# Variance Request Form

**PG&E Hollister 115 kV Power Line Reconductoring Project**

Variance Request No.: 28

## CONTRACTOR SECTION

Request Prepared By: Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E)

Photos? ☒Yes ☐No

Landowner: 199-061-012-000 Christensen, Patricia currently encumbered by easements to access, maintain, and operate the power line.

Attachments? ☒Yes No

- Attachment A: Variance 28 Map

Current Land Use: Agriculture Rangeland

**Permit Measure or Specification:**

- California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) Project Description
  - Deviation from the project description to allow use of an alternate overland access route not included in the MND and necessary to allow vehicles to safely access Tower 3/17.

**Detailed Description of Variance:**

As construction has progressed in the tower section it has become apparent to PG&E that the approved overland access route to Tower 3/17 does not allow safe access to the tower. Specifically, due to the slopes and topography of the area, it is not feasible for construction vehicles to safely access the tower from the access road approved in the MND and shown in Figure 2-2c of the MND. Therefore, PG&E is requesting authorization from the CPUC to allow use of an alternate access route. The alternate route, which was suggested by the landowner, is safer, and results in less overall disturbance. The alternate overland travel route consists of approximately 0.03 mile (143 feet) of existing road and approximately 0.07 mile (344 feet) of overland travel for a total length of approximately 0.1 mile. The alternate overland travel route eliminates the need for approximately 0.3 mile of approved overland access route that was included in the MND, resulting in a net decrease of approximately 0.2 mile of disturbance related to overland travel.

Table 1: Access Roads, provides a summary of the miles of access roads from the MND and previously approved variances, the net increase in miles of access roads from this variance, and the total if this variance request is approved. Attachment A: Variance 28 Map depicts the locations of this route.

**Table 1: Access Roads**

| Type of Access | MND and Previously Approved Variances (miles) | Variance Request #28 (miles) | Total (miles) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Existing Road | 18.26 | 0.03 | 18.29 |
| Existing Road – Needs Improvement | 1.79 | 0.00 | 1.79 |
| New Road | 0.32 | 0.00 | 0.32 |
| Overland Travel Route | 7.54 | (0.23) | 7.31 |
| All-Terrain Vehicles (ATV) Overland Access Route | 1.20 | 0.00 | 1.20 |
| **Total** | **29.11** | **(0.20)** | **28.91** |

**Variance Justification:**

The additional overland travel route was not included in the MND or previous variances, but is necessary for vehicles to safely access Tower 3/17. It is infeasible to safely access Tower 3/17 with vehicles using only the existing approved overland travel routes shown in the MND and included in previous variances; therefore, the additional route has been identified in Attachment A: Variance 28 Map. Specifically, due to the slopes and topography of the area, it is not feasible to safely access the tower site from “above.” As described in the resource evaluation section below, potential impacts associated with this variance are consistent with those evaluated during the CEQA review and will not result in any new significant impacts that were not previously identified. Environmental protection measures will be implemented as described in the MND and other project permits.

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## PG&E ENVIRONMENTAL SECTION

**RESOURCE EVALUATION**

The proposed variance was analyzed to verify that the project change would not introduce new significant impacts and that any potential impacts were fully analyzed in the MND. The following table provides a brief summary of each resource area analyzed in the MND.

| CEQA SECTION | Applicable | (Y) Define Potential Impact or<br>(N) Briefly Explain Why CEQA Section is Not Applicable |
|---|---|---|
| Aesthetics | ☒ Y<br>☐ N | *No Change.* No new sources of light or glare will be introduced to the area from use of the additional route. Use of this route will not increase traffic beyond the 200 construction-related vehicle trips per day analyzed in the MND. The use of this route will not substantially degrade the quality of the site and its surroundings because views of the construction vehicles will be of short duration and construction is relatively short term. Environmental protection measures will be implemented as described in the MND. Therefore, potential impacts are consistent with those evaluated in the MND, and use of this route will not create significant additional impacts to aesthetics. |
| Agriculture and Forestry Resources | ☒ Y<br>☐N | *No Change.* The additional route will not be located in Important Farmland, but will be located in grazing land. The route will not significantly impact agricultural activities because its use is relatively short term and will not convert agricultural land to non-agricultural use. Use of this route will not result in impacts to forestry resources because it will not require additional tree trimming or removal. Use of this route will not conflict with Williamson Act contracts or existing zoning because it will not result in any changes to existing land uses. Environmental protection measures will be implemented as described in the MND. Therefore, potential impacts are consistent with those evaluated in the MND, and the use of the additional route will not create significant additional impacts to agriculture or forestry resources. |
| Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions | ☒ Y<br>☐N | *No Change.* The use of the additional route will not increase traffic beyond the estimated 200 construction-related vehicle trips per day that were analyzed in the MND. In addition, the use of this route will not substantially increase the amount or use of heavy equipment on the project and, therefore, will not increase emissions or fugitive dust, beyond what was analyzed in the MND. The additional route will not be closer to residences or sensitive receptors; therefore, pollutant concentrations and objectionable odors will not increase beyond those described in the MND. Environmental protection measures will be implemented as described in the MND. Therefore, potential impacts are consistent with those evaluated in the MND, and the use of the additional route will not create significant additional impacts to air quality or greenhouse gas emissions. |

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|---|---|---|
| Biological Resources | ☒ Y<br>☐ N | *No Change.* The MND evaluated the project areas and a 500-foot buffer for special status wildlife species. The additional route is located within the 500-foot survey buffer and was, therefore, evaluated in the MND. Applicant-Proposed Measures (APMs) and mitigation measures in the MND require pre-construction wildlife surveys for burrowing owl, American badger, and San Joaquin kit fox to be conducted within 30 days prior to use of these access routes. Pre-construction wildlife surveys were previously conducted in in this area, and a report describing the survey results has been submitted to the CPUC. If any special-status species or nesting birds are observed, the appropriate and required measures, including construction buffers will be implemented as described in the MND and project permits. The use of the additional route will not require any additional tree trimming or removal. Environmental protection measures will be implemented as described in the MND and other project permits. Therefore, potential impacts to biological resources associated with this variance are consistent with those evaluated in the MND, and the use of the additional route will not create significant additional impacts to biological resources. |
| Cultural Resources | ☒ Y<br>☐ N | *No Change.* PG&E prepared a Historic Properties Inventory Report, which included an evaluation of cultural resources in the project area and a 500-foot buffer. The additional route is located within the 500-foot survey buffer and was, therefore, included in the evaluation. The proposed new route is not located in an area of high archaeological sensitivity nor does its use require ground disturbance. Other environmental protection measures will be implemented as described in the MND and other project permits. Therefore, potential impacts to cultural resources associated with this variance are consistent with those evaluated in the MND, and the use of the additional route will not create significant additional impacts to cultural resources. |
| Geology, Soils, and Seismicity | ☒ Y<br>☐N | *No Change.* The additional route was included in the evaluation of geology, soils, and seismicity in the project area, and will not result in new geology, soils, or seismicity impacts. Environmental protection measures will be implemented as described in the MND. Therefore, potential impacts are consistent with those evaluated in the MND, and the use of the additional route will not create significant additional geology, soils, or seismicity impacts. |
| Hazards and Hazardous Materials | ☒ Y<br>☐ N | *No Change.* The use of the additional route will not create new significant hazards or require new hazardous materials because construction activities will not change. Environmental protection measures will be implemented as described in the MND. Therefore, potential impacts are consistent with those evaluated in the MND, and the use of the additional route will not create significant additional impacts from hazards or hazardous materials. |
| Hydrology and Water Quality | ☒ Y<br>☐ N | *No Change.* The use of the additional route will not result in new significant impacts to hydrology and water quality. The additional route will not require improvements. Potential impacts are consistent with those evaluated in the MND, and the use of the additional route will not create significant additional impacts to hydrology or water quality. |
| Land Use and Planning | ☒ Y<br>☐N | *No Change.* The use of the additional route will not result in new significant impacts to land use because the current land use will not be converted and the use of these areas will be temporary. Therefore, potential impacts are consistent with those evaluated in the MND, and the use of the additional route will not create significant additional impacts to land use or planning. |
| Mineral Resources | ☐ Y<br>☒ N | *No Change.* The additional route is not located on any known mineral resources. Therefore, potential impacts are consistent with those evaluated in the MND, and the use of the additional route will not create additional significant impacts to mineral resources. |

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| Noise | ☒ Y<br>☐ N | *No Change.* The use of the additional route will not result in new significant impacts from noise because this route will not be located closer to residences or sensitive receptors. The use of this route will not increase traffic beyond the estimated 200 construction-related vehicle trips per day that were analyzed in the MND. In addition, impacts to noise as a result of construction vehicles and equipment were analyzed in the MND, and use of the additional route will have the same impacts. Environmental protection measures will be implemented as described in the MND. Therefore, potential impacts are consistent with those evaluated in the MND, and the use of the additional route will not create additional significant impacts from noise. |
| Population and Housing | ☐ Y<br>☒ N | *No Change.* The additional route will not be closer to residences than those described in the MND and use of this route will not induce population growth or displace existing housing or people. Therefore, potential impacts are consistent with those evaluated in the MND, and the use of the additional route will not create additional significant impacts to population or housing. |
| Public Services | ☐ Y<br>☒ N | *No Change.* The use of the additional route will not result in any impacts on public services because use of the route will be of relatively short duration. The MND found that potential impacts on emergency response services, fire protection services, police services, school facilities, recreational facilities, public libraries, and hospitals will be less than significant because construction activities are temporary and do not require construction of new or physically altered governmental facilities for public services. Environmental protection measures will be implemented as described in the MND. Therefore, potential impacts are consistent with those evaluated in the MND and the use of the additional route will not create additional significant impacts to public services. |
| Recreation | ☒ Y<br>☐ N | *No Change.* Impacts to recreational resources will not increase substantially beyond those identified in the MND because use of the additional route will be of relatively short duration. The use of this route will not increase local population or housing and, therefore, will not increase demand for recreational facilities. Environmental protection measures will be implemented as described in the MND. Therefore, potential impacts are consistent with those evaluated in the MND, and the use of the additional route will not create additional significant impacts to recreation. |
| Transportation and Traffic | ☒ Y<br>☐ N | *No Change.* The use of the additional route will not result in new significant impacts to transportation or traffic because use of this route will be of relatively short duration and the route is not a public thoroughfare. In the MND, it was estimated that construction will generate over 200 vehicle trips per day within the project area. The use of the additional route will not increase traffic beyond the estimated 200 construction-related vehicle trips per day that were analyzed in the MND. In addition, this route is not a public thoroughfare and, therefore, will not impact public transit, bicycle and pedestrian transportation, airports, or rail service. Environmental protection measures will be implemented as described in the MND. Therefore, potential impacts are consistent with those evaluated in the MND, and the use of the additional route will not create additional significant impacts to transportation or traffic. |

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| Utilities and Service Systems | ☒ Y<br>☐ N | *No Change.* The use of the additional route will not result in new significant impacts to existing utilities or service systems because use of this route will be of relatively short duration and construction activities will not change. Environmental protection measures will be implemented as described in the MND. Therefore, potential impacts are consistent with those evaluated in the MND, and the use of the additional route will not create additional significant impacts to utility or service systems. |
| Other Variance Conditions Attached: ☐Yes ☒ No | | |

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| **PG&E Approval** | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Title** | **Name** | **Approval Initials** | **Date** | **Conditions (see attached)** | |
| Project Manager | Keith Miller | KM | 10/09 | ☐ Yes | ☒ No |
| Lead Environmental Inspector | Nick Fisher | NF | 10/09 | ☐ Yes | ☒ No |
| PG&E Project Biologist (if applicable) | Andrea Henke | AH | 10/09 | ☐ Yes | ☒ No |
| PG&E Project Archaeologist (if applicable) | Wendy Nettles | | | ☐ Yes | ☒ No |
| PG&E Storm Water Program Manager (if applicable) | John Villalobos | | | ☐ Yes | ☒ No |
| PG&E Environmental Compliance Lead | Andy Smith | AS | 10/09 | ☐ Yes | ☒ No |
| PG&E Project Manager (if applicable) | Art de la Rocha | AR | 10/09 | ☐ Yes | ☒ No |

| **Landowner Approval (if needed)** | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Landowner Name** | **Approval Signature** | **Date** |
| NA | NA | NA |

| **Resource Agency Approvals** | |
|---|---|
| **Determine required agency approvals based on the following:** | |
| Will biological resources/habitats be affected? NO | If yes, obtain CDFG and USFWS approval |
| Is this a variance from a permit? NO | If yes, obtain permitting agency approval |
| Will wetlands or waters of the U.S. be affected? NO | If yes, obtain U.S. Army Corps of Engineers approval |
| Will riparian areas or drainages be affected? NO | If yes, obtain CDFG approval – may require a permit |
| Will surface or groundwater be affected? NO | If yes, obtain RWQCB approval |

| **Resource Agency** | **Name** | **Approval Initials** | **Date** | **Conditions (see attached)** | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| USFWS | | NA | | ☐ Yes | ☐ No |
| CDFG | | NA | | ☐ Yes | ☐ No |
| USACE | | NA | | ☐ Yes | ☐ No |
| RWQCB | | NA | | ☐ Yes | ☐ No |

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## .CPUC and CPUC CONSULTANT SECTION

Variance Approved: ☐ Yes ☐ No

**AFFECTED RESOURCE(s) and APPLICABLE MITIGATION MEASURES**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ☐ Aesthetics: | ☐ Agriculture and Forestry Resources: | ☐ Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions: |
| ☐ Biological Resources: | ☐ Cultural Resources: | ☐ Geology, Soils, and Seismicity: |
| ☐ Hazards and Hazardous Materials: | ☐ Hydrology and Water Quality: | ☐ Land Use and Planning: |
| ☐ Mineral Resources: | ☐ Noise: | ☐ Population and Housing: |
| ☐ Public Services: | ☐ Recreation: | ☐ Transportation and Traffic: |
| ☐ Utilities and Service Systems: | | |

Other Variance Conditions Attached: ☐ Yes ☐ No

**REQUIRED APPROVAL SIGNATURES**

Consultant Environmental Monitor: (Note: signature signifies review only)

Consultant Project Manager: _____ ☐Level 1 Verbal Approval

CPUC Project Manager: ☐Level 1 Verbal Approval

*Level 1 variances require only verbal approval from CPUC Project Manager and Consultant Project Manager. Level 2 variances require signatures.*

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**VARIANCE CONDITIONS**

| |
|---|
| **Condition Name:** |
| **Conditions:** |
| **Condition Name:** |
| **Conditions:** |
| **Condition Name:** |
| **Conditions:** |

# ATTACHMENT A: VARIANCE 28 MAP

## Hollister 115 kV Power Line Reconductoring Project

- Hollister Tower Segment
- New Tower
- Existing Tower
- Existing Crane Pad
- Proposed Gate
- Tree Removal and Trimming
- Overland Travel Route
- Existing Road
- Existing Road - Needs Improvement

**Variance 28 Proposed Road**

- Existing Road
- Variance 28, Overland Travel Route

1:5,000

0 150 300 600 Feet

Pacific Gas and Electric Company®

INSIGNIA ENVIRONMENTAL

Source: Insignia 2012; PG&E 2012

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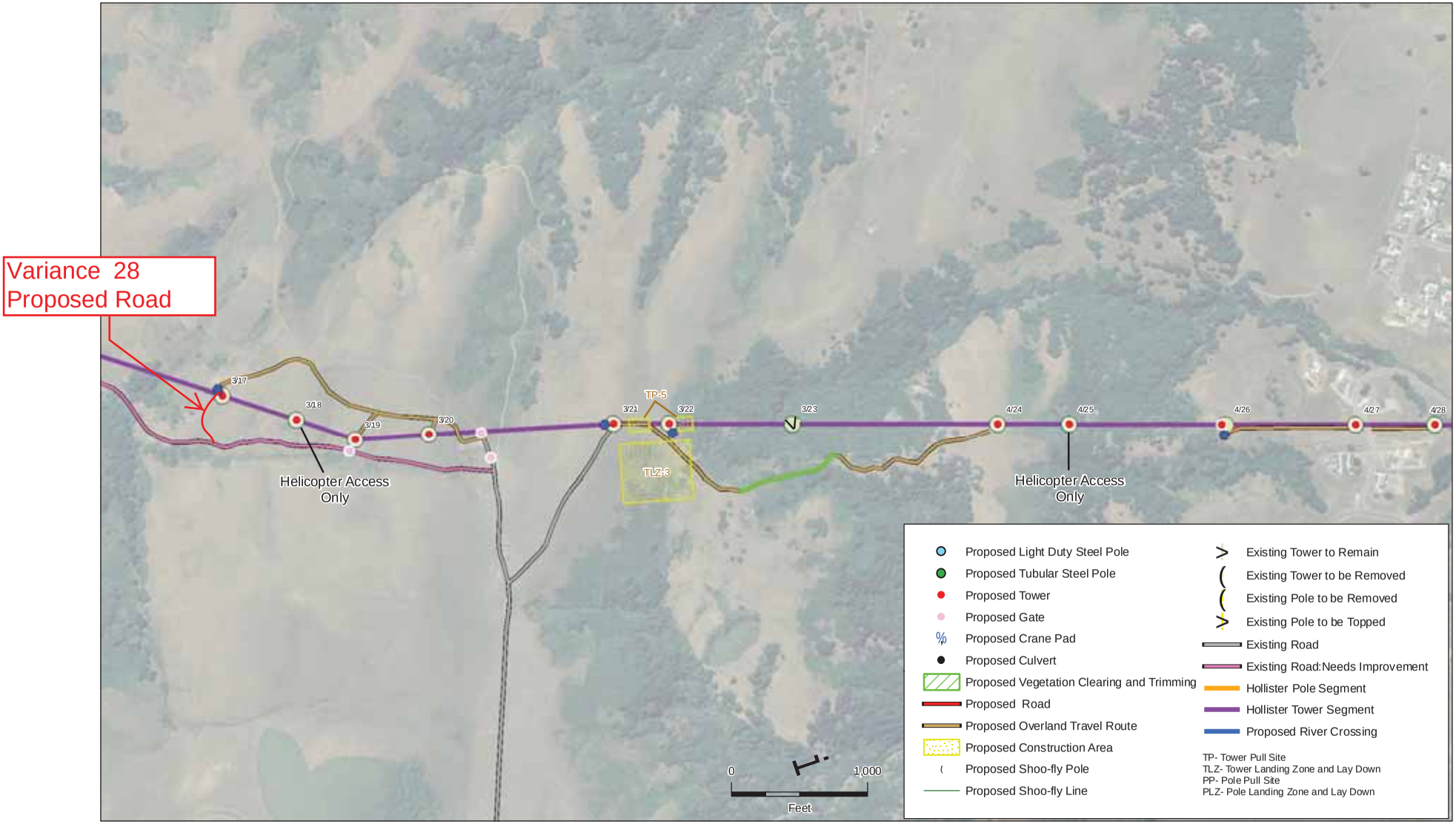


Source: PG&E, 2010; Microsoft Virtual Earth, 2010

Hollister 115 kV Power Line Reconductoring Project . 207584.03

**Figure 2-2 c**

Proposed Project