

Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board

15 January 2015

Connie Chen
California Public Utilities Commission
505 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94102

CERTIFIED MAIL
7014 2120 0001 3978 4351

COMMENTS TO REQUEST FOR REVIEW FOR THE MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION, MISSOURI FLAT-GOLD HILL 115KV POWER LINE RECONDUCTORING PROJECT, SCH# 2014122065, EL DORADO AND SACRAMENTO COUNTIES

Pursuant to the State Clearinghouse's 24 December 2014 request, the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Central Valley Water Board) has reviewed the *Request for Review for the Mitigated Negative Declaration* for the Missouri Flat-Gold Hill 115 kV Power Line Reconductoring Project, located in El Dorado and Sacramento Counties.

Our agency is delegated with the responsibility of protecting the quality of surface and groundwaters of the state; therefore our comments will address concerns surrounding those issues.

Construction Storm Water General Permit

Dischargers whose project disturb one or more acres of soil or where projects disturb less than one acre but are part of a larger common plan of development that in total disturbs one or more acres, are required to obtain coverage under the General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction Activities (Construction General Permit), Construction General Permit Order No. 2009-009-DWQ. Construction activity subject to this permit includes clearing, grading, grubbing, disturbances to the ground, such as stockpiling, or excavation, but does not include regular maintenance activities performed to restore the original line, grade, or capacity of the facility. The Construction General Permit requires the development and implementation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP).

For more information on the Construction General Permit, visit the State Water Resources Control Board website at:
http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/stormwater/constpermits.shtml.



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For more information on the Construction General Permit, visit the State Water Resources Control Board website at:
http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/stormwater/constpermits.shtml.

Phase I and II Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Permits¹

The Phase I and II MS4 permits require the Permittees reduce pollutants and runoff flows from new development and redevelopment using Best Management Practices (BMPs) to the maximum extent practicable (MEP). MS4 Permittees have their own development standards, also known as Low Impact Development (LID)/post-construction standards that include a hydromodification component. The MS4 permits also require specific design concepts for LID/post-construction BMPs in the early stages of a project during the entitlement and CEQA process and the development plan review process.

For more information on which Phase I MS4 Permit this project applies to, visit the Central Valley Water Board website at:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/water_issues/storm_water/municipal_permits/.

For more information on the Phase II MS4 permit and who it applies to, visit the State Water Resources Control Board at:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/stormwater/phase_ii_municipal.shtml

Industrial Storm Water General Permit

Storm water discharges associated with industrial sites must comply with the regulations contained in the Industrial Storm Water General Permit Order No. 97-03-DWQ.

For more information on the Industrial Storm Water General Permit, visit the Central Valley Water Board website at:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/water_issues/storm_water/industrial_general_permits/index.shtml.

Clean Water Act Section 404 Permit

If the project will involve the discharge of dredged or fill material in navigable waters or wetlands, a permit pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act may be needed from the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACOE). If a Section 404 permit is required by the USACOE, the Central Valley Water Board will review the permit application to ensure that discharge will not violate water quality standards. If the project requires surface water drainage realignment, the applicant is advised to contact the Department of Fish and Game for information on Streambed Alteration Permit requirements.

If you have any questions regarding the Clean Water Act Section 404 permits, please contact the Regulatory Division of the Sacramento District of USACOE at (916) 557-5250.

¹ Municipal Permits = The Phase I Municipal Separate Storm Water System (MS4) Permit covers medium sized Municipalities (serving between 100,000 and 250,000 people) and large sized municipalities (serving over 250,000 people). The Phase II MS4 provides coverage for small municipalities, including non-traditional Small MS4s, which include military bases, public campuses, prisons and hospitals.

Clean Water Act Section 401 Permit – Water Quality Certification

If an USACOE permit (e.g., Non-Reporting Nationwide Permit, Nationwide Permit, Letter of Permission, Individual Permit, Regional General Permit, Programmatic General Permit), or any other federal permit (e.g., Section 9 from the United States Coast Guard), is required for this project due to the disturbance of waters of the United States (such as streams and wetlands), then a Water Quality Certification must be obtained from the Central Valley Water Board prior to initiation of project activities. There are no waivers for 401 Water Quality Certifications.

Waste Discharge Requirements

If USACOE determines that only non-jurisdictional waters of the State (i.e., “non-federal” waters of the State) are present in the proposed project area, the proposed project will require a Waste Discharge Requirement (WDR) permit to be issued by Central Valley Water Board. Under the California Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act, discharges to all waters of the State, including all wetlands and other waters of the State including, but not limited to, isolated wetlands, are subject to State regulation.

For more information on the Water Quality Certification and WDR processes, visit the Central Valley Water Board website at:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/help/business_help/permit2.shtml.

Regulatory Compliance for Commercially Irrigated Agriculture

If the property will be used for commercial irrigated agricultural, the discharger will be required to obtain regulatory coverage under the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program.

There are two options to comply:

- 1. Obtain Coverage Under a Coalition Group.** Join the local Coalition Group that supports land owners with the implementation of the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program. The Coalition Group conducts water quality monitoring and reporting to the Central Valley Water Board on behalf of its growers. The Coalition Groups charge an annual membership fee, which varies by Coalition Group. To find the Coalition Group in your area, visit the Central Valley Water Board’s website at: http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/water_issues/irrigated_lands/app_approval/index.shtml; or contact water board staff at (916) 464-4611 or via email at IrrLands@waterboards.ca.gov.
- 2. Obtain Coverage Under the General Waste Discharge Requirements for Individual Growers, General Order R5-2013-0100.** Dischargers not participating in a third-party group (Coalition) are regulated individually. Depending on the specific site conditions, growers may be required to monitor runoff from their property, install monitoring wells, and submit a notice of intent, farm plan, and other action plans regarding their actions to comply with their General Order. Yearly costs would include State administrative fees (for example, annual fees for farm sizes from 10-100 acres are currently \$1,084 + \$6.70/Acre); the cost to prepare annual monitoring reports; and water quality monitoring costs. To enroll as an Individual Discharger under the Irrigated Lands Regulatory

Program, call the Central Valley Water Board phone line at (916) 464-4611 or e-mail board staff at IrrLands@waterboards.ca.gov.

Low or Limited Threat General NPDES Permit

If the proposed project includes construction dewatering and it is necessary to discharge the groundwater to waters of the United States, the proposed project will require coverage under a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit. Dewatering discharges are typically considered a low or limited threat to water quality and may be covered under the General Order for *Dewatering and Other Low Threat Discharges to Surface Waters* (Low Threat General Order) or the General Order for *Limited Threat Discharges of Treated/Untreated Groundwater from Cleanup Sites, Wastewater from Superchlorination Projects, and Other Limited Threat Wastewaters to Surface Water* (Limited Threat General Order). A complete application must be submitted to the Central Valley Water Board to obtain coverage under these General NPDES permits.

For more information regarding the Low Threat General Order and the application process, visit the Central Valley Water Board website at:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/board_decisions/adopted_orders/general_orders/r5-2013-0074.pdf

For more information regarding the Limited Threat General Order and the application process, visit the Central Valley Water Board website at:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/board_decisions/adopted_orders/general_orders/r5-2013-0073.pdf

If you have questions regarding these comments, please contact me at (916) 464-4684 or tcleak@waterboards.ca.gov.



Trevor Cleak
Environmental Scientist

cc: State Clearinghouse unit, Governor's Office of Planning and Research, Sacramento

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

DISTRICT 3 – SACRAMENTO AREA OFFICE
2379 GATEWAY OAKS DRIVE, STE 150 - MS 19
SACRAMENTO, CA 95833
PHONE (916) 274-0635
FAX (916) 263-1796
TTY 711



*Serious drought.
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January 22, 2015

032015-ELD-0002
03-ELD-50 / PM 0.517
SCH# 2014122065

Ms. Connie Chen
California Public Utilities Commission
505 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94102

Missouri Flat-Gold Hill 115 kV Power Line Reconductoring – Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND)

Dear Ms. Chen:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review for the project referenced above. The proposed project will reinforce the electric transmission and distribution system in El Dorado County by replacing existing conductor (reconductoring) and existing poles, and modifying existing lattice steel towers on the Missouri Flat-Gold Hill 115 kilovolt (kV) Power Line (Missouri Flat-Gold Hill 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) will 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. The project route generally parallels United States Highway (US) 50 crossing the route in several locations. The following comments are based on the IS/MND:

Transportation Management Plan (TMP)

If it is determined that traffic restrictions and detours are needed on or affecting State highways, a TMP or construction Traffic Impact Study may be required of the developer for approval by Caltrans prior to construction. TMPs must be prepared in accordance with Caltrans' *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices*. Further information is available at:
<http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/traffops/engineering/mutcd/>.

Encroachment Permit

Please be advised that any work or traffic control that would encroach onto the State Right of Way (ROW) requires an encroachment permit issued by Caltrans. To apply, a completed encroachment permit application, environmental documentation, and five sets of plans clearly indicating State ROW must be submitted to: Sergio Aceves, Chief, Office of Permits, California Department of Transportation, District 3, 703 B Street, Marysville, CA 95901. Traffic-related mitigation measures should be incorporated into the construction plans prior to the encroachment permit process. Further information is available at: <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/traffops/developserv/permits/>.

Please provide our office with copies of any further actions regarding this project. We appreciate the opportunity to review and comment on any changes related to this development.

If you have any questions regarding these comments or require additional information, please contact Eileen Cunningham, Intergovernmental Review Coordinator at (916) 274-0639 or by email at eileen.cunningham@dot.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



ERIC FREDERICKS, Chief
Office of Transportation Planning – South

cc: Scott Morgan, State Clearinghouse



January 29, 2015

Connie Chen
California Public Utilities Commission
505 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94102-3298

Subject: MND, Missouri Flat-Gold Hill 115 kV Power Line Reconductoring Project (A. 13-08-014)

Dear Ms. Chen,

The Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD) appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on the MND, Missouri Flat-Gold Hill 115 kV Power Line Reconductoring Project (A. 13-08-014). SMUD is the primary energy provider for Sacramento County and the proposed project location. SMUD's vision is to empower our customers with solutions and options that increase energy efficiency, protect the environment, reduce global warming, and lower the cost to serve our region. As a Responsible Agency, SMUD aims to ensure that the proposed project limits the potential for significant environmental effects on SMUD facilities, employees, and customers.


It is our desire that the MND, Missouri Flat-Gold Hill 115 kV Power Line Reconductoring Project (A. 13-08-014) will acknowledge any project impacts related to the following:

- Overhead and or underground transmission and distribution line easements
- Electrical load needs/requirements
- Energy Efficiency
- Utility line routing
- Climate Change

SMUD would like to be involved with discussing and resolving the above issues as well discussing any other potential issues. We aim to be partners in the efficient and sustainable delivery of the proposed project. Please ensure that the information included in this response is conveyed to the project planners and the appropriate project proponents.

Environmental leadership is a core value of SMUD and we look forward to collaborating with you on this project. Again, we appreciate the opportunity to provide input on the MND. If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Rob Ferrera, SMUD Environmental Specialist at (916) 732-6676.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rob Ferrera', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Rob Ferrera
Environmental Specialist
Environmental Management
Legislative & Regulatory Affairs
Sacramento Municipal Utility District

Cc: Jose Bodipo-Memba
Pat Durham
Joseph Schofield

From: Calderaro, Angela@Wildlife [<mailto:Angela.Calderaro@wildlife.ca.gov>]

Sent: Monday, January 26, 2015 9:27 AM

To: Chen, Connie

Cc: Wildlife R2 CEQA

Subject: Review of Missouri Flat-Gold Hill 115kV Powerline Reconductoring Project (SCH 2014122065)

Good morning Connie,

I have reviewed the CEQA document for Missouri Flat-Gold Hill 115kV Powerline Re-conductoring Project (SCH 2014122065). The Department would just like you to be aware of new policy effective January 1, 2015. The Office of Administrative Law has approved regulations that will allow CDFW to permit the take of state-listed rare plants under the Native Plant Protection Act. These regulations will allow CDFW to authorize the take of state-listed rare plants using the same procedures and under the same conditions as incidental take permits, voluntary local programs, natural community conservation plans, safe harbor agreements, and scientific/educational/management permits. To remove rare plants, you may need to obtain a permit from the Department. In order to issue the permit, the CEQA will need to be sufficient to address impacts to these species.

Mitigation measure APM BIO-5.3 and other mentioned in the document may not be sufficient to fully mitigate the impacts to plant species designated as rare or state-listed by the Department.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Thank you,

Angela Calderaro

Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist)

Habitat Conservation Branch

California Department of Fish and Wildlife, North Central Region

1701 Nimbus Road, Rancho Cordova CA 95670

Office: 916-358-2920

Fax: 916-358-2912

Angela.Calderaro@wildlife.ca.gov

www.wildlife.ca.gov

To report a violation please call 1-888-DFG-Caltip.



Sam Danner
Pacific Gas and Electric Company
Senior Land Planner
Environmental Management –
Electric Transmission

2730 Gateway Oaks Drive
Sacramento, CA 95833
Office: (916) 923-7041
Cell: (916) 539-7396
Email: sadk@pge.com

February 06, 2015

Connie Chen
California Public Utilities Commission
c/o Environmental Science Associates
550 Kearny Street, Suite 800
San Francisco CA 94108

**RE: PG&E Missouri Flat-Gold Hill 115 kV Power Line Reconductoring Project
Draft Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration**

Dear Ms. Chen:

Thank you for the opportunity to review the draft Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the Missouri Flat-Gold Hill 115 kV Power Line Reconductoring Project (Project). Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) appreciates the effort expended by Commission staff and its consultant to prepare a comprehensive CEQA document to cover the Project.

PG&E suggests the following minor corrections and comments concerning the draft MND:

Section 3.4.4(a), Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures, Page 3.4-44: In the first sentence of the subsection, please replace ‘federal-and/or state- *listed* wildlife species’ with ‘federal- and/or state-special status species, as not all fourteen species referenced are listed under the federal or state endangered species acts.

Section 3.4.4, Mitigation Measure 3.4-4, Page 3.4-49: Please correct the reference to the Native Plant Protection Act ‘CDFG Section 10913(c)’ to state ‘Section 1913(c)’.

Section 3.4.4(c), Page 3.4-50: As indicated in this section of the document, PG&E has designed the project to avoid any permanent impacts to wetlands and to limit temporary effects to approximately 50 feet of one seasonal wetland. PG&E does not believe that these temporary effects to a very small area would cause a ‘substantial adverse effect’ on federally protected wetlands. However, PG&E agrees that minimizing impacts to wetlands is important and has no objection to Mitigation Measure 3.4-1, which will further minimize temporary impacts to the resource.

Section 3.16.4(c), Page 3.16-9: In the second line, please delete the reference to Mitigation Measure 3.8-1, which does not exist.

Section 3.18(a), Mandatory Findings of Significance, Page 3.18-1: Please update the standard of significance in subsection (a) in the following manner in accordance with the language of

revised CEQA Guidelines Section 15065(a)(1):

(a) Have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory.

We also recommend revisions to the text of the analysis in subsection (a) as necessary to match the above language. We do not believe that these revisions to the text will change the corresponding impact analysis.

PG&E appreciates the opportunity to provide these comments. Please feel free to contact me if further information or clarification is necessary.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sam Danner". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "S" and "D".

Sam Danner
Senior Land Planner
Pacific Gas and Electric Company