

TABLE OF CONTENTS

NORTHERN GEYSERS AREA REINFORCEMENT PROJECT PERMIT TO CONSTRUCT (A-98-06-039) COMMENTS AND RESPONSES TO COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION (SCH#98102036) AND DRAFT INITIAL STUDY

	<u>Page</u>
1. INTRODUCTION	1-1
Introduction	1-1
CEQA Process	1-1
2. COMMENT LETTERS	2-1
A Antero A. Rivasplata, State of California, Governor's Office of Planning and Research, November 13, 1998.	
B John E. Marcucci, 700 River Road, Fulton, California, October 16, 1998.	
C John E. Marcucci, 700 River Road, Fulton, California, December 3, 1998.	
3. RESPONSES TO COMMENTS BY LETTER	3-1

**NORTHERN GEYSERS AREA REINFORCEMENT PROJECT PERMIT TO
CONSTRUCT (A.98-06-039)**

**COMMENTS AND RESPONSES TO COMMENTS ON
THE DRAFT MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION (SCH#98102036)
AND DRAFT INITIAL STUDY**

1. INTRODUCTION

On October 16, 1998, the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) released for public review a Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration and Draft Initial Study for the proposed reinforcement of the Northern Geysers Power Line System Project in the Known Geysers Resource Area at the Eagle Rock Substation approximately 11 miles south of Clear Lake and the Fulton Substation located approximately 2 miles north of the City of Santa Rosa at the intersection of Highway 101 and River Road, both located in Sonoma County, California, in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and Rule 17.1 of the CPUC's Rules of Practice and Procedure. The reports were filed with the State Clearinghouse on that date. A minimum 30-day review and comment period (CEQA Guidelines § 15105) began on that date. The official public review period closed on November 16, 1998. The CPUC is the Lead Agency for the application and is responsible for compliance with CEQA. The CPUC has prepared a response to all comments received during the public review period on the content of the Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration and the appended Initial Study. This document is a compilation of all written comments received by the CPUC on the documents. This document also presents responses to the comments.

Section 2 of this document contains the comment letters. Each comment letter was assigned a letter of the alphabet for tracking, indicated in the upper right hand corner of the letter. Each comment was assigned a number, placed in the margin of the letter, that does not necessarily coincide with the numbering provided by the comment writer. All comment letters have been reproduced in their entirety in this document.

Section 3 of this document presents the responses to the comment letters. Responses are organized by letter in the assigned alphabetical order and keyed to the assigned comment number. Comments stating an individual's or group's position on an issue and comments on whether the project should or should not be approved are noted without additional response.

2. COMMENT LETTERS

The following is a list of comment letters received on the Draft Negative Declaration:

- A Antero A. Rivasplata, State of California, Governor's Office of Planning and Research, November 13, 1998.
- B John E. Marcucci, 700 River Road, Fulton, California, October 16, 1998.
- C John E. Marcucci, 700 River Road, Fulton, California, December 3, 1998.

Each of the above letters is reproduced in this section.



STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Governor's Office of Planning and Research

1400 TENTH STREET SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95833-5044



Pete Wilson
GOVERNOR

Paul F Miner
DIRECTOR

November 13, 1998

STEPHEN RUTLEDGE
CALIFORNIA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
505 VAN NESS AVENUE
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94102

Subject: PG & E NORTHERN GEYSERS REINFORCEMENT PROJECT
SCH#: 98102036

Dear STEPHEN RUTLEDGE:

The State Clearinghouse submitted the above named environmental document to selected state agencies for review. The review period is closed and none of the state agencies have comments. This letter acknowledges that you have complied with the State Clearinghouse review requirements for draft environmental documents, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act.

Please call the State Clearinghouse at (916) 445-0613 if you have any questions regarding the environmental review process. When contacting the Clearinghouse in this matter, please use the eight-digit State Clearinghouse number so that we may respond promptly.

Sincerely,

Artem A. Rivasplata
Chief, State Clearinghouse

1

Form A: Notice of Completion

Mail to: State Clearinghouse, 1400 Ninth Street, Sacramento, CA 95834 916/445-0613

SC# 98102036

Project Title: PG&E Northern Geysers Area Reinforcement Project (Application Number A-98-06-219)
 Lead Agency: California Public Utilities Commission Contact Person: Stephen R. Dudge
 Street Address: 505 Van Ness Avenue, Fourth Floor Phone: (415) 763-1677
 City: San Francisco Zip Code: 94102 County: San Francisco

Project Location
 County: Sonoma City/Nearest Community: Santa Rosa and Clear Lake
 Cross Streets: U.S. Highway 01 Zip Code: 94903 Total Acres: _____
 Assessor's Parcel No. _____
 Within 2 Miles: State Hwy. # U.S. Highway 101 Range: _____ Base: _____
 Airports: _____ Railroads: _____ Schools: _____

Document Type
 CEQA: NOP Supplemental EIS/Response NEPA: NOI Other: Joint Document
 Early Conc. EIR (Pre-SC# No.) EA Final Document
 Neg Dec Other _____ Draft EIS Draft IIS Other _____
 Draft EIR FONSI

Local Action Type
 General Plan Update Specific Plan Rezoning Annexation
 General Plan Amendment Master Plan Precinct Redevelopment
 General Plan Element Planned Unit Development Use Permit Coastal Permit
 Community Plan Site Plan Land Division (Subdivision) Other: PTC Permit (CPLC)
 Parcel Map, Tract Map, etc.)

Development Type
 Residential: Dist Acres _____ Water Pollution: Type _____ MGD _____
 Office: Sq. ft. Acres _____ Transportation: Type _____
 Commercial: Sq. ft. Acres _____ Mining: _____
 Industrial: Sq. ft. Acres _____ Power: Type _____ Electrical _____ Water _____ 115KV and above _____ 230KV _____

Project Issues Discussed in Document
 Aesthetics/Visual Flood Hazard/Flooding Schools/Universities Water Quality
 Agricultural Land Forest Land/Fire Hazard Septic Systems Water Supply/Groundwater
 Air Quality Geologic/Seismic Sewer Capacity Wetlands/Bay/Delta
 Archaeological/Historical Minerals Soil Erosion/Compaction/Grading Wildlife
 Coastal Zone Noise Solid Waste Growth Inducing
 Drainage/Assessment Public Utilities/Balance Toxic Hazards Land Use
 Cumulative Impacts Public Services/Facilities Traffic/Circulation Cumulative Effects
 Other Other _____

Present Land Use/Zoning/General Plan Use
 Geysers Site: Resource and Rural Development
 Fulkers Site: Public-Quasi Public/Public Facility

Project Description
 The proposed project involves two components. At the Geysers site, PG&E plans to install a 1,100-foot long, 115KV loop that will connect Geysers Unit 11 and the existing Geysers Unit 11-Fulkers line to the Eagle Rock Substation and to add two 115KV electric bays with two 115KV line positions to the substation. At the Fulkers site, the connection point of the Geysers Unit 11-Fulkers line at the substation will be moved from its existing 230KV line position to a 115KV line position. Once the improvements are completed, the operating voltage of the Geysers Unit 11-Fulkers line will then be reduced from 230KV to 115KV. (For further details on the project construction and schedule, refer to the Project Description of the Negative Declaration.)

State Clearinghouse Contact: Mr. Toby Holmes
(916) 445-0613
 State Review Began: 10-15-98
 Dept. Review to Agency: 1-6
 Agency Rev to SCH: 11-12
 SCH COMPLIANCE: 11-13

Project Sent to the following State Agencies
 Resources State/Consumer Svcs
 Boating General Services
 Coastal Comm Cal EPA
 Coastal Conserv ARD
 Colorado Rvr Bd CA Waste Mgmt Bd
 Conservation SWRCB: Grants
 Fish & Game # 3 SWRCB: Delta
 Delta Protection SWRCB: Wtr Quality
 Forestry SWRCB: Wtr Rights
 Historic Preservation Reg. WQCB # 1
 Parks & Rec Toxic Sub. Cont-CTC
 Reclamation Yrb/Adlt Corrections
 Bay Cons & Dev Comm Corrections
 DWR Independent Comm
 OES Energy Commission
 Bus Transp Hous NAHC
 Aeronautics Public Utilities Comm
 CHP State Monitor Mnu
 Caltrans # 4 State Lands Comm
 Trans Planning Tobacco Rgl Plan
 Housing & Devel Other: _____
 Food & Agriculture Other: _____
 Health & Welfare

Please note SCH Number on all Comments
98102036
 Please forward late comments directly to the Lead Agency
 AQMD/APCD: 2/23 (Resources: 10 / 17)

PCUC
10/20/98

ENERGY DIVISION



98 OCT 20 AM 11:51

700 River Road
Fulton, CA 95439-2819
October 16, 1998

Stephen Rutledge, CPUC Project Manager
California Public Utilities Commission, Energy Division
505 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94102

Dear Mr. Rutledge:

This is to report that I am totally against the further expansion of the Fulton Power Station and must protest any action in this direction. | 1

Your current station has already tripled in size over the last few years. Maintenance of the current mega-plant is abominable. There is no protective solid wall to surround the current site - let alone the proposed increase of power. The Fulton Park & Ride is directly in front of your plant. Vandals get a clear view of your operation - there has already been a "bomb scare" requiring that the sheriff had to shut down River Road while they searched for the bomb. A major hotel and restaurant sits across the street.

Weeds abound on your property. Diseased prune trees line the acreage to the West, and dying deciduous trees are expected to provide camouflage of the power terminals. All this - at the entrance to the scenic route to the Russian River. The situation is so bad that, on September 27, 1998, I filed a certified letter of complaint with Gordon Smith, President of the Pacific Gas & Electric Company (with copies to the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors). | 2

In addition, you have recently decided to locate power lines on both sides of River Road between the Highway 101 and the town of Fulton - with no easements from the property owners. You may have an agreement with the road commission but you have no agreement with the property owners, no compensation has been paid to any of us, and your decision may certainly add to our property's depreciation should we ever decide to sell. Your one mega-pole is less than 50-feet from my living room. Television reception is impossible; we have had to resort to satellite delivery of the signal.

Would you like to live across the street from such a station? You have demonstrated clearly that you cannot maintain the current facility. The Fulton plant is a visual disgrace and an unsafe operation. I cannot agree to an expansion of the problem. | 3

Sincerely,

John E. Marucci

700 River Road
Fulton, CA 95139-8819
December 3, 1998



Mr. Steve Rutledge
California Public Utilities Commission, Energy Division
505 Van Ness Avenue, Fourth Floor
San Francisco, CA 94102

Dear Mr. Rutledge:

This is in reference to correspondence from John Mintz discrediting my protest of the proposed North Geysers Area Reinforcement Project which the public was invited to critique. Mr. Mintz seems to feel that my letter to you was simply regarding the appearance of the Fulton station and nothing more. This simply isn't true. He has chosen to center on the appearance points of my letter and purposely left out other comments.

When your original correspondence told us of the NGARP proposal, the materials were sent to my attorney, Bradford DeMeo. Mr. DeMeo and his staff reviewed the proposal and reported back to me on August 11, 1998. They felt that I should file a letter of protest - feeling that the move by P.G.&E. might be depreciating to my property values - and I agreed with their findings. My previous letter to you clearly speaks about this and states further that the P.G.&E. recently took the south side of River Road for high voltage lines with no easements or compensation to the property owners. Certainly, wires deface the area and this defacement reflects appearance, but perhaps Mr. Mintz feels that he can complete the NGARP proposal without the expansion of wires. I seriously doubt it.

Our ranch is already a myriad of high voltage lines. Recently, the Open Space District evaluated my property for acquisition as a preserve. An independent appraiser was summoned for his evaluation. The present P.G.&E. construction on two sides of my property was noted in their report - along with the statement: ". . . and there are wires going in every direction . . ." Their report shows that the ranch was appropriately depreciated. Since that evaluation, the P.G.&E. has freely taken a third side of my property for their high voltage lines! I remain sorry that it is so difficult for Mr. Mintz to understand why we have protested the NGARP proposal. Just how much more should one property owner be asked to endure for the "betterment of the whole?"

I continue to be in disagreement with the NGARP proposal.

Sincerely,

John E. Marcucci

3. RESPONSES TO COMMENTS BY LETTER

LETTER A

Antero A. Rivasplata,
State of California
Governor's Office of Planning and Research
November 13, 1998

- 1.) Comment noted.

LETTER B

John E. Marcucci, 700 River Road
Fulton, California,
October 16, 1998

- 1.) Comment noted.
- 2.) The additional facilities PG&E is proposing to construct at the Fulton substation are part of a larger project involving a substation in the Known Geysers Resource Area (KGRA) and the connecting conductors between the two substations. Because PG&E is proposing to construct a new line within the KGRA that is not: on utility property; within a utility right of way, easement or franchise agreement; nor within a designated utility corridor, the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) was triggered requiring an environmental review of the entire project.

Commission staff is required to review the utility's proposal and determine if the proposal will create a significant effect on the environment according to the criteria of CEQA. In our draft mitigated negative declaration issued on October 16, 1998, we found that PG&E's proposal would not significantly affect the environment when certain mitigation measures were included in the proposal.

The issues you brought to the Commission concerning previously constructed PG&E poles, PG&E construction and its affect on your property value, and the ongoing safety concerns of the location of the Fulton substation, are not issues staff may address in its CEQA review. CEQA reviews are specifically pointed towards changes in the environment that may occur as a result of a proposed project.

The one issue which you addressed that we did consider in our CEQA review is the effect of the proposed project on public views and visual aesthetics. There will be 3 new 40 foot poles and three new 70 foot poles on substation property along Highway 1. These new poles will be, for the most part, shielded from Highway 1 by current vegetation and proposed plantings. From your property, these new poles will be at the far side of the Fulton substation, and should hardly be noticeable by the unaccustomed eye beyond the current facilities at the substation.

Although Commission staff found that PG&E's proposed project would not have a significant affect on visual aesthetics, PG&E did agree to additional maintenance and landscaping improvements at the Fulton substation as a result of your letter of complaint to the company concerning these matters. At this point, Commission staff cannot require PG&E to provide any additional relief to you.

Your letters will become part of the file in this matter. However, because your first letter was not received within 30 days of the date of PG&E's application and because it was not filed in accordance with the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure (Article 12, Protests and Responses to Applications), it was not considered a formal protest to the application. However, both of your letters were considered as comments on the proposal.

- 3.) Comment noted.

LETTER C

John E. Marcucci, 700 River Road
Fulton, California,
December 3, 1998

- 1.) Comment noted.
- 2.) Please see response to comment B2.
- 3.) Comment noted.