

Growth-Inducing and Cumulative Impacts

Growth-Inducing Impacts

The proposed project is intended to meet the following objectives:

- **Meet electric demand**—To ensure that the electric system includes adequate capacity to safely and reliably serve the communities of Hollister and San Juan Bautista and the surrounding areas in San Benito County.
- **Replace aging infrastructure**—To replace aging towers that support the 115 kV power lines on the Hollister Tower Segment; existing tower structures are approximately 70 years old.
- **Improve transmission system reliability**—To reduce the frequency of line outages by installing new structures with greater spacing between the conductors and steel supports that will minimize bird contacts with the lines.
- **Comply with the California ISO grid planning criteria**—To comply with the CA ISO grid reliability planning criteria.

PG&E's local 115 kV transmission system is at risk of overloading should there be a loss of one of the two 115 kV transmission lines that supply the Hollister area. The proposed reconductoring work will correct this problem and help meet future demand, maintain compliance with applicable grid reliability criteria, and make it easier to maintain the transmission system. The project will not directly induce growth by creating new opportunities for local industry or commerce.

Growth in the project area is carefully planned and regulated by city and county general plans, with land use policies to protect the region's open spaces and agricultural traditions and to control urban development. The project is designed to meet immediate and projected electrical power needs in the San Benito-Monterey service area based on current and projected demand.

Like other utilities and public service providers, PG&E plans and upgrades electrical facilities incrementally based on growth projections provided by local government agencies. These projections reflect economic and residential developments that are planned and approved by city and county governments with jurisdiction over land uses. Local planning policies and zoning regulations have the biggest influence in controlling the pace and ultimate amount of growth in the project area. The project will provide short-term employment for construction workers, but no additional permanent workers who would require

new housing. Construction will require a minimal amount of workers over a single season. PG&E's existing workforce, contractors, and a few other workers from the local labor pool will construct the project. Non-local labor will be used only for specialized skills not readily available locally; these individuals likely will stay in hotels or rent housing on a short-term basis. The limited, temporary construction crew is not expected to result in long-term growth or housing demands in the area. Therefore, the project is not considered growth inducing.

Cumulative Impacts

Project-Related Impacts

The Hollister 115 kV Power Line Reconductoring Project involves reconductoring two segments of power lines within an existing corridor. The existing towers and poles will be replaced, and a new double-circuit power line will increase the reliability of the existing lines. Minor changes to the existing Hollister Substation will be made to accommodate the new line. The Proposed River Crossing, an approximately 1.3-mile new crossing of the San Benito River, will relocate the existing river alignment to a new location out of the floodplain of the river. The Proposed River Crossing has been located to avoid significant environmental impacts while increasing safety and reliability.

The primary impacts associated with the project will occur during the construction phase because changes to ongoing operations and maintenance activities related to the reconductoring will be negligible. Much of the existing infrastructure has been in place for approximately 70 years, and routine maintenance has been conducted on a regular basis. Linear construction will require no more than a few days at any location along each segment and is expected to be completed within 13 months. No significant effects on any environmental resource are associated with the project. The impact analyses for resources that would be affected by the project (e.g., transportation and traffic) assumed construction of all components occurring simultaneously rather than sequentially and the maximum amount of delivery trucks and associated construction vehicles being present on roadways in the project area. Potential project-related impacts on all resources are less than significant because of environmental protection measures routinely implemented by PG&E and those specifically proposed for the project.

The proposed project does involve temporary and permanent changes to agricultural lands in San Benito and Monterey Counties. Although the majority of the project alignment is within an existing utility corridor, expanded permanent right-of-way easements are required, particularly for the Proposed River Crossing. Approximately 1.36 acres of FMMP-designated farmland will be permanently reduced by the proposed project, all of which is designated as grazing land. Approximately 0.92 acre of Williamson Act lands will be permanently converted from an agricultural use. The land required for the two

other PG&E substation projects (discussed below) will contribute to the cumulative loss of agricultural land in the affected counties.

The amount of land to be permanently converted is considered negligible in relation to the amount of available farmland in San Benito and Monterey Counties. In addition, as noted above, PG&E plans and upgrades electrical facilities incrementally based on growth projections provided by local government agencies. These projections reflect economic and residential developments that are planned and approved by city and county governments with jurisdiction over land uses. Local planning policies and zoning regulations have incorporated farmland conversion for utilities into the planning processes for the project area.

Other Reasonably Foreseeable Projects

A cumulative impact could occur if PG&E or another utility service implemented a concurrent project in the segments of the power line corridor affected by this project, or in segments of the power line corridor in the immediate project vicinity. Two new utility projects, as well as several projects in San Benito and Monterey County, have been identified and considered for possible cumulative impacts. These projects are described below.

Crazy Horse Substation

PG&E is proposing to construct a new 115 kV switching station at the Lagunitas Junction on the Moss Landing-Salinas-Soledad lines. The proposed switching station would serve as a switching station for the four existing 115 kV power lines between Moss Landing and Salinas. The targeted in-service date for this project is December 2012.

Moss Landing-Crazy Horse 115kv Power Line Reconductoring Project

The Moss Landing-Salinas-Soledad power line sections between Moss Landing and the new substation would be reconducted with 477 SSAC. The targeted in-service date for this project is November 2009.

San Benito Substation Project

This PG&E project proposes to install a new 115/21 kV distribution substation near the town of San Juan Bautista by May 2011. The substation has undergone review by the County of San Benito and the CPUC's Notice of Construction process under General Order 131-D. Construction is planned to begin in fall 2010.

Table 4.17-1 provides information describing a number of development projects in San Benito and Monterey Counties. These projects are provided for informational purposes only. It has been determined that none of these projects have the potential to result in a cumulative impact in conjunction with the proposed project. Many of the larger projects contained on the list have not been approved, and declining economic conditions may delay their implementation.

The proposed project (as well as the other PG&E projects) will be required to implement project-specific mitigation measures to minimize any potential cumulative impacts, and none of the likely future projects in either county would result in cumulative impacts related to the proposed project. Therefore, no cumulative impacts related to the proposed project are anticipated.

Table 4.17-1. Reasonably Foreseeable Projects in the San Benito–Monterey Area

Project Name	Project Type	Location	Source	Other Information
Lowes	Commercial (home improvement store)	Highway 25 and Meridian Street, Hollister	San Benito County Planning & Building Department	Permit issued; construction expected to begin mid-2009
Earthbound Farms – facilities expansion	Commercial	San Juan Highway (northeast of San Juan Bautista)	San Benito County Planning & Building Department	Recently completed 15,000-square-foot refrigeration storage facility; two more phases for further expansion planned and pending approval
Santana Ranch Planned Unit Development	Multi-family residential/mixed use	Fairview and Sunnyslope Roads, Hollister	San Benito County Planning & Building Department	1,092 units with school and commercial development
Gavilan College – campus extension	Mixed use	Highway 25 and Fairview Road, Hollister	San Benito County Planning & Building Department	Extension of campus and possible development of 300 homes
El Rancho San Benito	Multi-family residential	Highway 25 and Highway 101	San Benito County Planning & Building Department	6,500 units; consultants preparing Environmental Impact Report
Equestrian center	Commercial	Frazier Lake Road, North San Benito County (near Frazier Lake Airpark)	San Benito County Planning & Building Department	Use permit requested for 64-acre facility
San Juan Oaks	Multi-family residential	Near San Juan Oak Golf Course, south of Highway 156 (Hollister)	San Benito County Planning & Building Department	100 units
Butterfly Village (Ranch San Juan)	Multi-family residential/mixed use	North of Russell Road, Salinas	Monterey County Planning & Building Department	780 single-family units, community park, and school
Rancho Los Robles	Multi-family residential/mixed use	Sill Road, Watsonville	Monterey County Planning & Building Department	97 units with park, common area, and possible commercial development

Table 4.17-1. Continued

Project Name	Project Type	Location	Source	Other Information
The Commons at Rogge Road	Multi-family residential/mixed use	Rogge Road, Salinas	Monterey County Planning & Building Department	123 single-family units, apartment lot (48 units), park, and common area
Truck driving school	Commercial	Boronda Road, Salinas	Monterey County Planning & Building Department	Combined development permit requested
Crazy Horse Substation	Construct new 115 kilovolt (kV) substation	Lagunitas Junction on the Moss Landing-Salinas-Soledad lines, San Benito County	Pacific Gas & Electric	Targeted in-service date of 2010
Moss Landing-Crazy Horse 115kv Power Line Reconductoring Project	Reconductoring power lines with 477 steel-supported aluminum conductor;	Power line sections between Moss Landing and the new Crazy Horse Substation	Pacific Gas & Electric	Targeted in-service date of 2010
San Benito Substation Project	Install a new 115/21 kV distribution substation	Near city of San Juan Bautista (location of proposed substation is under review)	Pacific Gas & Electric	Installation targeted for completion by May 2011

Note: The City of Hollister is currently under a building moratorium due to sewer capacity issues. In 2002, the California Regional Water Quality Control Board imposed the moratorium when the city's wastewater treatment plant reached its design capacity. (City of Hollister 2008).

Sources: City of Hollister 2008; Monterey County Resource Management Agency Planning Department 2008a, 2008b; Hill pers. comm.; Ortwein pers. comm.

References

Printed References

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Personal Communications

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