

**Notice of Exemption**

- 1 -



**To:**  
Office of Planning and Research  
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:** California Endangered Species Act Incidental Take Permit No. 2081-2022-002-04 for the Pacific Gas and Electric Company 30995749 G HPR RBLD - Panoche Rd #2, Paicines Project (Project)

**Project Location:** The Project is located within the Panoche Valley in San Benito County, California. The Project is specifically located in the Panoche United States Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle; along Panoche Road at approximately 36° 35' 44.30" N, 120° 47' 3.50" W, along Dan Berg Road at approximately 36° 35' 44.80" N, 120° 49' 1.42" W, and along Recalde Road at approximately 36° 36' 6.91" N, 120° 49' 54.70" W.

**Project Description:** The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) has issued a California Endangered Species Act (CESA; Fish & G. Code, § 2050 et seq.) Incidental Take Permit (ITP) No. 2081-2022-002-04, to authorize Pacific Gas and Electric Company to incidentally take giant kangaroo rat (*Dipodomys ingens*) which are designated as an endangered under CESA, San Joaquin antelope squirrel (*Ammospermophilus nelsoni*) and San Joaquin kit fox (*Vulpes macrotis mutica*) which are both listed as threatened species under CESA, respectively (Fish & G. Code § 2050 et seq.; see Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 670.5, subd. (a)(6)(C), (b)(6)(B), and (b)(6)(E), respectively).

The ITP authorizes take of giant kangaroo rat, San Joaquin antelope squirrel, and San Joaquin kit fox (Covered Species) for activities associated with the Project which is necessary to repair a leak in the gas distribution pipelines and remove deactivated aboveground infrastructure. The Project will include repairing the natural gas distribution pipeline where the leak has been detected, installing a new section of pipe and new aboveground high pressure regulating equipment, and removing associated, deactivated aboveground infrastructure at all three Work Areas. The Project is expected to permanently disturb 0.00006 acre and temporarily disturb 0.1024 acre of Covered Species habitat. The repairs are needed urgently to stop the leak.

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

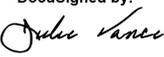
**Person or Public Agency Carrying Out Project:** Pacific Gas and Electric Company, Jeff McDougal, Manager, 2730 Gateway Oaks Drive, Room 230, Sacramento, California 95833.

**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:** Sarah Bahm (Sr. Environmental Scientist, Specialist), sarah.bahm@wildlife.ca.gov

DocuSigned by:  
  
Signature: FA83F09FE08945A...

Date: 2/23/2022

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. 2081-2022-002-04 for the Pacific Gas and Electric Company 30995749 G HPR RBLD - Panoche Rd #2, Paicines Project (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 proposed Project includes the repair of natural gas distribution pipeline leak and removal of aboveground infrastructure. The repairs are needed urgently to protect the integrity and safety of the pipeline and maintain service to customers. The Project will include activities associated with repairing the natural gas distribution pipelines where the leak has been detected, installing a new section of pipe and new aboveground high pressure regulating equipment, and removing associated, deactivated aboveground infrastructure at all three Work Areas. The repairs are needed urgently to stop the leak.

Project activities include: clearing; excavating; stockpiling soil; cutting pipe; welding; installing pipeline coating; installing aboveground facilities; removal of aboveground facilities; reburying pipeline; compacting soil; materials and equipment laydown and storage; transporting construction materials and other Project-related traffic; site recontouring; installing and removing temporary exclusion fencing; and other activities. Impacts will be minimized and fully mitigated through the implementation of measures required by Incidental Take Permit No. 2081-2022-002-04. Measures include: 1) Weekly Compliance Reports; 2) establishment of avoidance zones; 3) worker education; 4) species relocation; and 5) permanent habitat protection.