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## State Water Resources Control Board

### **Public Notice for Proposed Order for Waste Discharge Requirements and Water Quality Certification for the Pacific Gas and Electric Bay Area Operations and Maintenance Program**

State Water Resources Control Board  
Division of Water Quality  
Water Quality Certification Program

**Date Posted: February 7, 2023**

**Comment Period: February 7, 2023 - March 9, 2023 at noon**

**Affected Counties: Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano, and Sonoma**

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN** that written comments will be accepted by the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) on the proposed Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification and Waste Discharge Requirements for the Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) Bay Area Operations and Maintenance Program (Order).

#### **Project Name: Pacific Gas and Electric Bay Area Operations and Maintenance Program**

**Background:** Some of PG&E's existing facilities (for example, electric lines and transmission towers) are located near or within San Francisco Bay Area tidal, stream channel or wetland waters. PG&E needs a permit from the Water Board to work in these areas.

The proposed Order would provide coverage for PG&E's Bay Area Operation and Maintenance Program activities required to maintain safe and operable electrical and gas utility infrastructure. The program includes discharges of dredged or fill material to all waters of the state, including federal and non-federal waters. Individual projects eligible for coverage under this Order include a wide variety of activities that may result in temporary impacts to water quality or may result in a permanent loss of waters, including:

- Internal pipeline inspection and repair
- Valve recoating and replacement
- Pipeline cathodic protection
- Pipeline lowering and replacement
- Pipeline coating and replacement
- Substation maintenance

E. JOAQUIN ESQUIVEL, CHAIR | EILEEN SOBECK, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

- Transmission tower maintenance
- Boardwalk maintenance
- Site specific erosion solutions
- Water diversion techniques
- Power pole maintenance
- Line reconductoring
- Site access development and maintenance
- Minor new construction
- Other activities
- Restoration and Mitigation Activities

Work on existing facilities (called routine operation and maintenance activities) tends to have fewer impacts on water quality than new construction (where infrastructure is built for the first time). The proposed draft Order would establish a review process and requirements for future PG&E O&M work on existing facilities, within the nine Bay Area counties listed above. This Order would not authorize any specific project. Rather, it provides a framework of requirements that future projects must comply with before work can begin.

Once the need for a specific project is identified by PG&E, PG&E will describe all proposed project features, including those potentially offsite and/or adjacent to waters of the state which could result in impacts to waters of the state in a Notice of Intent, which must be completed for authorization under this Order. Staff will review the Notice of Intent to confirm the project is eligible for enrollment under this Order. The Order's requirements will ensure a sequence of actions has been taken to avoid, minimize, and mitigate negative impacts to waters of the state before construction can begin. Please contact Samantha Parker with any questions you have on this project.

The application for this Project was previously noticed on July 12, 2022 through August 26, 2022. No comments were received during that time.

**Project Location:** PG&E's ongoing and routine maintenance activities related to gas and electric infrastructure would affect the nine-county region consisting of Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano, and Sonoma counties. Activity locations may vary from year to year, based on maintenance schedules, changes in maintenance priority, and the need to respond to emergencies.

**Project Proponent: Pacific Gas and Electric Company**

**Project Proponent Contact: Matthew Brown**

**Telephone: (559) 246-1592**

**Email: [MVB5@pge.com](mailto:MVB5@pge.com)**

**Document Availability:** In accordance with Water Code section 13167.5, the proposed Order and draft attachments are available on the [State Water Board's 401 Water Quality Certification and Wetlands Program Bay Area Operations and Maintenance Order website](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/cwa401/pge.html) ([https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water\\_issues/programs/cwa401/pge.html](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/cwa401/pge.html)). You may request a paper copy of the proposed Order and draft attachments by contacting Samantha Parker at (916) 327-8653 or via email at [Samantha.Parker@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:Samantha.Parker@waterboards.ca.gov).

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife acting as lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act prepared an Environmental Impact Report, which is available at the following website: [Pacific Gas and Electric Company Bay Area Operations & Maintenance Environmental Impact Report](https://ceqanet.opr.ca.gov/2017122028/3) (<https://ceqanet.opr.ca.gov/2017122028/3>).

**Staff will consider all comments submitted in writing and received during a 30-day comment period that begins on the first date of issuance of this letter (February 7, 2023) and ends at noon on the last day of the comment period (March 9, 2023).** Submit comments to the State Water Board staff person listed below. Electronic submittals are strongly encouraged.

**State Water Resources Control Board Contact:**

Samantha Parker, Environmental Scientist  
Wetlands Permitting and Enforcement Unit II, Division of Water Quality  
State Water Resources Control Board  
1001 I Street, Sacramento, CA 95814  
Telephone: (916) 327-8653  
Email: [Samantha.Parker@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:Samantha.Parker@waterboards.ca.gov)

***KEEP INFORMED OF PROJECT MILESTONES***

To be informed of milestones in the development of this proposed Water Quality Certification, any interested persons should enroll in the State Water Board's 401 Program e-mail notification service.

Click the SUBSCRIBE button under the "Quick Links" section of the 401 Program Webpage at:  
[http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water\\_issues/programs/cwa401/index.shtml](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/cwa401/index.shtml)

Select "CWA401 Certification and Wetlands Program." By enrolling in this list, you will receive notices for all current 401 applications, including the Project announced in this notice. You will need a valid e-mail address to use this service. You can enroll or un-enroll at any time. If you do not have internet access or do not wish to participate in the Lyris list, contact the staff person named in the notice to express your interest in receiving notices by other means.