

**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

**State Clearinghouse Number:** 2022110521

**Project Title:** Major Amendment No. 1 to California Endangered Species Act Incidental Take Permit No. 2081-2022-064-04 for the Southern California Gas Company eTS 58713.01 Line 85 Milepost 75.85 Remediation Digs Project (Project).

**Project Location:** The Project is located in the southern San Joaquin Valley approximately 6 miles east of the town of Taft in Kern County, California. The Project is specifically located at three distinct Work Areas on California Department of Water Resources-owned land adjacent to and on both sides of the California Aqueduct near Lake Station Road within the United States Geological Survey 7.5-Minute Quadrangle Map Buena Vista Lake Bed in Township 32 South, Range 24 East, Section 12, Mount Diablo Base and Meridian. Work Areas are located at approximately 35.158518, -119.349025, 35.157883, -119.346292, and 35.158184, -119.345164.

**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. 2081-2022-064-04 and this Major Amendment No. 1 to authorize Southern California Gas Company (Permittee) to incidentally Tipton kangaroo rat (*Dipodomys nitratooides nitratooides*) which is designated as an endangered species under CESA and San Joaquin antelope squirrel (*Ammospermophilus nelsoni*) which is listed as a threatened species under CESA, respectively (Fish & G. Code § 2050 et seq.; see Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 670.5, subd. (a)(6)(D) and (b)(6)(B), respectively).

The Project includes activities necessary to inspect and repair three segments of the 26-inch natural gas pipeline (Line) 85 near MP 75.85 where anomalies have been identified and installing cathodic protection for the integrity of the pipeline. Major Amendment No. 1 makes five changes to the ITP. Major Amendment No. 1 will: 1) extend the expiration date of the ITP to November 30, 2023; 2) add installation of three above-ground 16-inch by 12-inch by 6-inch junction boxes to the Project Description; 3) add installing junction boxes and pouring concrete to the list of Covered Activities; 4) convert approximately 4 square feet of temporary disturbance to permanent disturbance within the same total footprint of the Project and adds permanent impacts to Covered Species habitat by 2.67 square feet (0.000061 acre); and 5) revise and replace the ITP Figures to depict the locations of junction boxes and associated permanent impacts within the Project Area.

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

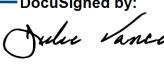
**Person or Public Agency Carrying Out Project:** Southern California Gas Company, Mark Medina, Project Manager, 9400 Oakdale Avenue, SC9314, Chatsworth, California 91311

**Exempt Status:**

- Statutory Exemption. California Code of Regulations, Title 14, section 15269, subdivision (b); Public Resources Code, section 21080, subdivision (b)(4)

**Reasons why project is exempt:** See Attachment

**CDFW Contact Person:** Sarah Bahm (Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist)), [sarah.bahm@wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:sarah.bahm@wildlife.ca.gov)

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Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
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Date: 6/2/2023

Julie A. Vance  
Regional Manager, Central Region

Date received for filing at OPR: \_\_\_\_\_

**Attachment to Notice of Exemption  
State Clearinghouse No. 2022110521**

**California Endangered Species Act Incidental Take Permit No. 2081-2022-064-04  
Major Amendment No. 1  
Southern California Gas Company eTS 58713.01 Line 85 Milepost 75.85 Remediation  
Digs 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 purpose of the Project is to prevent pipeline failure by inspecting and repairing three segments of the 26-inch natural gas pipeline (Line) 85 near Milepost 75.85 where potential anomalies have been identified via remote pigging equipment and installing cathodic protection to protect the integrity of the pipeline. The repairs are needed urgently to protect the integrity and safety of the pipeline as well as to ensure service to natural gas customers is not impacted this winter. Additionally, repairs are needed urgently to reduce potential impacts to other pipelines in the vicinity of the California Aqueduct, and possibly to the California Aqueduct itself.

On April 25, 2023, the Permittee requested to extend the expiration date of the ITP to November 30, 2023 because the Project was delayed due to access constraints by the landowner, the California Department of Water Resources and a revision to the Project Description to include the installation of three junction boxes which will require the conversion of approximately 4 square feet of temporary impacts within two of the Work Areas to permanent impacts.

CDFW has determined that although Major Amendment No. 1 may result in an increase in take of the Covered Species and permanent Covered Species habitat impacts from those contemplated in the ITP as originally issued, 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. 1. Impacts will be minimized and fully mitigated through the implementation of measures required by Incidental Take Permit No. 2081-2022-064-04. Measures include: 1) Monthly Compliance Reports; 2) establishment of avoidance zones; 3) worker education; 4) species relocation; and 5) permanent habitat protection.