in all Project areas, except on county roads and state and federal highways.
5. The limits of the construction area throughout the Project will be flagged if not already marked by right-of-way or other fencing, and all activity will be confined

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within the marked area. A qualified biologist shall be onsite during all activities that could result in the take of a listed species.

In addition, the Project will be subject to permit requirements for additional measures, as listed below, to reduce or mitigate project impacts.

BIO-1: To minimize effects of the proposed project on the California Tiger Salamander (CTS), vernal pool fairy shrimp, and vernal pool tadpole shrimp, PG&E will purchase mitigation credits at an USFWS-approved mitigation bank.

BIO-2: PG&E will purchase 0.276 acres of vernal pool preservation credits and 0.136 acres of vernal pool creation credits at a vernal pool conservation bank approved by USFWS prior to the start of earth-moving activities.

BIO-3: PG&E will restore the 0.2 acres of habitat temporarily affected by the Project. PG&E will also permanently preserve an additional 0.22 acres of salamander habitat by purchasing credits from a USFWS-approved conservation bank. Additionally, PG&E shall mitigate for the permanent loss of 0.24 acres of upland dispersal habitat by purchasing 0.75 acre of California Tiger Salamander (CTS) upland habitat credits from a USFWS-approved conservation bank.

APM-AQ-1: Water all active construction areas at least twice daily during dry conditions.

APM-AQ-2: Cover all trucks hauling soil, sand, and other loose materials or require all trucks to maintain at least two feet of freeboard.

APM-AQ-3: Pave, apply water three times daily (during dry conditions), or apply (non-toxic) soil stabilizers on all unpaved access roads, parking areas, and staging areas at construction sites.

APM-AQ-4: Sweep daily (with water sweepers) all paved access roads, parking areas, and staging areas at construction sites.

APM-AQ-5: Sweep streets daily (with water sweepers) if visible soil material is carried onto adjacent public streets.

APM-AQ-6: Hydroseed or apply (non-toxic) soil stabilizers to inactive construction areas (previously graded areas inactive for ten days or more).

APM-AQ-7: Enclose, cover, water twice daily or apply (non-toxic) soil binders to exposed stockpiles (dirt, sand, etc.).

APM-AQ-8: Limit traffic speeds on unpaved roads to 15 mph.

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APM-AQ-9: Install sandbags or other erosion control measures to prevent silt runoff to public roadways.

APM-AQ-10: Replant vegetation in disturbed areas as quickly as possible.

APM-GHG-1: Encouraging the use of bio-diesel fuel for diesel-powered equipment and vehicles.

APM-GHG-2: Encouraging construction workers to carpool.

APM-GHG-3: Encouraging the recycling of construction waste.

APM-BIO-1: PG&E shall conduct an employee education program. The program will consist of a presentation explaining endangered species concerns to contractors, their employees, and any other personnel involved in the Project. The program will include the following: a description of special-status species and their habitat needs; a report of the occurrence of these species in the Project area; an explanation of the status of these species and their protection under the Federal Endangered Species Act, California Endangered Species Act, and other statutes; and a list of measures being taken to reduce impacts to the species during Project construction and implementation. A fact sheet conveying this information will be prepared for distribution to the above-mentioned people and anyone else who may enter the Project site. Upon completion of training, employees will sign a form stating that they attended the training and understand all the conservation and protection measures. To the extent possible, nighttime construction will be minimized. Construction crews will be informed during the education program meeting that, to the extent possible, travel within the marked Project site will be restricted to established roadbeds. Established roadbeds include all pre-existing and Project constructed unimproved, as well as, improved roads.

APM-BIO-2: Biological monitors will be onsite during all ground-disturbing work within sensitive biological areas and the seasonal wetlands located adjacent to MP 4.88 and MP 1.38. Temporary work areas will be clearly flagged and marked. To the extent feasible, all work within sensitive biological areas will be conducted during the dry season.

APM-BIO-3: Dust control measures will be implemented during construction in the dry season. Work areas and dirt access roads will be watered regularly to minimize airborne dust and soil particles generated by construction.

APM-BIO-4: The potential for adverse effects to water quality in vernal pools or habitat within the Project area will be avoided by implementing temporary Best Management Practices outlined in the California Stormwater Quality Association's Construction Handbook (CASQA, 2003). PG&E's Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan and erosion

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control BMPs will be used to minimize any wind- or water-related erosion. Protective measures will include:

- a. No discharge of pollutants from vehicle and equipment cleaning will be allowed into storm drains, wetlands, or water courses.
- b. Vehicle and equipment fueling and maintenance operations must be at least 100 feet from vernal pools and other aquatic habitat.
- c. Dust control will be implemented, including the use of water trucks to control dust in disturbed areas, rocking temporary access road entrances and exits, and placement of geotextile mats and rock on access road areas to be used in the wet season.
- d. Disturbed work areas will be restored to pre-Project conditions and will be reseeded, as appropriate.

APM-BIO-5: Project-related vehicles shall observe a 15 mph speed limit in all Project areas, except on county roads and state and federal highways.

APM-BIO-6: The limits of the construction area throughout the Project will be flagged if not already marked by right of way or other fencing, and all activity will be confined within the marked area. A qualified biologist shall be onsite during all activities that could result in the take of a listed species.

APM-BIO-7: The Project proponent shall include a copy of the USFWS-issued Biological Opinion (BO) within its construction documents making the primary contractor responsible for implementing all requirements and obligations included within the BO, and to educate and inform all other contractors involved in the Project as to the requirements of the BO.

APM-BIO-8: A biologist shall inspect construction-related activities at the Project area to ensure that no unauthorized take of federally-listed species or destruction of their habitat occurs. The biologist shall be available for monitoring throughout all phases of construction that may result in adverse effects to listed crustaceans.

APM-BIO-9: The contractor will prepare a site specific Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) for the Project to protect receiving waters from pollution. The SWPPP will include standard sediment and erosion control measures that include limiting soil disturbances during the winter rainfall season. Given the site-specific conditions of the Project area, the SWPPP for this Project will generally include limiting soil disturbances during the winter rainfall season of October 15 through April 15 and fully stabilizing disturbed areas prior to December 1. Standard sediment erosion control measures, such as silt fencing, straw bale barriers, and sediment traps shall be implemented to directly reduce the offsite transport of sediment from disturbed slopes. Existing vegetation that can be preserved will be identified and flagged or fenced to avoid disturbance. Erosion in disturbed areas will be controlled through the use of grading

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operations that eliminate direct routes for conveying runoff to drainage channels and use of soil stabilization BMPs, such as mulching, erosion control fabrics, and/or reseeded with grass or other plants where necessary.

APM-BIO-10: To the extent feasible, all ground disturbing activities within MP 1.38 and MP 4.88 work sites will be conducted during the dry season (June 1 – October 15). Prior to the initiation of ground disturbance at these two work sites, preconstruction surveys shall be conducted by a qualified biologist(s) for burrows and upland habitat within the temporary work easements. These surveys shall consist of walking surveys of the Project site and adjacent areas to determine presence of burrows. Burrows will be flagged and avoided to the extent feasible. If salamanders are observed during these surveys, a USFWS-approved biologist(s) will remove the animal from the work site and translocate them under the direction and authorization of the Service.

APM-BIO-11: All salamanders captured on the Project site during monitoring and inspections conducted during construction shall be removed by a USFWS approved biologist(s) and translocated under the direction and authorization of the USFWS.

APM-BIO-12: To prevent inadvertent entrapment of salamanders during construction, all excavated, steep-walled holes or trenches more than 2 feet deep shall be covered at the close of each working day by plywood or similar materials, or provided with one or more escape ramps constructed of earth fill or wooden planks. Before such holes or trenches are filled, they must be thoroughly inspected for trapped animals. If at any time a trapped listed animal is discovered, a biologist(s) should immediately place escape ramps or other appropriate structures to allow the animal to escape, or the USFWS and/or CDFG shall be contacted by telephone for guidance. The USFWS shall be notified of the incident by telephone and electronic mail within one (1) working day.

APM-BIO-13: If requested, before, during, or upon completion of ground breaking and/or construction activities, the Project proponents shall allow access by USFWS and/or CDFG personnel to the Project site to inspect Project effects to the salamander and associated habitats.

APM-BIO-14: Prior to construction activities, a qualified botanist shall establish exclusion zones for special status plants within 50 feet of impact areas. These exclusion zones will include known populations and, where practicable, a 50-foot buffer zone. Construction equipment and personnel will be restricted from entering the exclusion zones, except where allowed under specific mitigation measures. An environmental monitor will be onsite during construction activities in the vicinity of sensitive biological resources. If direct or indirect impacts to special status plant species are observed then the monitor shall notify the construction manager immediately. If any populations of special-status plants are impacted, work in that area will be halted. The environmental monitor, in consultation with PG&E, will contact the CDFG and/or the USFWS.

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APM-BIO-15: Pappose tarplant readily transplants from seed and can adapt and survive in disturbed habitats along with natural ones. This species also appears to thrive with some disturbances, such as trampling, grazing, mowing, and light disking. Prior to disturbing areas with pappose tarplant, all top soil shall be removed. Plants that are in bloom shall be removed and dried to collect seeds that have matured. After construction, restoration and planting with top soil and seed shall be implemented by a qualified botanist. PG&E is currently seeking a suitable transfer site and will submit the proposed translocation site and pappose tarplant Relocation Plan for CDFG approval.

APM-BIO-16: For Project construction activities occurring during the bird nesting season of February 1 through August 31, a qualified ornithologist shall conduct pre-construction surveys for nesting birds within two weeks of construction. These surveys will cover the transmission line route, staging areas, pull sites, fly sites, and access routes. Additional preconstruction surveys shall be conducted for each new phase of Project implementation that occurs during the nesting season, no more than two weeks prior to construction. For any nests that are found, nest protection zones will be established. For passerine birds, a 50 to 100- foot protection zone shall be established around active nests; for raptors, a 300-foot protection zone and for golden eagles a 500-foot protection zone shall be established around active nests. These protection zones may be modified on a site-specific basis as determined by the Environmental Monitor or in coordination with CDFG. Active nests within the Project area would be monitored for signs of disturbance. If the biological monitor determines that a disturbance is occurring, construction shall be halted, and the agencies shall be contacted as to the measures that shall be implemented. Preconstruction surveys will be conducted by a qualified biologist for burrowing owls at work sites MP 1.38 and MP 4.88. If active burrows are found near a work area during preconstruction surveys or at any time during construction, work in the vicinity of the burrows would be limited as follows:

No disturbance would occur within approximately 160 feet of occupied burrows during the non-breeding season of September 1 – January 31, or within approximately 250 feet during the breeding season of February 1 – August 31; the limits of the exclusion zone in the project work area will be clearly marked with signs, flagging and/or fencing.

PG&E will consult with CDFG to determine the appropriate mitigation requirements if impacts to burrowing owl habitat cannot be avoided.

APM-BIO-17: To the extent feasible, buffers to wetlands will be created using signage or exclusion fencing during construction. Areas that are avoided shall be further protected from indirect impacts by using BMPs. PG&E shall implement the following erosion and sediment control and surface water protection methods for each of the work sites: At MP 1.38, the portion of seasonal wetland to be filled will be clearly delineated and marked with flagging or fencing so that the remaining portion of the seasonal wetland will be avoided. BMPs, such as silt fencing and/or fiber rolls, will be installed around the

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portion of seasonal wetland to be avoided. At MP 4.88, BMPs, such as fiber rolls and/or silt fencing, shall be installed between the two seasonal wetlands and the work site. A qualified biological monitor shall inspect construction-related activities at each work site to assist in the preservation of existing vegetation to the extent possible, ensure avoidance of water features when feasible, and to ensure water quality measures and BMPs are being implemented.

APM-CULT-1: If concentrations of prehistoric or historic-period materials are encountered during ground-disturbing work at any of the Project work sites, all work in the immediate vicinity of the discovery shall be halted until a qualified archaeologist can evaluate the significance of the find. If the find is determined to be significant, PG&E shall determine the appropriate avoidance measures or other appropriate mitigation in consultation with a qualified archaeologist and the State Water Resources Control Board. Significant cultural materials shall be curated according to current professional standards.

APM-CULT-2: If unanticipated paleontological resources are discovered during ground disturbing activities during the Project, excavations in the immediate vicinity of the find shall be temporarily halted until the discovery is examined by a qualified paleontologist per Society of Vertebrate Paleontology standards. If the find is determined to be significant, PG&E shall determine the appropriate avoidance measures or other appropriate mitigation in consultation with a qualified paleontologist and the State Water Resources Control Board. Significant paleontological finds shall be curated according to current professional standards.

APM-CULT-3: If human remains are encountered, work in the immediate vicinity shall stop and the County Coroner shall be notified immediately. A qualified archaeologist shall be contacted immediately to evaluate the discovery. If the human remains are of Native American origin, the Coroner must notify the Native American Heritage Commission within 24 hours of this identification. The Native American Heritage Commission then has 48 hours to identify a Most Likely Descendent.

APM-WQ-1: No discharge of pollutants from vehicle and equipment cleaning are allowed into the storm drain or water courses.

APM-WQ-2: Vehicle and equipment fueling and maintenance operations must be at least 50 ft away from vernal pools and other aquatic habitat.

APM-WQ-3: Dust control will be implemented, including the use of water trucks to control dust in disturbed areas; rocking temporary access road entrances and exits; and placement of geotextile mats and rock on access road areas to be used in the wet season.

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APM-WQ-4: Disturbed work areas will be restored to pre-Project conditions, and reseeded if appropriate.

APM-WQ-5: At the time of excavation within the temporarily impacted wetland at MP 1.38, the top six to twelve inches of soil within the wetland footprint will be salvaged and set aside. Once the upgrade and repair work is complete, the wetland topsoil will be reapplied to the excavation in the same soil horizon and compacted to pre-existing conditions. A qualified wetlands scientist will be present during excavation and backfill of soils at the MP 1.38 site.

APM-NOI-1: Care of Equipment – Equipment engines shall be covered, and PG&E will ensure that mufflers are in good working condition. This measure can reduce equipment noise by 5 to 10 dBA.

APM-NOI-2: Equipment Location – All stationary equipment such as compressors and welding machines shall be located away from noise receptors to the extent practicable.

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Approved:

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