

Notice of Exemption

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

State Clearinghouse No.: 2021070445

Project Title: Minor Amendment No. 1 to California Endangered Species Act (CESA) Incidental Take Permit (ITP) No. 2081-2019-020-04 for the Pacific Gas and Electric Company ID-78/Spans 24 and 27, L-300 Project

Project Location: The Project is located within portions of the Panoche Valley and Tumey Hills in San Benito County.

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 Pacific Gas and Electric Company to incidentally take giant kangaroo rat, which is listed as endangered species under CESA (Fish & G. Code § 2050 et seq.; see Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 670.5, subd. (a)(6)(C)), San Joaquin kit fox, which is listed as threatened species under CESA (Fish & G. Code § 2050 et seq.; see Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 670.5, subd. (b)(6)(E)), and San Joaquin antelope squirrel burrow, which is listed as threatened species under CESA (Fish & G. Code § 2050 et seq.; see Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 670.5, subd. (b)(6)(B)).

The Pacific Gas and Electric Company ID 78/Spans 24 and 27, L-300 Project includes maintenance and repair activities associated with an investigative dig and associated sniff holes on Gas Line 300B where a potential internal anomaly has been identified, recoating at pipeline spans at two locations where corrosion of exposed pipeline has occurred on both Gas Line 300A and Gas Line 300B, and cross compression. Minor Amendment No. 1 makes one specific change to the ITP; it adds clarification language to Condition of Approval 5.26 that once San Joaquin antelope squirrel burrow excavation is initiated within a Work Area when daytime high temperatures are between 68 and 86 degrees Fahrenheit, burrow excavation shall continue until it is completed, even if on-site daytime high temperatures are below 68 degrees Fahrenheit or above 86 degrees Fahrenheit.

Public Agency Approving Project: CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

Person or Public Agency Carrying Out Project: Pacific Gas and Electric Company, Matt Putnam, Director of Environmental Management Gas and Electric Projects, 1455 East Shaw Avenue, Fresno, California 93710.

Exempt Status:

- Statutory Exemption. California Code of Regulations, title 14, section 15282(k); Public Resources Code, section 21080.21
- Categorical Exemption.

Reasons why project is exempt: See Attachment

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

DocuSigned by:

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Signature: _____ **Date:** 10/26/2021

Julie A. Vance
Regional Manager, Central Region

Date received for filing at OPR: _____

**Attachment to Notice of Exemption
State Clearinghouse No. 2021070445**

**California Endangered Species Act Incidental Take Permit No. 2081-2019-020-04
Minor Amendment No. 1
Pacific Gas and Electric Company ID-78/Spans 24 and 27, L-300 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 15282, subdivision (k), “The installation of new pipeline or maintenance, repair, restoration, removal, or demolition of an existing pipeline as set forth in Section 21080.21 of the Public Resources Code, as long as the project does not exceed one mile in length”. Public Resources Code, section 21080.21 states, “This division does not apply to any project of less than one mile in length within a public street or highway or any other right-of-way for the installation of a new pipeline or the maintenance, repair, restoration, reconditioning, relocation, replacement, removal, or demolition of an existing pipeline.” “Pipeline’ includes subsurface facilities but does not include any surface facility related to the operation of the underground facility.” (Pub. Resources Code, §21080.21(a)).

The Project includes maintenance and repair activities associated with an investigative dig and associated sniff holes on Gas Line 300B where a potential internal anomaly has been identified, recoating at pipeline spans at 2 locations where corrosion of exposed pipeline has occurred on both Gas Line 300A and Gas Line 300B, and cross compression.

On October 15, 2021, CDFW initiated a minor amendment to the ITP to clarify the intent of a specific Condition of Approval for San Joaquin antelope squirrel burrow excavation that once burrow excavation begins during specific weather conditions, it should continue until it is completed within that Work Area, even if it is no longer occurring during the stated weather conditions.

CDFW has determined that this Amendment will not result in an increase in take of the Covered Species and will not increase Covered Species habitat impacts, therefore, there will be no increase in Project impacts to the Covered Species with this Amendment. Impacts will be minimized and fully mitigated through the implementation of measures required by Incidental Take Permit No. 2081-2019-020-04, as amended. Measures include: 1) Monthly Compliance Reports; 2) establishment of avoidance zones; 3) worker education; 4) species relocation; 5) permanent habitat protection; and 6) site restoration.