

Notice of Exemption

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 (CDFW)
Central Region
1234 East Shaw Avenue
Fresno, CA 93710
Contact: Shaelyn Latronica
Phone: (559) 246-2584

Street Address:
1400 Tenth Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Project Title: California Endangered Species Act Incidental Take Permit No. 2081-2024-046-04 for the eTS 61647 Line 85 MP 67.60 Pipeline Replacement Project (Project)

Project Location: The Project is located east of State Route (SR) 33 and west of SR 119 within the City of Taft, Kern County, California. The approximate center of the Project Area is located approximately at latitude 35.229199° North and longitude -119.460609° West (WGS84). The Project Area is depicted on the Taft, California 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle (United States Geological Survey 2024). The Public Land Survey System depicts the Project within Township 31S, Range 23E and 24E, Sections 13, 19, and 24, Mt. Diablo Meridian.

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. 2081-2024-046-04 authorizing Southern California Gas Company to incidentally take San Joaquin antelope squirrel (*Ammospermophilus nelsoni*) and San Joaquin kit fox (*Vulpes macrotis mutica*) which are listed as threatened species under CESA, respectively (Fish & G. Code § 2050 et seq.; see Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 670.5, subd. (b)(6)(B) and (b)(6)(E), respectively).

The ITP authorizes take of San Joaquin antelope squirrel and San Joaquin kit fox (Covered Species) for activities associated with the Project which are necessary to replace and realign an existing section of Transmission Line 85 at mile post 67.60 (L85) to resolve an anomaly, required to address safety regulatory requirements. The Project is expected to temporarily disturb 4.281 acres of Covered Species Habitat. Temporary disturbance areas will be returned to pre-project conditions.

Public Agency Approving Project: CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

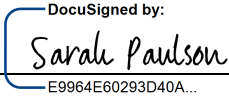
Person or Public Agency Carrying Out Project: Southern California Gas Company, Chloé Phan, Project Manager, 555 West 5th Street, Los Angeles, California 90013

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: Shaelyn Latronica (Environmental Scientist), Shaelyn.Latronica@wildlife.ca.gov

Signature  Date: 9/20/2024

E9964E60293D40A...

for Julie A. Vance, Regional Manager

Date Received for filing at OPR: _____

Attachment to Notice of Exemption

California Endangered Species Act Incidental Take Permit No. 2081-2024-046-04 Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas) eTS 61647 Line 85 MP 67.60 Pipeline Replacement Project (Project)

Approval of this Project is subject to the statutory exemption for “Specific actions necessary to prevent or mitigate an emergency” (Emergency Project; Pub. Resources Code, §21080, subd. (b)(4)) under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA; Pub. Resources Code, §21000 et seq.). “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 replace and realign an existing section of Transmission Line 85 at mile post 67.60 (L85) to resolve an anomaly resulting from the encroachment of a nearby 8-inch petroleum pipeline. The proposed Project is required for SoCalGas to comply with federal and State pipeline safety regulations, and to prevent a loss of natural gas service to customers within the San Joaquin Valley. Natural gas pipeline maintenance is required by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) General Order (GO) 112 F. GO 112 F incorporates the United States Department of Transportation regulations in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Title 49, Part 192, Transportation of Natural and Other Gas by Pipeline.

This encroachment urgently needs to be address based on the potential for creating a future hazard, pursuant to SoCalGas’s procedural manual prepared under CFR 192.605. The Project will need to start immediately to address safety regulatory requirements. If SoCalGas cannot complete the Project by the assigned compliance date, the CPUC may require SoCalGas to isolate or reduce the amount of natural gas running through Transmission Line 85 to avoid safety concerns. A reduction or isolation of this segment of line could cause a loss of provision of a public service essential to the health, safety, or welfare of natural gas customers. Isolation or a reduction of natural gas along Transmission Line 85 pipeline segment would risk SoCalGas’s ability to provide reliable natural gas to customers within the San Joaquin Valley.

The Project will include excavating a trench to expose the L85 segment of interest, cross compression of the existing L85, then the removal of an approximately 76-foot segment of L85 to be replaced and realigned with approximately 81 feet of new pipeline. Additionally, the Project will include three temporary bypass routes to allow space for landowner vehicle bypass around the Project’s work area. The Project is expected to temporarily disturb 4.281 acres of Covered Species Habitat.

Impacts will be minimized and fully mitigated through the implementation of measures required by Incidental Take Permit No. 2081-2024-046-04. Measures include: 1) Weekly Compliance Reports; 2) establishment of avoidance zones; 3) worker education; 4) species relocation; and 5) permanent habitat protection.