

**PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
505 VAN NESS AVENUE
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94102-3298**



**To: State Clearinghouse, Responsible and Trustee Agencies, Property Owners
& Interested Parties**

From: Mr. Boris Sanchez, CPUC Project Manager

**Subject: NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT AN INITIAL STUDY/MITIGATED NEGATIVE
DECLARATION (IS/MND)
Gates 500 kV Dynamic Reactive Support Project (A.21-02-018)**

Date: April 22, 2022

The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) has prepared a Draft Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (Draft IS/MND) under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for consideration of LS Power Grid California, LLC's (LSPGC's) application (A.21-02-018) to construct, operate, and maintain the Gates 500 kV Dynamic Reactive Support Project (the Project). The Draft IS/MND details the Project; evaluates and describes the potential environmental impacts associated with the Project's construction, operation, and maintenance; identifies impacts that could be significant; and presents mitigation measures that, if adopted by the CPUC, would avoid or minimize these impacts.

Description of the Project

The Project would be located in unincorporated Fresno County upon and surrounded by rural agricultural lands with existing transmission infrastructure, utility-scale solar energy generation facilities, and scattered rural residences in the vicinity of the Project site.

The Project would involve construction of the Orchard Substation containing two static synchronous compensator (STATCOM) units (devices used to regulate voltages for transmission networks and assist in ensuring reliable operation of transmissions systems in proximity to a substation) and ancillary components immediately north of and independently connected to the existing PG&E Gates Substation. The Project would support the regional transmission system by providing voltage support and grid stability, which would facilitate the reliable operation of the extra high voltage transmission system proximal to the Gates Substation. The purpose of the Project is to provide dynamic reactive support at the PG&E Gates Substation, a 500 kV and 230kV level regional substation. Connection to the PG&E Gates Substation would require PG&E to construct and operate two single-circuit 500 kV interconnection transmission lines from the Gates Substation 500 kV bus to the Orchard Substation 500 kV take-off towers.

LSPGC requests CPUC authorization to:

- Construct, operate, and maintain the Project including the Orchard Substation and ancillary facilities, and connect such facilities to the PG&E-owned Gates Substation;

Project components include:

- Two equally sized STATCOM units and ancillary components that would be constructed immediately north of and independently connected to the Gates Substation via two new single circuit 300 foot-long 500 kV interconnection transmission lines;
- Two approximately 4,000 square-foot STATCOM insulated gas bipolar transistors (IGBT)
- valve/control enclosures that would contain converters, protective relaying and control equipment, supervisory control and data acquisition (SCADA) equipment, cooling equipment, AC/DC auxiliary power equipment, and maintenance storage;
- Chain link and barb wire security fencing approximately nine feet in height with secure gates accessible only by LSPGC staff and emergency services personnel;
- Signage and shielded, motion-detection lighting;

- New and/or improved access road construction;
- A stormwater detention basin and conveyance system;
- Transformer oil containment basins; and
- Electric distribution power connection.

Public Comment on the Draft IS/MND.

The Draft IS/MND is available for a 32-day public comment period: **April 22, 2022 through May 23, 2022.** The public may submit written comments and concerns regarding the proposed Project and the adequacy of the Draft IS/MND. Comments on the Draft IS/MND must be postmarked or received by e-mail no later than Monday, May 23, 2022 at 5:00 pm. Please include your name, address, and telephone number in your correspondence.

Written comments on the Draft IS/MND should be sent to:

**CPUC c/o ESA, Attn. Michael Manka/Gates
1425 N. McDowell Blvd., Suite 200
Petaluma, CA 94954
lspgates@esassoc.com**

Availability of Draft IS/MND.

Copies of the Draft IS/MND will be available for public review on the Project website:

<https://ia.cpuc.ca.gov/environment/info/esa/gates/index.html>

This website will be used to post all public documents during the environmental review process. Printed copies of the Draft IS/MND are available for public review at the following libraries in the Project area.

Fresno County Public Library 2420 Mariposa Street Fresno, CA Phone:(559) 600-7323	Coalinga-Huron District Library 305 N 4 th Street Coalinga, CA 93210 Phone: (559) 935-1676	Huron Public Library 36050 O Street Huron, CA 93234 Phone: (559) 945-2284
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REMINDER: Draft IS/MND comments will be accepted by e-mail, or mail postmarked through May 23, 2022. Please include your name, address, and telephone number. Note that comments become public record.