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## State Water Resources Control Board

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### *Video and Teleconference Meeting During COVID-19 Emergency*

This meeting will occur via [remote presence only](#) as a result of the COVID-19 emergency and as authorized by Government Code section 11133

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## NOTICE OF PREPARATION AND CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT SCOPING MEETING

### ORDER FOR CLEAN WATER ACT SECTION 401 WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION AND WASTE DISCHARGE REQUIREMENTS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF PACIFIC GAS AND ELECTRIC COMPANY SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE ACTIVITIES

Tuesday, January 11, 2022  
1:00 p.m.

[Remote Meeting Registration Link](https://forms.office.com/g/XvZNWtk2dc)  
(<https://forms.office.com/g/XvZNWtk2dc>)

### Remote Participation Only

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN** that State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) staff will hold a California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) scoping meeting to receive public input on the content and scope of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) that will be prepared to assess the potential environmental effects of a proposed project, Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification and Waste Discharge Requirements for discharges associated with Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) San Francisco Bay Area Operations and Maintenance (O&M) Activities (General Order).

The scoping meeting will include a brief presentation about the proposed General Order followed by the opportunity for public comment. A quorum of State Water Board members may be present; however, no action will be taken.

The State Water Board will accept both written and oral comments regarding scoping elements. Written comments may be submitted in accordance with the instructions set forth below by **12:00 p.m. (noon) on January 14, 2022.**

E. JOAQUIN ESQUIVEL, CHAIR | EILEEN SOBECK, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Information about the scoping meeting is located on the [Clean Water Act Section 401 – Certification and Wetlands Program : PG&E Bay Area Operations and MGO | California State Water Quality Control Board](#) at:

[https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water\\_issues/programs/cwa401/pge.html](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/cwa401/pge.html)

### **MEETING LOGISTICS**

To comment or ask questions during the online meeting, register using the [Remote Meeting Registration Link](#) (<https://forms.office.com/g/XvZNWtk2dc>). Following registration, virtual participation information will be sent to you one day prior to the meeting. The live webcast, which does not give viewers the ability to comment or ask questions, will be available at: <https://video.calepa.ca.gov/#/>.

### **LANGUAGE SERVICES AND ACCESSIBILITY**

The workshop will be offered in English. To request other language interpretation or sign language services, please submit your request at least 10 business days before the workshop (December 27, 2021) by contacting Elizabeth Reece at [Elizabeth.Reece@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:Elizabeth.Reece@waterboards.ca.gov). Telecommunications device for the hearing impaired (TDD) users may contact the California Relay Service at (800) 735-2929 or voice line at (800) 735-2922.

## **Notice of Preparation**

**TO:** State Clearinghouse, P.O. Box 3044,  
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

**FROM LEAD AGENCY:**

State Water Resources Control Board  
Attention Jean Bandura  
P.O. Box 2000, Sacramento, CA 95812-2000

**SUBJECT: ORDER FOR CLEAN WATER ACT SECTION 401 WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION AND WASTE DISCHARGE REQUIREMENTS FOR PACIFIC GAS AND ELECTRIC BAY AREA OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE ACTIVITIES**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The State Water Resources Control Board proposes to develop a General Order to streamline the Water Quality Certification (WQC) and Waste Discharge Requirements (WDR) permitting process for ongoing and routine maintenance activities conducted by Pacific Gas & Electric in the nine counties surrounding the San Francisco Bay Area. Pursuant to CEQA, the State Water Board will be the Lead Agency and will prepare an EIR for the proposed WQC/WDR.

## **BACKGROUND**

Pacific Gas and Electric Company filed an application for a Section 401 Water Quality Certification under the Clean Water Act from the State Water Resources Control Board

in conjunction with an application for a United States Army Corps of Engineers' Section 404 Regional General Permit. The General Order would authorize the fill of waters of the state, resulting from PG&E's ongoing Bay Area Operations and Maintenance Program for natural gas pipelines, electric transmission and distribution systems.

The General Order would establish a comprehensive approach to avoid and minimize impacts to waters of the state and mitigate for impacts as appropriate.

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This proposed General Order considers a variety of operation and maintenance activities on gas and electric infrastructure that take place within the San Francisco Bay Area. The following proposed activities, when conducted in areas where discharges may affect the quality of waters of the state, are included:

1. **Site-specific Erosion Control** - use of rock riprap, biotechnical bank stabilization techniques, erosion control fabrics, or other techniques to protect utility infrastructure from being undermined or exposed by erosion of channel banks.
2. **Boardwalk Maintenance** - repair or replace existing boardwalks that provide access to transmission facilities.
3. **Internal Pipeline Inspection** - inspect gas pipelines to confirm integrity.
4. **Pipeline Recoating** - recoat deteriorated coating with epoxy.
5. **Valve Recoating and Replacement** - replace and recoat deteriorated valves.
6. **Pipeline Cathodic Protection** - install cathodic protection system by installing an anode in a temporary trench located parallel and adjacent to the pipeline.
7. **Pipeline Lowering and Replacement** - clear, grade, trench, and excavate the existing pipeline when the integrity of the line becomes compromised.
8. **Dewatering of Maintenance Sites** - implement dewatering techniques when work must be conducted in areas that are usually inundated (e.g., pipeline crossings at creek channels, installation of rock riprap toe armoring in a creek channel, etc.).
9. **Substation Maintenance** - repair or replace transformer, switches, fuses, cutouts, meters, and insulators.
10. **Transmission Tower Maintenance** - repair or replace tower foundations and/or the upper portion of the tower.
11. **Power Pole Maintenance** - reinforce or replace existing poles.
12. **Line Reconductoring** - replace conductors (wires) that have outlasted their usefulness or if increased capacity is required.
13. **Site access development/maintenance** - complete routine access road maintenance such as blading/smoothing, culvert repair or installation, waterbars, and over-side drains. Install security fencing as needed around pipeline facilities.

**14. Management of Riparian Vegetation** - incidental removal of riparian vegetation to provide clearances for power lines and minimize root systems in the vicinity of buried pipelines.

The proposed operations and maintenance activities include best management practices (BMPs) that minimize impacts to waters of the state and their beneficial uses.

#### PROJECT LOCATION

The proposed General Order addresses future activities that may occur in the nine counties surrounding the San Francisco Bay consisting of: Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano, and Sonoma counties (Attachment A). For the purposes of the EIR, the project area is limited to the facilities, facility rights-of-way, and access routes to the facilities in the project area that intersect waters of the state. The proposed project is located within the jurisdiction of the Central Coast Regional Water Board, the Central Valley Regional Water Board, North Coast Regional Water Board, and the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Board.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL BASELINE

California Code of Regulations, title 14, section 15125 states that an EIR must include a description of the existing physical environmental conditions in the vicinity of the project, as they exist at the time the Notice of Preparation. The environmental setting will constitute the baseline physical conditions that State Water Board, the Lead Agency, will use to determine whether an impact is significant. In general, the environmental baseline is the same as existing conditions.

#### PROJECT ALTERNATIVES

A reasonable range of potentially feasible project alternatives, in addition to the no project alternative, will be addressed, following the scoping process and will consider the views of responsible and trustee agencies and the public.

#### POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

The EIR will focus on resources that the State Water Board expects the project to have probable environmental effects on, which are:

- Aesthetics
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Noise
- Tribal Cultural Resources, and
- Wildfire

## SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN COMMENTS

Written comment submittals must include the following in the subject line: **“Comment Letter – Proposed PG&E Bay Area O&M General Order.”** Written comments must be received no later than **12:00 noon on January 14, 2022** and addressed to:

Jeanine Townsend, Clerk to the Board  
State Water Resources Control Board  
P.O. Box 100, Sacramento, CA 95812-2000 (mail)  
1001 I Street, 15th floor, Sacramento, CA 95814 (hand-delivered)

Comment letters may be submitted electronically, in pdf text format (if less than 15 megabytes in total size), to the Clerk to the Board via e-mail at [commentletters@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:commentletters@waterboards.ca.gov). If the file is greater than 15 megabytes in total size, then the comment letter may be submitted by fax at (916) 341-5620, mailed to the address above, or by hand delivery. Couriers delivering hand copies of comment letters must check in with lobby security personnel, who can contact Jeanine Townsend at (916) 341-5600.


## FUTURE NOTICES

Any change in the date, time, and place of the scoping meeting will be publicly noticed on the State Water Board website and through Lyris e-mail list. Any person desiring to receive future notices concerning the proposed General Order should sign up on the Lyris e-mail list. To sign up for a Lyris list, access the [email List Subscription Form](#) at the webaddress listed below, click the “Water Quality” tab, and check the box for “CWA401 – Certification and Wetlands Program”:

[http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/resources/email\\_subscriptions/swrcb\\_subscribe.shtml](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/resources/email_subscriptions/swrcb_subscribe.shtml).

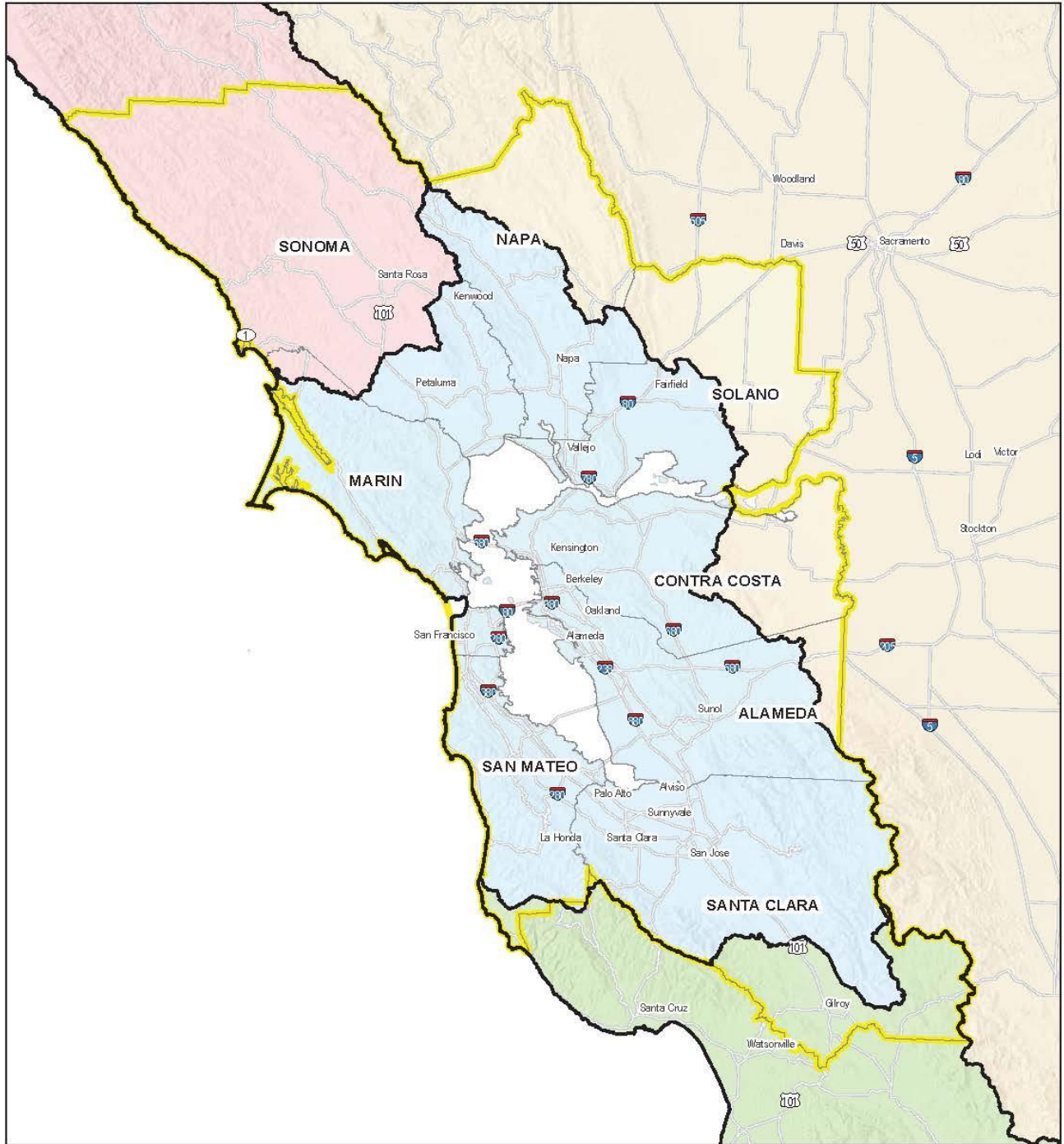
Please direct questions about this notice to Jean Bandura at (916) 322-7781 or [Jean.Bandura@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:Jean.Bandura@waterboards.ca.gov).

December 7, 2021  
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Date








  
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Jeanine Townsend  
Clerk to the Board



### Attachment A: Project Area Map



#### PG&E Bay Area Operations and Maintenance Program Area

-  Project (Program) Area
-  County Boundary
- Regional Water Quality Control Board Boundary**
-  Central Coast (5% of Program Area)
-  Central Valley (17% of Program Area)
-  North Coast (18% of Program Area)
-  San Francisco Bay (60% of Program Area)
-  Major Road

