

**Notice of Exemption**

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**To:**  
Office of Planning and Research  
*For U.S. Mail:*  
P.O. Box 3044  
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

**From:**  
California Department of Fish and Wildlife  
Central Region  
1234 East Shaw Avenue  
Fresno, CA 93710



*Street Address:*  
1400 Tenth Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Project Title:** Minor Amendment No. 1 to California Endangered Species Act (CESA) Incidental Take Permit (ITP) No. 2081-2017-002-04 for the Southern California Gas Company Line 103 Right of Way Maintenance Project

**Project Location:** The Project is located approximately 10 miles southwest of the City of Bakersfield, in Kern County, California. The Project is specifically within the United States Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-Minute Quadrangle Maps Tupman and Buena Vista Lake Bed in Township 30 South, Range 25 East, Sections 31 and 32; Township 31 South, Range 25 East, Sections 05, 06, 07, 08, and 17; and Township 31 South, Range 24 East, Sections 12 and 13, Mount Diablo Base and Meridian. The approximate center of the Project is Latitude 35.25203°N and Longitude -119.32363°W. A large portion of the Project occurs within the Coles Levee Ecosystem Preserve and adjacent to CDFW's Elk Hills Ecological Reserve (ER), but no Project activities will occur within the ER.

**Project Description:** The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) has issued a CESA (Fish & G. Code, § 2050 et seq.) ITP and this Minor Amendment No. 1 to authorize Southern California Gas Company to incidentally take San Joaquin antelope squirrel and San Joaquin kit fox which are listed as threatened species under CESA (Fish & G. Code § 2050 et seq.; see Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 670.5, subd. (b)(6)(B) and (b)(6)(E), respectively).

The Southern California Gas Company Line 103 Right of Way Maintenance Project includes activities that are necessary to repair two segments of the 10-inch natural gas pipeline (Line) 103 located at Mile Post (MP) 1.39 and MP 2.20 that have been exposed due to erosion and repair and regrade 3.2 miles of ROW access roads for Line 103 in order to access those repair locations and conduct safety inspections of the entire Line. This Minor Amendment No. 1 makes five changes to the ITP, which are: 1) increases the size of the excavation areas at each Work Area; 2) changes the type of epoxy and covering material placed over the pipe prior to reburying; 3) increases the number of water bar rock outfall areas but the total area will remain the same; 4) adds that imported or certified clean fill will be necessary to repair the existing access road; 5) adds equipment to be used and provides that substitutions of equipment will be similar size and specification.

**Public Agency Approving Project:** CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

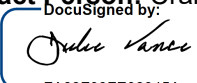
**Person or Public Agency Carrying Out Project:** Southern California Gas Company, Elod Nemeth, Project Manager, 9400 Oakdale Avenue, SC9314, Chatsworth, California 91311.

**Exempt Status:**

- Statutory Exemption. California Code of Regulations, Title 14, section 15269, subdivision (b); Public Resources Code, section 21080, subdivision (b)(4)
- Categorical Exemption.

**Reasons why project is exempt:** See Attachment

**CDFW Contact Person:** Craig Bailey (Sr. Environmental Scientist, Supervisory), 559-243-4014, extension 227

**Signature:**  EA83E09FE08945A... **Date:** 3/19/2021

Julie A. Vance  
Regional Manager, Central Region

Date received for filing at OPR: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Attachment to Notice of Exemption**

### **California Endangered Species Act Incidental Take Permit No. 2081-2017-002-04 Minor Amendment No. 1 Southern California Gas Company Line 103 Right of Way Maintenance Project**

Approval of this Project is statutorily exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA, Pub. Resources Code, § 21000 *et seq.*) because the Project is subject to California Code of Regulations, Title 14, section 15269, subdivision (b), "Emergency repairs to publicly or privately owned service facilities necessary to maintain service essential to the public health, safety, or welfare which includes those actions that require a reasonable amount of planning to address an anticipated emergency" and Public Resources Code, section 21080, subdivision (b)(4), "Specific actions necessary to prevent or mitigate an emergency". "Emergency" is defined as "a sudden, unexpected occurrence, involving a clear and imminent danger, demanding immediate action to prevent or mitigate loss of, or damage to, life, health, property, or essential public services" (Pub. Resources Code, § 21060.3).

The Southern California Gas Company Line 103 Right of Way Maintenance Project includes the repair of two segments of the 10-inch natural gas pipeline (Line) 103 located at Mile Post (MP) 1.39 and MP 2.20 that have been exposed due to erosion and repair and regrade 3.2 miles of right-of-way (ROW) access roads for Line 103 in order to access those repair locations and conduct safety inspections of the entire Line. The repair locations have experienced additional erosion over time and repairs are needed urgently to protect the integrity and safety of the pipeline.

In an email dated February 25, 2021, the Permittee requested a change to the Project Description for Incidental Take Permit No. 2081-2017-002-04 because pipeline integrity evaluations of the exposed 10-inch pipeline at the MP 1.39 and 2.20 exposure Work Areas show that the pipe has lost more than half the thickness. This change will increase the excavation area at MP 1.39 from 160 linear feet to approximately 300 linear feet and will increase the excavation area at MP 2.20 from 40 linear feet by 8 feet wide to approximately 20 linear feet by 20 feet wide to safely and accurately identify sections of pipe that are of sufficient metal thickness/integrity so that the deficient pipe can be extracted, and a new pipe segment installed. The Permittee also requested to add up to one more water bar rock outfall without increasing the total area of approximately 307 square feet. Additionally, the Permittee has identified severe erosion that occurred in some sections of the access road where approximately 310 to 330 cubic yards of imported or certified clean fill will be necessary for repairs. Finally, there are minor changes to the type of epoxy material to be applied over the pipeline welds and poly-woven covering material to protect the pipe prior to reburial and equipment to be used for maintenance.

CDFW has determined that this Amendment will not result in an increase in take of the Covered Species, nor will it cause an increase in Covered Species habitat impacts because the additional area is within the existing access road and the previously calculated temporary impact area for the Work Areas and access road regrading. Impacts of the taking will be minimized and fully mitigated through implementation of the Conditions of Approval required by Incidental Take Permit No. 2081-2017-002-04, as amended.

Measures include: 1) Weekly Compliance Reports; 2) establishment of avoidance zones; 3) worker education; and 4) permanent habitat protection.