

NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

Revised Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Pacific Gas and Electric Company's Pittsburg-Tesla 230 kV Transmission Line Reconductoring Project in Contra Costa and Alameda Counties, California.

State Clearinghouse No. 2011102034
State Water Board Project I.D. SB10007IN

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board), as the lead agency pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), is presenting for public review a Revised Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND), including the Initial Study (IS), for the Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) Pittsburg-Tesla 230 kV Transmission Line Reconductoring Project (Project) in Contra Costa County and Alameda County in California. The State Water Board also intends to issue a Clean Water Act section 401 water quality certification for the Project in association with this MND. **The public review and comment period for the Revised IS/MND will extend from April 13, 2012 to 12:00 noon on May 14, 2012.**

Background

In order to maintain service reliability and meet increasing electric load demands in the City of Pittsburg and surrounding areas in Contra Costa and Alameda Counties, PG&E proposes the Project to replace approximately 31 miles of 230 kilovolt (kV) transmission line between Pittsburg and Tesla Substations (see Project Area Map below). The line begins at Pittsburg Substation in the City of Pittsburg, Contra Costa County, California, which is located south of the confluence of the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers. After leaving the substation, the line runs south for approximately four miles, and then turns east-southeast for 13 miles, crossing Black Diamond Mines Regional Park, portions of the John Marsh State Historic Park, and Marsh Creek Reservoir and Dam. From there, the line turns southeast for 14 miles through Alameda County, where it crosses the western shore of Bethany Reservoir and Interstate 580 (I-580), and terminates at Tesla Substation in northern Alameda County. The Project is located within or alongside areas with land uses which include industrial, residential, agricultural, recreational, and natural resource protection.

This Project will minimize the potential for future power demand overloads and ensure service reliability to the East San Francisco Bay area. As part of this Project, PG&E proposes to modify approximately 43 of 147 existing steel lattice towers. Of the 43

towers to be modified, approximately 4 towers will receive dead end conversions and 39 towers will receive approximately 16.5 foot cage extensions. All modifications are above ground and no foundation improvements will be required. The work performed at the towers will be conducted by helicopter. Ground access to replace wire will take place at twelve areas along the existing rights-of-way. The Project is currently scheduled to begin construction in September 2012, with an estimated duration of approximately 19 months, completing in May 2014.

A MND-IS for the Project was originally submitted to the State Clearinghouse for public review on October 18, 2011 through November 21, 2012. During the public comment period for this original MND-IS, the State Water Board received comments which revealed new information and potential project impacts that require modification of the Project and the proposed mitigation measures. Comments received identified additional wildlife species of concern, and other wildlife protection issues. Comments regarding permitting and Underground Service Alert (USA) issues were also received. The revised document responds to this new information with changes to the Project. The changes include reconfiguration of Project work areas and access routes, alterations to Project mitigation measures, and additional Project authorizations/permits.

Determination

The Revised MND replaces the previously proposed MND. It describes and evaluates potential environmental impacts associated with the Pittsburg-Tesla 230 kV Transmission Line Reconductoring Project based on the new information received. The Revised MND establishes that there is no substantial evidence, in light of the whole record before the State Water Board, that the project may have a significant effect on the environment, with incorporated mitigation measures to avoid or mitigate potential significant impacts. All of the mitigation measures needed to avoid or minimize potentially significant impacts are set out in the Revised Initial Study and its attached Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan.

Document Availability

Electronic copies of the Revised IS/MND and public comments can be found on the State Water Board's 401 Program Website:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/cwa401/notices.shtml

Hard copies of these documents may be requested from the State Water Board.

Documents may be viewed at the State Water Board offices at the California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal-EPA) Building. Please contact the designated contact person to make arrangements.

Submission of Written Comments

Interested persons may submit their comments, evidence, and other material by email, fax, or hard copy. Comments are requested for the new information only. In order to be fully considered, written materials must be received by **12:00 noon on May 14, 2012**.

E-mail comments are encouraged. If electronic documents greater than 5 mb are to be submitted, please inform the designated contact person. Documents of any size may be submitted via CD, DVD, ftp file sharing services, or other common electronic media.

To ensure proper routing, all comment letters, regardless of the method of delivery, must have the following in the subject line: **“Comment Letter: Pittsburg-Tesla, Revised”**.

Please send comment letters to the designated contact person listed below. Comments may also be hand-delivered. Couriers delivering comment letters must check in with lobby security personnel on the first floor of the Cal-EPA Building. Questions on comment submittal may be directed to the designated contact person.

Parking and Accessibility

For directions to the Joe Serna Jr./Cal-EPA Building and public parking information, please refer to the map on the State Water Board website:

<http://www.calepa.ca.gov/EPAbldg/location.htm>

The Joe Serna Jr./Cal-EPA Building is accessible to persons with disabilities. All visitors to the Joe Serna Jr./Cal-EPA Building are required to sign in and obtain a badge at the Visitor Services Center located just inside the main (10th Street) entrance. Valid picture identification may be required. Please allow up to 15 minutes for receiving security clearance.

Future Notices

Staff intends to file a Notice of Completion with the State Clearinghouse in May 2012. A Clean Water Act section 401 water quality certification for the Project will be issued by the State Water Board at the same time. Both documents will be posted at:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/cwa401/certifications.shtml

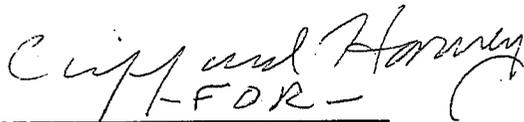
Contact Information

The designated contact person for the proposed Project is:

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Updates and additional information are also available at:
http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/public_notices/comments/index.shtml.

Sincerely,



Bill Orme
Chief, Water Quality Certification Unit
Division of Water Quality

April 6, 2012
Date

KEEP INFORMED OF PROJECT MILESTONES

To be informed of milestones in the development of this proposed Water Quality Certification, any interested persons should enroll in the State Water Board's 401 Program e-mail notification service.

Click the SUBSCRIBE button under the "Quick Links" section of the 401 Program Webpage at:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/cwa401/index.shtml

By enrolling in this list, you will receive notices for all current 401 project applications, including the project announced in this notice. You will need a valid e-mail address to use this service. If you do not have internet access or do not wish to participate in the Lyris list, contact the staff person named in the notice to express your interest in receiving notices by other means. You can enroll or un-enroll at any time. The State Water Board will not disclose your name or e-mail information to any outside parties, and will not use this information for any other purpose.