EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E), in its California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) application (A.13-08-014), filed on August 13, 2013, requests to reinforce the electric transmission and distribution system in El Dorado County by replacing existing conductor (reconductoring), replacing existing poles, and modifying existing lattice steel towers on the Missouri Flat-Gold Hill 115 kilovolt (kV) Power Line (Missouri Flat-Gold Hill Line), pursuant to CPUC General Order (GO) 131-D. The application includes the Proponent's Environmental Assessment (PEA) prepared pursuant to Rule 2.4 of the CPUC's Rules of Practice and Procedure.

PG&E owns and operates the Missouri Flat-Gold Hill Line, as well as the El Dorado-Missouri Flat 115 kV Power Line (El Dorado-Missouri Flat Line) and the Gold Hill-Clarksville 115 kV Power Line (Gold Hill-Clarksville Line). The Missouri Flat-Gold Hill Line is an approximately 12.5-mile, double-circuit power line between the City of Folsom in Sacramento County and the community of Shingle Springs in El Dorado County. The Missouri Flat-Gold Hill 115 kV Power Line Reconductoring Project (Project) would also modify and upgrade existing substations and temporarily convert the Gold Hill No. 1 60 kV Power Line (Gold Hill No. 1 Line), an existing 60 kV power line, to 115 kV to provide power to customers during construction of the Project.

With one exception, the proposed alignment would be located in existing PG&E easements. Additional rights-of way (ROW) would be required to accommodate the relocation of approximately 150 feet of an existing distribution feeder line associated with Limestone Substation near the intersection of Strolling Hills Road and Ridge Pass Drive. No additional ROW or easement expansions would be needed to accommodate construction or operation and maintenance of the line.

This Project is subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). CEQA requires a lead agency, here, the CPUC, to prepare an Initial Study (IS) to determine if the project may have a significant effect on the environment. (CEQA Guidelines §15063(a)) If the agency determines there is substantial evidence that the project may cause a significant effect on the environment, it shall prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR). The lead agency shall prepare a negative declaration if there is no substantial evidence that the project may cause a significant effect on the environment. (CEQA Guidelines § 15063(b)) If the IS identifies potentially significant effects of the Project but the applicant agrees to revisions that would avoid or mitigate the effects to a point where clearly no significant effects would occur, then a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) shall be prepared (Pub. Res. Code §§21064.5, 21080(c); 14 Cal. Code §§15064(f)(2), 15070(b)).

Based on the analysis in the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND), it has been determined, based on substantial evidence, that, through the incorporation of feasible mitigation measures agreed to by PG&E all potentially significant environmental impacts of the Project would be avoided or reduced to a point where clearly no significant effects would occur. For this reason, adoption of an IS/MND would satisfy the requirements of CEQA.

Project Description

The proposed Project consists of the following primary components:

- **Missouri Flat-Gold Hill Line Reconductoring:** Approximately 12.5 miles of the existing 115 kV double-circuit (No. 1 and No. 2) power line between Shingle Springs and Gold Hill substations would be reconductored. In addition, approximately 0.3 mile of the existing power line east of Shingle Springs Substation would be reconductored to facilitate construction activities. The Missouri Flat-Gold Hill Line travels in a generally east-west direction from Shingle Springs Substation in El Dorado County to Gold Hill Substation in the City of Folsom. It generally parallels Highway 50 for approximately 6.4 miles and crosses the highway at five locations.

- **Gold Hill No. 1 Line Reconductoring:** Approximately 7 miles of the existing Gold Hill No. 1 60 kV Line would be upgraded in order to provide backup electric service while the Missouri Flat-Gold Hill Line is being reconductored. The portion of the Gold Hill No. 1 Line that would be upgraded begins approximately 0.6 mile east of Shingle Springs Substation in the community of Shingle Springs and continues west to Clarksville Substation. The line closely parallels the Missouri Flat-Gold Hill Line; however, the two alignments slightly diverge in three locations. Upon completion of this reconductoring, the voltage would be returned to 60 kV; however, the upgraded structures and facilities would remain in place.

- **Substation and Switching Station Modifications:** Minor modifications would be made to substation equipment and facilities at Shingle Springs, Pacific Western Pipe, Limestone, Clarksville, and Gold Hill substations, and Missouri Flat Switching Station to tie the new conductor into the substations and modify existing equipment to accommodate the line upgrades. All substation equipment would be sized adequately to match or exceed new line requirements. All substation and switching station modifications would be completed within existing substation or switching station fence lines and no substation expansions are proposed.

Environmental Determination

The IS/MND was prepared to identify the potential environmental effects resulting from implementation of the proposed Project, evaluate the level of significance of these effects, and identify the revisions in the Project agreed to by PG&E that would avoid the effects or mitigate them to a point where they are not significant. The IS/MND relies on information from PG&E's Application for a Permit to Construct, the Proponent's Environmental Assessment, Project site reconnaissance, PG&E's responses to data requests by the CPUC, and the environmental expertise of the CPUC's consultant, who prepared the MND.

PG&E identified a number of applicant proposed measures (APMs) to avoid or reduce potential impacts associated with the proposed Project. All APMs are considered part of the proposed Project for the purpose of this IS/MND and, upon adoption of the Final MND, would become part of the Mitigation Monitoring, Reporting, and Compliance Program; therefore, implementation of and compliance with the APMs would be monitored and enforced by the CPUC. Based on the analysis documented in the IS/MND, mitigation measures are recommended to ensure that impacts of the proposed Project would be less than significant. The mitigation measures either supplement or supersede the APMs as indicated. PG&E has agreed to implement all of the recommended mitigation measures as part of the proposed Project, and they would also become part of the Project Mitigation Monitoring, Reporting, and Compliance Program.

Table ES-1 provides a complete, condensed presentation of the environmental impacts and mitigation measures for the proposed Project. A full description of the Mitigation Monitoring, Reporting, and Compliance Plan is included in Section 5 of this IS/MND.

TABLE ES-1
SUMMARY OF IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES FOR THE MISSOURI FLAT-GOLD HILL 115KV POWER LINE RECONDUCTORING PROJECT

Environmental Impact	Mitigation Measures Proposed in this MND	Significance after Mitigation
Light and Glare	**Mitigation Measure 3.1-1: Reduce construction night lighting impacts.** PG&E shall design and install all lighting at construction and storage yards and staging areas such that light bulbs and reflectors are not visible from public viewing areas; lighting does not cause reflected glare; and illumination of the Project facilities, vicinity, and nighttime sky is minimized. • Lighting shall be designed so exterior lighting is hooded, with lights directed downward or toward the area to be illuminated so that light trespass to the nighttime sky is minimized. The design of the lighting shall be such that the luminescence or light sources are shielded to minimize light trespass outside the Project boundary. • All lighting shall be of minimum necessary brightness consistent with worker safety. • Per APM NO-1, residents affected by nighttime project construction due to planned clearance restrictions will be notified.	Less than Significant
Air Quality Standards and Net Increase of Any Criteria Pollutant	**Mitigation Measure 3.3-1:** The following SCAQMD Rule 403 Best Available Fugitive Dust Control Measures shall be implemented during construction, where applicable, within El Dorado County: • For inactive disturbed surfaces, either: apply water to at least 80 percent of all inactive disturbed surface areas on a daily basis when there is evidence of wind driven fugitive dust (excluding any areas which are inaccessible due to excessive slope or other safety conditions); or apply dust suppressants to inactive disturbed surface areas in sufficient quantity and frequency to maintain a stabilized surface; or establish a vegetative ground cover within 21 days after active operations have ceased (ground cover must be of sufficient density to expose less than 30 percent of unstabilized ground within 90 days of planting); or utilize any combination of these controls together to control fugitive dust on all inactive disturbed surface areas. • Water all unpaved roads used for any vehicular traffic once daily, during dry weather conditions. • To control track-out, pave or apply chemical stabilization at sufficient concentration and frequency to maintain a stabilized surface starting from the point of intersection with the public paved surface, and extending for a centerline distance of at least 100 feet and a width of at least 20 feet; or pave from the point of intersection with the public paved road surface, and extending for a centerline distance of at least 25 feet and a width of at least 20 feet, and install a track-out control device immediately adjacent to the paved surface such that exiting vehicles do not travel on any unpaved road surface after passing through the track-out control device. • When wind gusts exceed 25 mph, implement the applicable Best Available Fugitive Dust Control Measures for High Wind Conditions identified in Appendix C-1, Table C.5 of the EDCAQMD Guide to Air Quality Assessment Determining Significance of Air Quality Impact Under the California Environmental Quality Act (EDCAQMD, 2002). **Mitigation Measure 3.3-2:** The following SMAQMD Basic Construction Emission Control Practices shall be implemented during construction, where applicable, within Sacramento County: • Water all exposed surfaces two times daily. Exposed surfaces include, but are not limited to soil piles, graded areas, unpaved parking areas, staging areas, and access roads; • Any haul trucks that would be traveling along freeways or major roadways should be covered; and • Use wet power vacuum street sweepers to remove any visible track-out mud or dirt onto adjacent public roads at least once a day. Use of dry power sweeping is prohibited.	Less than Significant

TABLE ES-1 (Continued)
SUMMARY OF IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES FOR THE MISSOURI FLAT-GOLD HILL 115KV POWER LINE RECONDUCTORING PROJECT

Environmental Impact	Mitigation Measures Proposed in this MND	Significance after Mitigation
Special-Status Species: Vernal Pool Invertebrates	**Mitigation Measure 3.4-1:** In areas where construction vehicles require crossing over seasonal wetlands and vernal pools that have the potential to support vernal pool invertebrates (crustacean habitat), the following protective measures would be implemented to reduce the effects of surface disturbance and compaction: a) No equipment or materials shall be stored in or adjacent to seasonal wetlands or vernal pools. b) Prior to allowing any vehicles or heavy equipment to cross a seasonal wetland, the Project proponent or its contractor shall employ geotextile fabric, wooden mats, or similar protective materials to protect the ground surface in areas where vehicles would encroach upon vernal pool crustacean habitat. Such materials would distribute the weight of vehicles and equipment over a greater area and prevent significant disturbance of soil in these areas. The project proponent or its contractor shall ensure that adequate calculations have been conducted prior to implementation of this measure to ensure the wooden mats can adequately distribute the weight of vehicles and heavy equipment to prevent compaction. c) Materials shall only remain in the wetland areas as long as necessary for the completion of work.	Less than Significant
Active Nests	**Mitigation Measure 3.4-2:** The following measure supplements APM BIO-3.1, (i.e. using the nest buffer areas described in APM Bio 3.1 as guidance). The PG&E biologist shall coordinate with CDFW to determine whether work, as modified to minimize disturbance of nesting birds may proceed in an exclusion zone around an active nest (if avoidance is not practicable). If any nests that are fully formed and have the potential to support eggs are found, the biologist shall monitor the nest for potential nesting activities. Project activities are only allowed to commence after it is determined that the nest is not actively being used by nesting birds, unless approved in coordination with CDFW per previous sentence. The biologist will monitor all work occurring within exclusion zones daily when construction is occurring and assess their effect on the nesting birds. If the biologist determines that particular activities pose a high risk of disturbing an active nest, the biologist will recommend additional feasible measures to minimize the risk of nest disturbance, potentially including temporary cessation of work activities within exclusion zones near active nests.	Less than Significant
Rare Plants	**Mitigation Measure 3.4-3:** In addition to the areas within the BLM Pine Hill Preserve, PG&E will apply the measures identified in APM BIO-5.3 to other areas within the project footprint known to support rare plant populations.	Less than Significant
	Mitigation Measure 3.4-4. In addition to the measures described in APM BIO-6, PG&E will provide notification to CDFW at least 10 days prior to affecting special-status plants to allow for the salvage of special-status plants (CDFG Section 10913(c)).	Less than Significant
Native Trees	**Mitigation Measure 3.4-5:** Retained oak trees over 6” diameter at breast height (dbh) or having multiple trunks with an aggregate over 10” dbh, or sensitive natural community trees, located adjacent to ground-disturbing construction activities that could damage tree roots, shall be protected through the implementation of the following protective measures: a) A Tree Protection Zone (TPZ) shall be established between any such retained tree or group of trees and the ground-disturbing construction activities. The TPZ shall be 1.5 times the radius of the dripline (canopy edge). However, a smaller TPZ may be approved by the CPUC monitor in coordination with the qualified biologist and construction personnel if necessary due to topography or other reasons, if the CPUC monitor concludes that the smaller TPZ is adequate to protect the tree(s) from significant impacts.	Less than Significant

TABLE ES-1 (Continued)
SUMMARY OF IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES FOR THE MISSOURI FLAT-GOLD HILL 115KV POWER LINE RECONDUCTORING PROJECT

Environmental Impact	Mitigation Measures Proposed in this MND	Significance after Mitigation
Native Trees (cont.)	b) The TPZ of any protected trees shall be marked with high visibility fencing, which shall remain in place for the duration of ground-disturbing construction activities in the area. c) Construction-related activities, including grading, trenching, or drilling shall be prohibited within the TPZ. No construction-related vehicles, personal vehicles, or machinery shall be operated or parked within the TPZ. No construction materials, equipment, machinery, or other supplies shall be stored within a TPZ. No wires or signs shall be attached to any tree. d) Where the TPZ cannot be fully implemented as described in Mitigation Measure 3.4-5a through c, and construction-related activities are determined by the CPUC monitor to have a significant impact to a retained oak tree such that tree health may decline over time and result in tree mortality at a rate faster than normally expected, the CPUC monitor will determine whether the tree shall be removed or retained. Mitigation for the removed or retained tree is defined in Mitigation Measure 3.4-6, below.	
	Mitigation Measure 3.4-6: Removed native oak trees and retained native oak trees (as defined in Policy 7.4.5.2) that are significantly impacted by construction-related activities and determined by the CPUC monitor to potentially decline and result in tree mortality at a rate faster than expected, shall be mitigated through replacement at a 1:1 ratio. The number of trees planted may be greater than the 1:1 ratio to achieve at least 100 percent replacement of impacted trees at the end of the monitoring period. As part of this mitigation, PG&E shall prepare an Oak Mitigation Plan when tree planting locations have been determined. The plan shall include, but is not limited to, details of the number of oak trees to be planted, based on the final total of trees removed or significantly impacted (Mitigation Measure 3.4-5d) by the Project, specific planting locations, maintenance and irrigation needs, monitoring requirements (i.e., at least 5 years monitoring plant vigor and growth), reporting requirements (e.g., annual reporting to the CPUC), and success criteria to be met before monitoring is concluded (e.g., 100 percent survival at a 1:1 replacement ratio; an independent assessment of "good" overall tree vigor; and tree viability without irrigation). The Oak Mitigation Plan shall be submitted to the CPUC for review and approval prior to implementation.	Less than Significant
Soil Instability	**Mitigation Measure 3.6-1.** If grading plans are required, designs will be signed by a professional engineer and submitted to CPUC for approval within a reasonable timeframe prior to construction initiation.	Less than Significant
Construction Noise	**Mitigation Measure 3.12-1:** Construction activity shall be limited to between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, and 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. on weekends, and on federally-recognized holidays, except with CPUC approval to conduct certain work during electrical line clearances pursuant to Mitigation Measure 3.12-2, or where necessary to ensure worker safety.	Less than Significant
	Mitigation Measure 3.12-2: In the event that limited nighttime (i.e., between 6:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m.) construction activity is determined to be necessary for safety reasons or for line clearance reasons within 500 feet of an occupied residential dwelling unit, a nighttime noise reduction plan shall be developed by PG&E and submitted to the CPUC for review and approval at least 30 days prior to commencement of construction activities. The noise reduction plan shall include a set of site-specific noise attenuation measures that apply state of the art noise reduction technology to ensure that nighttime construction noise levels and associated nuisance are reduced. The measures shall include, but not be limited to, the control strategies and methods for implementation that are listed below. • Plan construction activities to minimize the amount of nighttime construction.	Less than Significant

TABLE ES-1 (Continued)
SUMMARY OF IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES FOR THE MISSOURI FLAT-GOLD HILL 115KV POWER LINE RECONDUCTORING PROJECT

Environmental Impact	Mitigation Measures Proposed in this MND	Significance after Mitigation
Construction Noise (cont.)	• Provide notice to all residences within 500 feet of planned nighttime construction activities that includes the specific night(s) and approximate timeframe when construction activities would occur. • Offer temporary relocation of residents within 200 feet of nighttime construction activities that would occur after 10:00 p.m. • Temporary noise barriers, such as acoustical shields and/or blankets, shall be installed immediately adjacent to all nighttime stationary noise sources (e.g., generators, pumps that block the line of sound between nighttime activities and the closest residences.	
	Mitigation Measure 3.12-3: PG&E and/or the construction contractor shall employ noise-reducing practices during construction of the Project, including, but not necessarily limited to: locating equipment as far a practical from noise sensitive uses; requiring that all construction equipment powered by gasoline or diesel engines have sound-control devices that are at least as effective as those originally provided by the manufacturer; ensuring that all equipment be operated and maintained to minimize noise generation; and prohibiting gasoline or diesel engines from having unmuffled exhaust.	Less than Significant
	Mitigation Measure 3.12-4: At least 30 days prior to the start of construction, PG&E or the construction contractor shall notify residences (and other noise-sensitive receptors) within 200 feet of the construction areas of the construction schedule and the associated potential nuisance in writing.	Less than Significant
	Mitigation Measure 3.12-5: At least 30 days prior to the start of helicopter-related construction activities, written notifications shall be provided to residences and other noise-sensitive receptors within 500 feet of the helicopter landing zone, tower modification site, and flight path that include the specific dates and time of day that the helicopter-related activities are expected to occur.	Less than Significant

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