



Colorado River Basin Regional Water Quality Control Board

Certified Mail: 7021 0950 0001 6819 7855

March 18, 2022

Miguel Vergara
Southern California Gas Company
8101 S. Rosemead Blvd./SC723F
Pico Rivera, CA 90660
Email: mvergara@socalgas.com

SUBJECT: NOTICE OF APPLICABILITY FOR COVERAGE UNDER ORDER 2004-0004-DWQ, STATEWIDE GENERAL WASTE DISCHARGE REQUIREMENTS FOR DREDGED OR FILL DISCHARGES TO WATERS DEEMED BY THE U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS TO BE OUTSIDE OF FEDERAL JURISDICTION, SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA GAS COMPANY LINE 5000 PHASE 2 VALIDATION DIGS PROJECT (WDID 7A333241001), RIVERSIDE COUNTY

Dear Mr. Vergara,

On February 10, 2022, the Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas or Permittee) submitted a Notice of Intent (NOI) to enroll under and comply with State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) Order 2004-0004-DWQ, *Statewide General Waste Discharge Requirements for Dredged or Fill Discharges to Waters Deemed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to be Outside of Federal Jurisdiction*.

The California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Colorado River Basin Region (Colorado River Basin Water Board) has reviewed your enrollment materials and finds that the dredge/fill discharges associated with the Line 5000 Phase 2 Validation Digs Project (Project) meet the requirements for enrollment. You are hereby enrolled under Order 2004-0004-DWQ and may proceed with the Project in accordance with the Order.

A copy of [Order 2004-0004-DWQ](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/board_decisions/adopted_orders/water_quality/2004/wqo/wqo2004-0004.pdf) (https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/board_decisions/adopted_orders/water_quality/2004/wqo/wqo2004-0004.pdf) is attached and it can be found on the State Water Board's Adopted Orders webpage.

Please familiarize yourself with the requirements of Order 2004-0004-DWQ. You are responsible for complying with all applicable Order requirements. Failure to comply with

JAYNE POWELL, CHAIR | PAULA RASMUSSEN, EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Order 2004-0004-DWQ constitutes a violation of the California Water Code and may result in an enforcement action or termination of enrollment under the Order.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION, IMPACTS, AND MITIGATION:

The Project involves the inspection, repair, and/or replacement of Line 5000 a natural gas pipeline, between SoCalGas's Blythe Compressor Station and Cactus City Compressor Station within eastern Desert Center in Riverside County. SoCalGas needs to inspect, repair, and/or replace a section of Line 5000 where two anomalies were identified during an internal inspection. Project work will take place within an existing SoCalGas Right-Of-Way (ROW).

The Project will require exposing approximately 60 linear feet of Line 5000 at each location. Repair work will include exposing the pipeline at each dig site and inspecting the anomaly that was previously identified during internal pipeline inspection activities. If pipeline repairs are required, repairs will be completed while the pipeline is exposed and may include pipeline replacement and re-coating. Construction activities will generally include establishing a 50-foot-wide temporary work area, excavating a trench measuring approximately 15 feet wide and up to eight (8) feet deep, and backfilling the trench. No water diversion plan is anticipated because work is not expected to occur within flowing or ponded water. Once the repair work is complete, SoCalGas will restore the area to pre-construction contours to the extent feasible.

The three unnamed ephemeral streams where the excavation will take place is a water of the state. The Project will temporarily impact a total of 0.06 acres/165 linear feet of ephemeral streams as a result of dredge and fill. The ephemeral streams do not have any connectivity to federal waters. The Project will not result in permanent impacts.

SoCalGas will implement measures to protect fish, wildlife, and plant resources, including seasonal work periods to avoid sensitive species; avoid impacts to riparian vegetation; and use best management practices. SoCalGas will also implement the measures outlined in their Biological Opinion and California Endangered Species Act Memorandum of Understanding.

PROJECT LOCATION:

The Project is located at two dig site locations within eastern Desert Center, 0.5 miles south of Interstate 10, and 4.75 miles southeast of Rice Road on Bureau of Land Management (BLM) land between SoCalGas's Blythe Compressor Station and Cactus City Compressor Station in Riverside County. The latitude and longitude of the Project site is listed below. Maps showing the Project location and photographs are found in Attachment A of this Order.

Work Area	Latitude	Longitude
Dig 1 - AG2021S1P2E1	33.694764° N	-115.318571° W
Dig 2 - AG2021S1P2E2	33.703754° N	-115.354037° W

USGS 7.5 Minute Quad Map Name	Township	Range	Section
Corn Springs	5S	16E	30/33

APPLICATION FEE RECEIVED:

A fee of \$ 2,417 was received on February 9, 2022.

The fee amount was determined as required by California Code of Regulations, title 23, sections 3833(b)(3) and 2200(a)(3), and was calculated as category A – Fill and Excavation Discharges (fee code 84) with the dredge and fill fee calculator.

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA):

The Colorado River Basin Water Board has determined that the enrollment of this Project under Order 2004-0004-DWQ, which prescribes waste discharge requirements for the Project, is categorically exempt from the procedural requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Public Resources Code section 21000 et seq. Specifically, the issuance of this Order and the Project described herein meet the criteria for the following exemptions under the CEQA Guidelines (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15000 et seq.): Class 1, Existing Facility (§ 15301); Class 2, Replacement or Reconstruction (§ 15302), and Class 4, Minor Alterations to Land (§ 15304). Additionally, no exceptions to the CEQA exemptions listed above apply.

The above-listed exemptions are supported by the Findings of Facts (Findings) set forth in Attachment B, which is incorporated herein.

AVOIDANCE AND MINIMIZATION MEASURES:

The Permittee must implement the avoidance and erosion control methods as proposed in the Project application, as well as comply with all applicable requirements in Order 2004-0004-DWQ.

TERMINATION OF COVERAGE:

Upon completion of the Project, the Permittee shall submit a complete Notice of Termination (NOT) requesting to no longer be enrolled under Order 2004-0004-DWQ. Attachment 2 to Order 2004-0004-DWQ contains the NOT form.

If you have questions concerning this matter, please contact Kai Dunn, 401 Water Quality Certification Program Manager, at (760) 776-8986 or at Kai.Dunn@waterboards.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Original Signed By

Paula Rasmussen
Executive Officer
Colorado River Basin
Regional Water Quality Control Board

Enclosures: 1) Attachment A Project Maps
2) Attachment B CEQA Findings
3) Order No. 2004-0004-DWQ

KD/

Cc: via email (with enclosures):

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John Chisholm, California Department of Transportation District 8, District
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Cc continued:

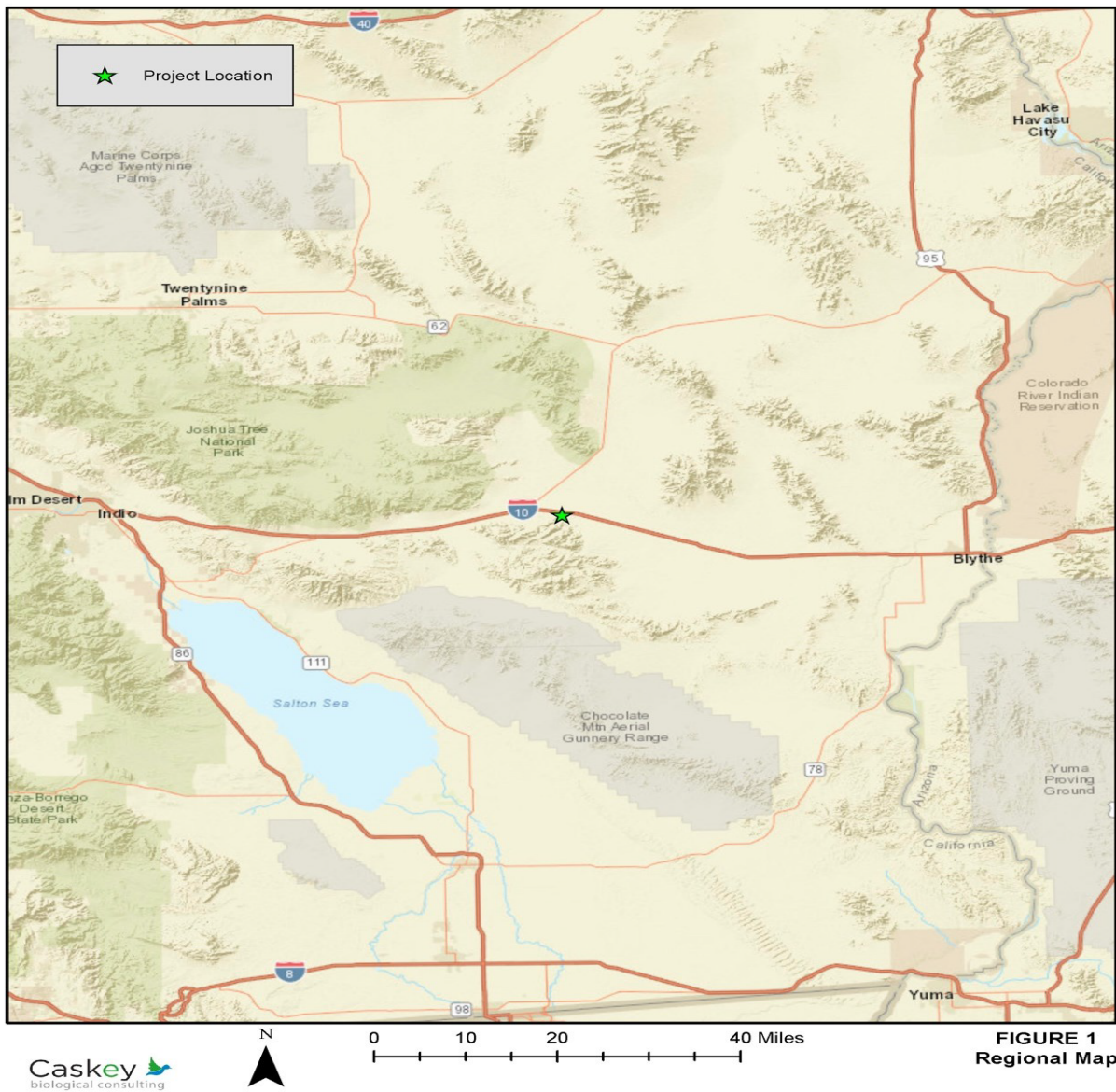
John R. Kalish, U.S. Bureau of Land Management, Field Manager
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Eldon Heaston, Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District, Executive Director
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General Email, California Department of Fish and Wildlife
AskRegion6@wildlife.ca.gov

File: 7A333241001, RM 446783, SoCalGas Line 5000 Phase 2 Validation Digs Project,
Order 2004-0004-DWQ

Attachment A Project Maps

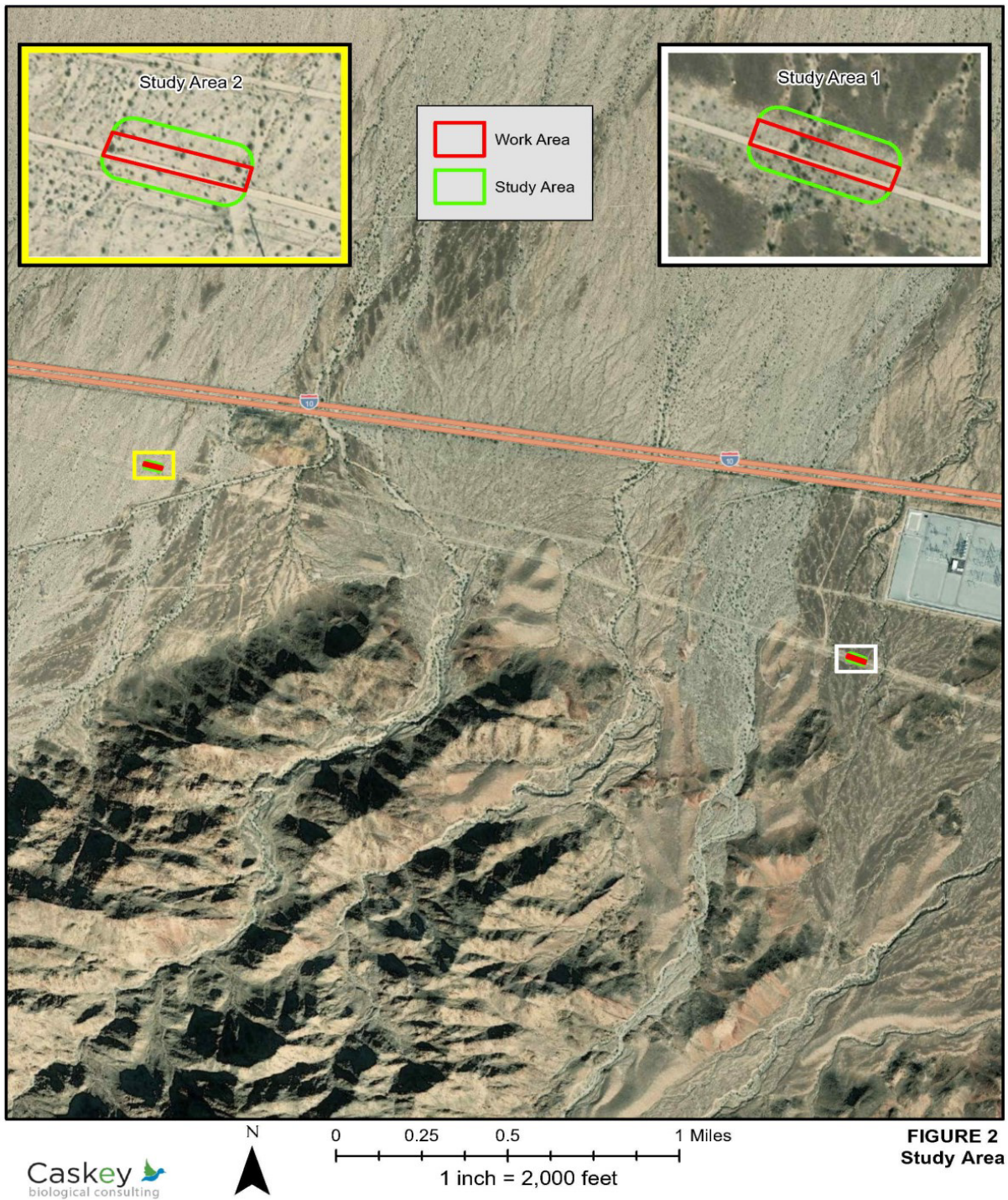


DATE: January 31, 2022
COORDINATE SYSTEM: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 11
SOURCE: ESRI World Street Map, CBC, SoCalGas

PROJECT:
L5000 Phase 2
Validation Digs

Figure 1: Regional Location Map (SoCalGas, 2022).¹

¹ Southern California Gas Company, February 2022. Notice of Intent (NOI) for the Southern California Gas Company SoCalGas Line 5000 Phase 2 Validation Digs Project.



DATE: February 4, 2022
COORDINATE SYSTEM: NAD 1983 State Plane California Zone VI FIPS 0406 (feet)
SOURCE: ESRI World Imagery, ESRI World Transportation, CBC, SoCalGas

PROJECT:
L5000 Phase 2
Validation Digs

Figure 2: Project Area Map (SoCalGas, 2022).

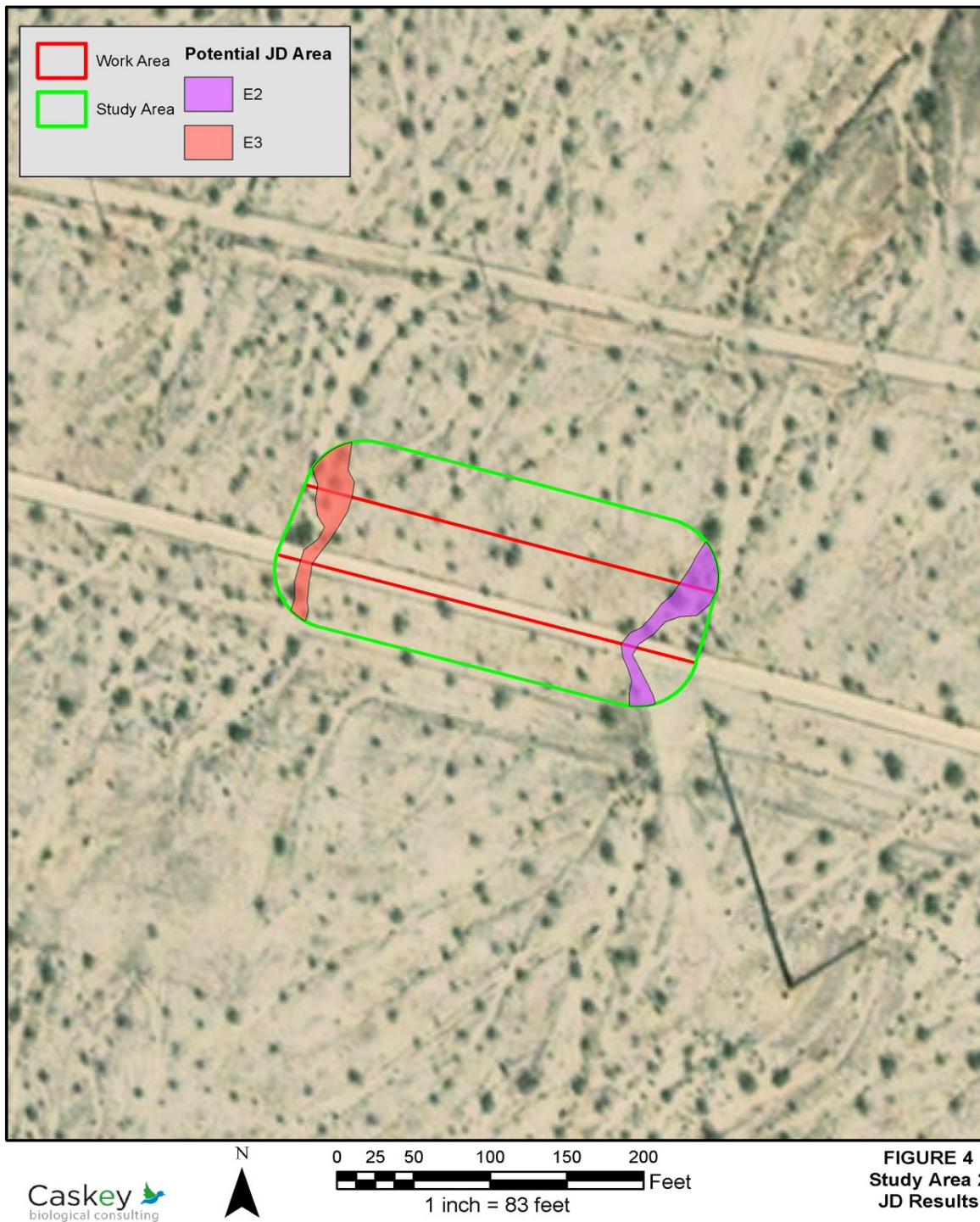


FIGURE 3
Study Area 1
JD Results

DATE: February 4, 2022
COORDINATE SYSTEM: NAD 1983 State Plane California Zone VI FIPS 0406 (feet)
SOURCE: ESRI World Imagery, ESRI World Transportation, CBC, SoCalGas

PROJECT:
L5000 Phase 2
Validation Digs

Figure 3: Dig 1 Project Area and Jurisdictional Delineation (SoCalGas, 2022).



DATE: February 2, 2022
COORDINATE SYSTEM: NAD 1983 State Plane California Zone VI FIPS 0406 (feet)
SOURCE: ESRI World Imagery, ESRI World Transportation, CBC, SoCalGas

PROJECT:
L5000 Phase 2
Validation Digs

Figure 4: Dig 2 Project Area and Jurisdictional Delineation (SoCalGas, 2022).



L5000 Phase 2 Validation Digs



S1P2E1-E1 - Ephemeral Drainage Upstream



S1P2E1-E1 - Ephemeral Drainage Downstream



S1P2E2-E2 - Ephemeral Drainage Upstream



S1P2E2-E2 - Ephemeral Drainage Downstream



S1P2E2-E3 - Ephemeral Drainage Upstream



S1P2E2-E3 - Ephemeral Drainage Downstream



Attachment B CEQA Findings

A. Introduction

The Colorado River Basin Water Board has determined that the Project is exempt from review under CEQA pursuant to California Code of Regulations, title 14, section 15061. Specifically, the issuance of this Order and the Project described herein meet the exemptions criteria under California Code of Regulations, title 14, section 15301 (Existing Facilities), section 15302 (Replacement and Reconstruction), and section 15304 (Minor Alterations to Land).

B. Findings

1. Applicable Categorical Exemptions

Under title 14, section 15301 of the California Code of Regulations, there is a “Class 1” categorical exemption where the proposed project “consists of the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features, involving negligible or no expansion of use beyond that existing at the time of the lead agency's determination” such as “(b) [e]xisting facilities of both investor and publicly-owned utilities used to provide electric power, natural gas, sewerage, or other public utility services.”

Under title 14, section 15302 of the California Code of Regulations, there is a “Class 2” categorical exemption where the proposed project involves “replacement or reconstruction of existing structures and facilities” including the “(c) [r]eplacement or reconstruction of existing utility systems and/or facilities involving negligible or no expansion of capacity.”

Under title 14, section 15304 of the California Code of Regulations, there is a “Class 4” categorical exemption where the proposed project “consists of minor public or private alterations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation” including “(f) [m]inor trenching and backfilling where the surface is restored.”

The Project falls within the exemptions per section 15301 (Existing Facilities), section 15302 (Replacement and Reconstruction), and section 15304 (Minor Alterations to Land). The Project involves the inspection, repair, and/or replacement of Line 5000 natural gas pipeline through pipe exposure and repair, or replacement of two pipeline anomalies with similar pipeline. The Project will entail minor trench excavation of three unnamed ephemeral streams; however, once the repair work has been completed, SoCalGas will back fill the trench and restore the Project site to pre-construction conditions.

2. No Exceptions to the Categorical Exemption Apply

There is no substantial evidence that any exceptions to the CEQA categorical exemptions listed above apply. Analysis of the relevant exceptions pursuant to section 15300.2 of the State CEQA Guidelines are as follows:

- a. *Location. Class 4 is qualified by consideration of where the project is to be located—a project that is ordinarily insignificant in its impact on the environment may in a particularly sensitive environment be significant. Therefore, this class is considered to apply in all instances, except where the project may have an impact on an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern where designated, precisely mapped, and officially adopted pursuant to law by federal, state, or local agencies.*

The Project occurs within eastern Desert Center, in unincorporated Riverside County, California. The Project would involve temporary impacts within three unnamed ephemeral streams; the work area will be restored to pre-Project conditions following Project completion. Impacts are anticipated to be short-term and less than significant. Furthermore, the Project falls within the exemption found in Section 15301 (Class 1, Existing Facilities), which is not qualified by consideration of location.

- b. *Cumulative Impact. All exemptions for these classes are inapplicable when the cumulative impact of successive projects of the same type in the same place, over time is significant.*

No significant cumulative impacts over time are anticipated. This Project is not a part of a larger project. Two similar projects are occurring on another SoCalGas pipeline in the immediate vicinity of this Project; all projects include minimal, temporary impacts and therefore no cumulative impacts will occur.

- c. *Significant Effect. A categorical exemption shall not be used for an activity where there is a reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.*

There are no “unusual circumstances” that would create a reasonable possibility of significant environmental impacts. The Project is being conducted near established roads that have been in use for some time. All construction will be performed under “no flow” conditions in the washes to preclude potential impacts to water quality. Best Management Practices (BMPs) will be used that are appropriate for this type of project activity.

- d. *Scenic Highway. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may result in damage to scenic resources, including but not limited to trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or similar resources, within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway*

The project is located at two dig site locations within eastern Desert Center, 0.5 miles south of Interstate 10, and 4.75 miles southeast of Rice Road on BLM land between SoCalGas’s Blythe Compressor Station and Cactus City Compressor Station in Riverside County. The Project will not damage the scenic resources within a highway/road officially designated as a state scenic highway/road.

- e. Hazardous Waste Sites. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project located on a site which is included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of Government Code.*

The Project site is located along an existing Right-Of-Way and is not included on any list compiled pursuant to section 65962.5 of the Government Code.

- f. Historical Resources. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.*

There is no anticipated substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource. The Project occurs along the existing natural gas transmission pipelines.

C. Determination

The issuance of this Order and the activities described herein meet the exemptions criteria under California Code of Regulations, title 14, section 15301 (Existing Facilities), section 15302 (Replacement and Reconstruction), and section 15304 (Minor Alterations to Land).

The Colorado River Basin Water Board concludes that no exceptions to the CEQA exemptions listed above apply to the activities approved by this Order.

The Colorado River Basin Water Board will file a Notice of Exemption with the State Clearinghouse within five (5) working days from the issuance of this Order (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15062).