

Notice of Exemption**- 1 -****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 Number: 2022070285

Project Title: Major Amendment No. 2 to California Endangered Species Act (CESA) Incidental Take Permit (ITP) No. 2081-2021-007-04 for the Southern California Gas Company Gas Pipeline Recoat and Anode Install Project (Project)

Project Location: The Project is located in Kern County, California and comprised of two separate Work Sites, L225 and L85. The L225 Site is located approximately one mile south of State Route 119, at 35.251245° N and -119.264576° W on land owned by California Resources Corporation; within the Tupman United States Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle on Assessor's Parcel Numbers (APNs) 184-012-051, Township 31 South, Range 25 East, and Section 11, Mount Diablo Base and Meridian (MDBM). The L85 Site is located approximately one mile east of State Route 33, at 35.422375° N and -119.660266° W on land owned by Aera Energy LLC and Chevron Corporation; within the Belridge USGS 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle on APNs 099-230-49 and 098-113-13, within Township 29 South, Range 21 and 22 East, and Sections 12 and 07 MDBM.

Project Description: The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) has issued a CESA (Fish & G. Code, § 2050 et seq.) ITP, Minor Amendment No. 1, and this Major Amendment No. 2 to authorize Southern California Gas Company to incidentally take giant kangaroo rat (*Dipodomys ingens*) and Tipton kangaroo rat (*Dipodomys nitratoides nitratoides*) which are listed as endangered under CESA (Fish & G. Code § 2050 et seq.; see Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 670.5, subd. (a)(6)(C) and (a)(6)(D)), and San Joaquin antelope squirrel (*Ammospermophilus nelsoni*) 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 Project includes activities associated with repair of two approximately 50-foot sections of high-pressure gas pipeline to prevent pipeline failure at two separate Work Sites, eTS 43141 Line 225 MP 3.28 (L225 Site) and eTS 44051 Line 85 MP 49.9 (L85 Site). The Project also includes the installation of anodes to provide cathodic protection of the pipelines. Major Amendment No. 2 makes twelve changes to the ITP. Major Amendment No. 2 will: 1) update the Permittee's Contact Person; extend the expiration date to January 31, 2024; 2) increase the size of the L225 excavation area and total footprint of the workspace and staging/laydown area; 3) add that the existing pipeline will be isolated and cross-compressed by installing two bypass stopple fittings and approximately 200-foot pipe bypass; 4) add options for pipeline repair or replacement, depending on severity, if inspection detects anomalies; 5) add that up to two coats of fusion-bonded epoxy or similar material will be used to recoat the pipeline; 6) add that zero-sack slurry, or wet sand, will be used to re-cover 18 inches above the exposed pipe followed by soil; 7) add that excess soil will be hauled off site for disposal; 8) add a crane, welding truck, two baker tanks, and two side booms to the equipment to be used; 9) add cutting pipeline section, repairing or replacing pipeline section, and welding to the Covered Activities list; 10) increase the total Project footprint by 1.996 acres and increases impacts to Covered Species habitat by 1.842 acres; 11) increase the total amount of Covered Species Credits required to be purchased or acres required for permanent protection and management of Habitat Management (HM) lands; and 12) revise and replace Figure 3 of the ITP with Figure 3a to depict the expanded L225 workspace within the modified Project Area.

Public Agency Approving Project: CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

Person or Public Agency Carrying Out Project: Southern California Gas Company, Erika Esparza, Project Manager, 555 West 5th Street, Los Angeles, California 90013.

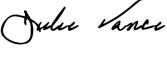
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Exempt Status:

- 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), 559-580-3195

DocuSigned by:

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Signature: _____

Date: 5/30/2023

Julie A. Vance
Regional Manager, Central Region

Date received for filing at OPR: _____

**Attachment to Notice of Exemption
State Clearinghouse No. 2022070285**

**California Endangered Species Act Incidental Take Permit No. 2081-2021-007-04
Major Amendment No. 2**

**Southern California Gas Company Gas Pipeline Recoat and Anode Install 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” and Public Resources Code, section 21080, subdivision (b)(4), “Emergency repairs 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 Project includes repair of two approximately 50-foot sections of high-pressure gas pipeline to prevent pipeline failure at two separate Work Sites, eTS 43141 Line 225 MP 3.28 (L225 Site) and eTS 44051 Line 85 MP 49.9 (L85 Site). The Project also includes the installation of anodes at the Work Sites to provide cathodic protection of the pipelines. In issuing the ITP, CDFW found, among other things, that Permittee’s compliance with the Conditions of Approval of the ITP would fully mitigate Project impacts of the taking on the Covered Species and that issuance of the ITP would not jeopardize the continued existence of the Covered Species.

On January 24, 2023, CDFW received a request from the Permittee for a minor amendment to the ITP and the corresponding fee payment on January 27, 2023. The request included updating the Permittee’s Contact Person and extending the expiration date of the ITP from January 31, 2023 to July 31, 2023 because the Project was delayed by Gas Control Outage Coordination (GCOC) as it could impact customers during months with high demand. CDFW issued Minor Amendment No. 1 on February 22, 2023. In issuing the ITP and Minor Amendment No. 1 (collectively the ITP, as amended), CDFW found, among other things, that Permittee’s compliance with the Conditions of Approval would fully mitigate impacts to the Covered Species and would not jeopardize the continued existence of the Covered Species.

On May 5, 2023, CDFW received a request from the Permittee for a major amendment to the ITP, as amended, and the corresponding fee payment on May 12, 2023. The request includes expanding the Work Area at the L225 Site to allow for replacement of an approximately 150-foot segment of pipeline. Upon exposure of a 50-foot segment of pipe for inspection and recoat at this location, it was determined the current condition of the pipe segment has approximately 40% wall loss deterioration in sections and an immediate replacement of a segment of approximately 150 feet of L225 is needed. In addition to an expanded footprint, the Permittee is requesting to add additional repair activities, equipment, and Covered Activities associated with pipe replacement. Permittee is also requesting to update the Principal Officer and extend the ITP expiration date by another six months because work at the L85 Site has been delayed while awaiting federal Endangered Species Act permitting.

CDFW has determined that although Major Amendment No. 2 may result in an increase in take of the Covered Species and increased Covered Species habitat impacts from those contemplated in the ITP as originally issued and as amended, the additional impacts of the taking will be minimized and fully mitigated through implementation of the Conditions of Approval. Because the impacts will be minimized and fully mitigated, there will be no increase in Project impacts to the Covered Species with Major Amendment No. 2. Measures include: 1) Weekly Compliance Reports; 2) establishment of avoidance zones; 3) worker education; and 4) permanent habitat protection.