

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION505 VAN NESS AVENUE
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94102-3298**REVISED MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION****PACIFIC GAS AND ELECTRIC COMPANY (PG&E)'S APPLICATION
NO. A.01-07-004, ATLANTIC-DEL MAR REINFORCEMENT PROJECT****INTRODUCTION**

Pursuant to the California Public Utilities Commission's (CPUC) General Order 131-D, Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) has filed an application with the Commission for a Permit to Construct power lines and associated substation modifications known as the Atlantic-Del Mar Reinforcement Project (A.01-07-004). The Application was filed on July 9, 2001 and includes the Proponents Environmental Assessment (PG&E, 2001a) prepared by PG&E pursuant to Rules 17.1 and 17.3 of CPUC's Rules of Practice and Procedure. PG&E requests authority to: 1) construct approximately 4 miles of 60-kilovolt (kV) single-circuit electric power line; and 2) install a new 60 kV breaker at the existing Atlantic Substation, and installing a new switch at the existing Del Mar Substation. Under the Commission's General Order 131-D, approval of this project must comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Pursuant to CEQA, the CPUC must prepare an "Initial Study" for discretionary projects such as the proposed project to determine whether the project may have a significant adverse effect on the environment. If an Initial Study prepared for a project indicates that such an impact could occur, the CPUC would be required to prepare and Environmental Impact Report (EIR). If Initial Study does not reveal substantial evidence of such an effect, or if the potential effect can be reduced to a level of insignificance through project revisions, a Negative Declaration can be adopted (Section 21080; CEQA Public Resources Code).

A Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) is the third type of document that could be prepared based on an Initial Study. The statute provides that MNDs are used "when the initial study has identified potentially significant effects on the environment, but (1) revisions in the project plans or proposals made by, or agreed to by, the applicant before the proposed negative declaration and initial study are released for public review would avoid the effects or mitigate the effects to a point where clearly no significant effect on the environment would occur, and (2) there is no substantial evidence in light of the whole record before the public agency that the project, as revised, may have a significant effect on the environment" (Section 21064.5; CEQA Public Resources Code).

Based on the assessment of the Initial Study prepared for the Atlantic-Del Mar Reinforcement Project, this Mitigated Negative Declaration has been prepared.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Following is a summary of the project that PG&E has proposed; the attached Initial Study (Section 8) presents more detail on the proposed project.

Power Line

The power line portion of the proposed project involves installing approximately four miles (21,000 feet) of a new 60 kV line on tubular steel poles (poles). The Proposed Project would provide a second 60 kV line to serve the Rocklin-south Placer County area. It would be built to 115 kV standards so that, at some future date, PG&E could convert the line to a 115 kV line without replacing the poles and conductors. PG&E does not have present plans to convert the line to 115 kV.

The new power line would begin at Atlantic Substation and proceed north adjacent to Harding Boulevard, following the existing Atlantic-Del Mar 60 kV line, for approximately 900 feet. The line would then turn east, continuing to follow the existing line, and proceed approximately 2,000 feet, crossing Antelope Creek before reaching the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) tracks. At the railroad tracks, the proposed route turns northeast (the existing power line crosses the railroad and goes east at this point), and continues parallel to the west side of the tracks, crossing State Route 65 (SR 65) and Sunset Boulevard. The line would cross the railroad tracks south of Farron Street and continue northeast again on the east side of the railroad tracks for approximately 1.1 miles. At this point, the route follows the south spur of the railroad tracks for approximately 0.4 miles. The line would then turn east, crossing Pacific Street where it would meet the existing 60 kV power line. The existing line would be reconstructed to accommodate the new proposed line on a single set of double circuit poles along Sierra Meadows Drive to the Del Mar Substation.

Based on analysis of visual impacts of PG&E's proposed project, an approximately 1.3-mile segment of underground power line is recommended in **Mitigation Measure V-1**. This underground power line segment would begin immediately south of Sunset Boulevard and extend to a point at least 120 feet north of Midas Avenue (see Section Ic for a detailed description of Mitigation Measure V-1). The underground power line would begin within the UPRR ROW on the west side of the railroad tracks at its southern terminus and extend to a point approximately 500 feet south of Rocklin Road. North of this point the underground route would be east of the railroad ROW on either City land or private property that is undeveloped.

Atlantic Substation

A new 60 kV breaker and bay would be installed within the fenced area at the existing Atlantic Substation. The new line would be placed on three new double-circuit poles within the Atlantic Substation property, along with the existing Atlantic-Del Mar 60 kV circuit, and routed toward the Del Mar Substation. The new 60 kV bay would be added to the end of the 60 kV bus.

Del Mar Substation

East of Pacific Street, along Sierra Meadows Drive, both the new 60 kV line and the existing 60 kV circuit from the Atlantic Substation would be placed on two new, double-circuit poles and routed from the Del Mar Substation toward the Atlantic Substation. The wood poles currently carrying the existing Atlantic-Del Mar 60kV circuit and a distribution circuit in this area would be topped off (i.e., the top third of the poles would be cut off leaving the existing distribution circuit attached) after the 60 kV circuit has been moved to the new poles. In order to permit a possible future voltage upgrade, the clearances and equipment at this substation are rated 115 kV, although the operating voltage is proposed to remain 60 kV. New equipment and clearances would also be rated 115 kV.

ALTERNATIVES

CEQA does not require that MNDs include an alternatives analysis because the Initial Study concludes that, with mitigation, there are no significant impacts resulting from the proposed project. However, pursuant to Section IX.B.1.c of CPUC's General Order 131-D, PG&E's Application did consider alternative power line routes and presented an explanation of the advantages and disadvantages of each alternative. Nine route alternatives were considered by PG&E during the scoping phase of the project. The nine power line routes are approximately bounded by the existing Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) tracks to the west, Atlantic Boulevard to the south, I-80 to the east, and Sierra Meadows Drive to the north. Of the nine route alternatives, four were considered feasible and capable of meeting the project objectives. The other five routes were rejected because PG&E believed that they would cause significant environmental impacts that could not be mitigated, or would result in substantial impacts to system reliability, operation, and/or costs. The four routes that PG&E considered feasible included: a route along the existing Atlantic-Del Mar 60 kV line that would create a double circuit; a route that would parallel Interstate 80 for approximately 2.5 miles; the preferred project route as described in this MND/IS; and a route that includes approximately 1 mile of underground power line along Pacific Street. The preferred route was selected because PG&E believed that it would have no significant adverse environmental impacts and the greatest line integrity and service reliability of all the alternative routes. Refer to Appendix A for more detailed descriptions and evaluations of the four alternative routes described above.

PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE PROJECT

The Atlantic-Del Mar Reinforcement Project would serve the City of Rocklin and south Placer County. The project is located within the cities of Roseville and Rocklin, approximately 15 miles northeast of Sacramento.

PG&E has experienced a significant and constant increase in electric demand in the project area due to dramatic growth in population, resulting in construction of new homes and businesses. The population of the City of Rocklin has increased from 19,033 in 1990 to 36,330 in 2000 (see Section XII, Population and Housing of the attached Initial Study). PG&E's electric load studies show that, without immediate action, loads within the project area could exceed existing power line and substation capacity by the summer of 2002. The proposed project would address this urgent need to upgrade the system. Furthermore, since the existing Atlantic-Del Mar 60 kV line is the single source for the area, there is currently no emergency capacity. The proposed project would increase the normal capacity of this area from 65 MW to over 117 MW. In addition, the project would provide an emergency capacity of 77 MW (PG&E, 2001a). This is because right now there is only one line serving this area. So if that line goes out, there is no existing emergency capacity. Each power line serving the area (the existing and proposed lines) would by itself have approximately 65 MW of normal operating capacity. However, power lines can handle slightly more than normal operating capacity from time to time. This higher capacity is referred to as the "emergency rating" of a power line. 77 MW is the emergency rating on these lines, so when one line goes out, the other can handle up to 77 MW for the short term in an emergency.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION

The Initial Study (attached as Section B) was prepared to identify the potential effects on the environment from the construction and operation of the proposed project and to evaluate the significance of these effects. The Initial Study was based on information presented in PG&E's PEA filed on July 9,

2001, site inspections by the CPUC environmental team, and other environmental analyses of the project. Within the PEA, measures addressing potentially significant impacts were proposed by the Applicant (Applicant Proposed Measures), and have been incorporated into the project description. Additional Mitigation Measures are recommended as a result of the Initial Study's analysis, and PG&E has agreed to implement these measures as well. Where Applicant Proposed Measures and Mitigation Measures are similar in intent, the more stringent measure is to be implemented.

Based on the Initial Study, the project as proposed by PG&E would be mitigable to less than significant effects or no impacts in the areas of aesthetics, agricultural resources, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, hazards & hazardous materials, hydrology & water quality, land use planning, mineral resources, noise, population and housing, recreation, transportation & traffic, and utilities and service systems. Implementation of these mitigation measures would avoid all potential impacts or reduce them to less than significant levels.

A Mitigation Implementation and Monitoring Plan (Section C) has been prepared to ensure that the Applicant Proposed Measures and the Mitigation Measures are properly implemented. The plan describes specific actions required to implement each measure, including information on the timing of implementation and monitoring requirements.

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Date