



US Army Corps
of Engineers
Sacramento District
1325 J Street
Sacramento, CA 95814-2922

Public Notice

Public Notice Number: 200600254

Date: August 24, 2007

Comments Due: September 24, 2007

In reply, please refer to the Public Notice Number

SUBJECT: The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Sacramento District, (Corps) is evaluating a permit application to construct a natural gas transmission pipeline, which would result in temporary impacts to approximately 8.4 acres of waters of the United States, including wetlands, in navigable waters, tributaries or wetlands adjacent to tributaries to navigable waters. This notice is to inform interested parties of the proposed activity and to solicit comments. This notice may also be viewed at the Corps web site at <http://www.spk.usace.army.mil/regulatory.html>.

AUTHORITY: This application is being evaluated under Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 for structures or work in or affecting navigable waters of the United States and Section 404 of the Clean Water Act for the discharge of dredged or fill material in waters of the United States.

APPLICANT: Mike Gumbly
Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E)
2730 Gateway Oaks Drive
Sacramento, CA 95812-3503

LOCATION: The project site is located in Sections 5, 8, 17, 20, 29 and 32 of Township 5 North , Range 5 East, MDB&M, and Sections 4, 9, and 15 of Township 6 North, Range 5 East, MDB&M, in Sacramento County, and can be seen on the Florin, California and Bruceville, California USGS Topographic Quadrangle. The vicinity map for the site is shown on Attachment A.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The applicant is proposing to expand the capacity of an existing natural gas pipeline by installing a larger, 24-inch diameter pipeline and extend the area of service of the pipeline to new customers in Elk Grove and southeast Sacramento County (south of Mack Road and Gerber Road). The applicant's proposed project would create greater pipeline system capacity to serve future large industrial transmission customers expected along the Interstate 80 and Highway 65 corridors and increase the capacity of the Sacramento Local Transmission System in order to transport gas to other high growth areas in North Sacramento, South Placer, and El Dorado Counties, by shifting one of the largest and fastest growing areas off the Sacramento Loop; increase operational flexibility, and allowing gas received from California Production via Line 196 west of Stockton into the Sacramento Local Transmission System to increase operational flexibility.

Based on the available information, the overall project purpose is to serve new gas distribution customers in Elk Grove and southeast Sacramento County and to increase gas delivery capacity and reliability to gas customers currently served by Line 108 in Sacramento County. The applicant believes there is a need for additional natural gas transmission infrastructure in the area since a shortage may occur in the next year in the high-growth area of south Sacramento County. Attachment B shows the proposed pipeline alignment.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Environmental Setting. The topography along the entire project alignment can be characterized as nearly level to flat, with elevational cline approximately 23 feet (at Laguna Boulevard in Sacramento County) to approximately five feet (south of the Mokelumne River in San Joaquin County) above mean

sea level. Most of the proposed alignment crosses agricultural land and intersects a number of terrestrial and aquatic habitat types, including riparian forest, riparian woodland, riparian scrub, emergent wetland, seasonal wetland, vernal pool, annual grassland, and ruderal grasslands. There are approximately 128.4 acres of navigable waters, wetlands, and other waters of the United States within the project area. The pipeline route would cross the Cosumnes and Mokelumne Rivers, along with two preserve areas: the Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge (managed by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service) and the Cosumnes River Preserve (managed by the Bureau of Land Management).

Alternatives. The applicant has provided some information concerning project alternatives in the “Biological Assessment for the PG&E Line 108 Replacement Project”, dated May 2007. The information provided covers four alternatives, including the (1) no project alternative, (2) Franklin Boulevard Alternative, (3) the Remove and Replace the Existing Line 108 Pipeline Alternative, and (4) the Line 172/DFM Alternative. A description of these alternatives is provided in Attachment C.

The applicant coordinated with the Corps in the field to determine the proposed pipeline alignment described in this public notice. However, other alternatives to the applicant’s proposed project may develop during the review process for this permit application. All reasonable project alternatives, in particular those which may be less damaging to the aquatic environment, will be considered.

Mitigation. The Corps requires that applicants consider and use all reasonable and practical measures to avoid and minimize impacts to aquatic resources. If the applicant is unable to avoid or minimize all impacts, the Corps may require compensatory mitigation. The applicant has proposed to restore temporarily impacted areas when work is completed.

OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AUTHORIZATIONS: Water quality certification or a waiver, as required under Section 401 of the Clean Water Act from the Central California Regional Water Quality Control Board is required for this project. The applicant has not indicated they have applied for certification.

HISTORIC PROPERTIES: Based on the available information (including applicant's report entitled “Significance Evaluation of the Line 108 Suspension Bridge over the Cosumnes River in Sacramento County, California” and “Cultural Resources Survey for the Line 108 Replacement Project in San Joaquin and Sacramento Counties, California”, dated March 2007), potentially eligible cultural resources may be affected by the proposed project. These include a suspension bridge across the Cosumnes River and a portion of the Western Pacific Railroad. The Corps will initiate consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, as appropriate.

ENDANGERED SPECIES: The proposed activity may affect Federally-listed endangered or threatened species or their critical habitat. Species that may be affected include Slender Orcutt grass (*Orcuttia tenuis*), Sacramento Orcutt grass (*Orcuttia viscida*), Valley elderberry longhorn beetle (*Desmocerus californicus dimorphus*), Vernal pool fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta lynchi*), Vernal pool tadpole shrimp (*Lepidurus packardii*), Delta smelt (*Hypomesus transpacificus*), Central Valley steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*), Green sturgeon (*Acipenser medirostris*), California tiger salamander (*Ambystoma californiense*), California red-legged frog (*Rana aurora draytonii*), Giant garter snake (*Thamnophis gigas*), and Bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*). The Corps will initiate consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service, pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, as appropriate.

ESSENTIAL FISH HABITAT: The proposed project may adversely affect Essential Fish Habitat. The Corps will initiate consultation with the National Marine Fisheries Service, pursuant to Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, as appropriate.

The above determinations are based on information provided by the applicant and our preliminary review.

EVALUATION FACTORS: The decision whether to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impacts, including cumulative impacts, of the described activity on the public interest. That decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The benefit, which reasonably may be expected to accrue from the described activity, must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors which may be relevant to the described activity will be considered, including the cumulative effects thereof; among those are conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, historic properties, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, floodplain values, land use, navigation, shoreline erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food and fiber production, mineral needs, consideration of property ownership and, in general, the needs and welfare of the people. The activity's impact on the public interest will include application of the Section 404(b)(1) guidelines promulgated by the Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency (40 CFR Part 230).

The Corps is soliciting comments from the public, Federal, State, and local agencies and officials, Indian tribes, and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of this proposed activity. Any comments received will be considered by the Corps to determine whether to issue, modify, condition, or deny a permit for this proposal. To make this decision, comments are used to assess impacts on endangered species, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects, and other public interest factors listed above. Comments are used in the preparation of an Environmental Assessment and/or an Environmental Impact Statement pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity.

SUBMITTING COMMENTS: Written comments, referencing Public Notice 200600254 must be submitted to the office listed below on or before August 24, 2007:

Andrea Jones, Project Manager
US Army Corps of Engineers, Sacramento District
Sacramento Office
1325 J Street, Room 1480
Sacramento, California 95814 2922
Email: Andrea.J.Jones@usace.army.mil

The Corps is particularly interested in receiving comments related to the proposal's probable impacts on the affected aquatic environment and the secondary and cumulative effects. Anyone may request, in writing, that a public hearing be held to consider this application. Requests shall specifically state, with particularity, the reason(s) for holding a public hearing. If the Corps determines that the information received in response to this notice is inadequate for thorough evaluation, a public hearing may be warranted. If a public hearing is warranted, interested parties will be notified of the time, date, and location. Please note that all comment letters received are subject to release to the public through the Freedom of Information Act. If you have questions, need additional information, or would like to request a paper copy of the notice, please contact the applicant or the Corps' project manager Andrea Jones at 916-557-7745, Andrea.J.Jones@usace.army.mil.

Attachments:

Attachment A. Vicinity map
Attachment B. Proposed pipeline alignment
Attachment C. Alternatives information