

Notice of Exemption

Fee Exempt per Government Code Section 6103

To: Office of Planning and Research
P.O. Box 3044, Room 113
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: California Department of Water Resources
SLFD 31770 Gonzaga Road
Gustine, CA 95322

Lead Agency: California Department of Water Resources

Project Title: California Aqueduct Milepost 62.28R PG&E Utility Power Pole Replacement

Project Location City & County: Merced County

Project Location – Specific: The work site is on the right side (R) of the California Aqueduct (Aqueduct) in the Department of Water Resources (DWR) right of way at Aqueduct milepost 62.28. It is approximately 0.95 miles northwest of the intersection of Butts Road and the Aqueduct and is about 5.0 miles northwest of the unincorporated community of Santa Nella. The site coordinates are (37.170700, -121.068261).

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:

PG&E requests encroachment permission to replace a damaged utility power pole located in the DWR right of way. Vehicles and equipment will access the work site by using existing roads and will stage on existing roads and road shoulders.

To perform the work, the electrical equipment will first be deenergized. Then, temporary grounding cables will be connected to the electrical equipment located on the existing poles that are adjacent to the one being replaced. The temporary grounding cables will be attached to temporary ¾-inch grounding rods that will be hammered 12 inches into the ground at the base of the poles. The existing power lines will then be disconnected from the damaged pole and the pole will be removed.

If needed, material will be removed from the existing hole to accommodate the new pole. If the power lines that were disconnected from the damaged pole are still in good condition, they will be connected to the new pole; if they are damaged, new cables will be spliced into the line and attached to the new pole. Then, the temporary grounding cables and grounding rods will be removed. Once all the connections are checked, the excavated area around the new pole will be backfilled and compacted to original contours and the electrical equipment will be reenergized.

This work is necessary to ensure reliable electric service to PG&E customers. PG&E will benefit from this work.

Exempt/Suspend Status:

- Ministerial (§21080[b][1]; 15268)
- Declared Emergency (Proclamation of a State of Emergency Due to Drought)
- Emergency Project (Public Resources Code §21080[b][4]; California Code of Regulations §15269[c])
- Categorical Exemption: 15301 (Existing Facilities) and 15305(b) (Minor Alterations in Land Use Limitations – Issuance of minor encroachment permits) apply.
- Statutory Exemptions:

Reasons Why Project Is Exempt: PG&E requests permission to replace an existing, damaged utility power pole located in the DWR right of way. This work will not expand existing or former use of the pole. Work will occur in areas with an average slope of less than 20 percent, and work will not result in any changes in land use. DWR will issue an encroachment permit for completion of this work. Categorical Exemption 15301 (Existing Facilities) and Categorical Exemption 15305(b) (Minor Alterations in Land Use Limitations – Issuance of minor encroachment permits) apply.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Department of Water Resources

Contact Person: Cody Nelson

Telephone: 209-827-5190

Signature: Cody Nelson **Date:** 10/2/2024 **Title:** Planner Scheduler/UC Supv.

- Signed by Lead Agency
- Signed by Applicant