

September 17, 2012

**Public Notice for Water Quality Certification and/or Waste  
Discharge Requirements (Dredge/Fill Projects)**

PG&E – Arcata Reconductoring Project  
WDID No. 1B12150WNHU

Humboldt County

On August 2, 2012, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from the Pacific Gas and Electric Company (applicant), requesting Federal Clean Water Act, section 401, water quality certification for proposed activities associated with the PG&E Arcata Reconductoring Project (project). The proposed project will cause disturbances to waters of the United States associated with wetlands in the Eureka Plain Hydrologic Unit No. 110.00.

The proposed project involves reconductoring (replacing existing wire) approximately 20,500 feet of the PG&E Arcata 1105 electric distribution line (1105 line) such that the capacity will be increased from 415 amperes to 677 amperes. The increased capacity will allow PG&E to transfer 360 amperes from the 1106 line to the reconducted 1105 line to alleviate the 1106 line, which is at risk of overloading due to ongoing growth in the Arcata and McKinleyville areas. The proposed project includes installation of a closed delta voltage regulator and two overhead switches. PG&E is also proposing to replace approximately 125 distribution line poles (DLPs) and add DLPs where existing DLPs are spaced too far apart.

Proposed reconductoring activities will consist of one or more of the following at each location: 1) existing DLP will be removed and a replacement pole will be installed insitu or immediately adjacent; 2) existing DLP will be removed and a replacement pole will be installed nearby; 3) DLP addition or removal; 4) existing anchor would be removed and replacement anchor will be added insitu or immediately adjacent; or 5) anchor addition or removal. Existing DLPs are located approximately 8 to 10 feet from adjacent roads. New or replacement DLPs will be 1-foot diameter, and new or replacement anchors will be 4-inch diameter. Utility trucks with 22-inch diameter augers will be used to remove and install the DLPs. All utility trucks and associated equipment will remain on adjacent paved roads. All construction activities will occur within the existing distribution line and/or road right-of-ways.

The applicant has applied for authorization from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to perform the project under Nationwide Permit Nos. 3, 12, and 33 pursuant to Clean Water Act, section 404. A Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement from the California Department of Fish and Game is not required. On August 3, 2012, the County of Humboldt submitted a draft mitigated negative declaration (SCH No.2012082014) for the project to the State Clearinghouse for a 30-day public review period which ended September 4, 2012. The Regional Water Board has considered the environmental document and any proposed changes incorporated into the project or required as a condition of approval to avoid significant effects to the environment.

Proposed activities will result in permanent impacts to 9.6 square feet of wetlands and 13.4 square feet of the streambank associated with drainage channels located adjacent to the roads. Proposed activities will also result in temporary impacts to 868.8 square

feet of wetlands and 964.8 square feet of the streambank associated with drainage channels located adjacent to the roadways. Compensatory mitigation is required for permanent impacts to wetlands and other waters of the United States. Proposed compensatory mitigation includes 108 square feet of wetland creation and 2,588.8 square feet of wetland enhancement offsite. Proposed offsite mitigation would be conducted on the applicant's property located on or near the Buhne Pont Preserve at the Humboldt Bay Power Plant in King Salmon. Non-compensatory mitigation includes onsite restoration of all temporary impacts and implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs) for use of heavy equipment in wetlands and drainage channels.

The information contained in this public notice is only a summary of the applicant's proposed activities. The application for Water Quality Certification in the Regional Water Board's file contains additional details about the proposed activities including maps and detailed design drawings. The application and Regional Water Board file are available for public review.

Regional Water Board staff are proposing to regulate this project pursuant to Section 401 of the Clean Water Act (33 USC 1341) and/or Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act authority. In addition, staff will consider all comments submitted in writing and received at this office by mail during a 21-day comment period that begins on the first date of issuance of this letter and ends at 5:00 p.m. on the last day of the comment period. If you have any questions, please contact staff member Dean Prat at (707) 576-2801 within 21 days of the posting of this notice.