



Variance Request Form

PG&E Hollister 115 kV Power Line Reconductoring Project

Variance Request No.: 38

CONTRACTOR SECTION

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

Photos? Yes No

Landowners: Multiple landowners, encumbered by existing PG&E easements
Current Land Use: ~~Multiple, primarily a~~Agriculture ~~and~~, public roadway

Attachments? Yes No

- Attachment A: Variance 38 Map
- Attachment B: Wildlife Survey Memorandum

Permit Measure or Specification:

- California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) Project Description
 - Deviation from the project description to install temporary distribution switches in ~~multiple locations~~the vicinity of Pole 20/04 and Pole 21/05.

Detailed Description of Variance:

PG&E is requesting authorization from the CPUC to allow installation of temporary distribution switches in the vicinity of the Hollister 115 kV Power Line Reconductoring Project (project). The temporary distribution switches are intended to minimize outages to customers during the project. This variance is requesting the immediate use of two ~~known~~ locations where temporary switches will be installed. These locations include a distribution pole approximately 300 feet south of Pole 20/04 and a distribution pole approximately 300 feet north of Pole 21/05. These locations are shown in Attachment A: Variance 38 Map.

The distribution pole located south of Pole 20/04 is located in an agricultural field at the northeastern corner of the intersection of Buena Vista Road and Wright Road. All activities at this location will be conducted from the road shoulder on Wright Road and Buena Vista Road. The distribution pole located north of Pole 21/05 is located on the shoulder of an existing agricultural dirt road that runs between two agricultural fields. Access to this location will require the addition of an approximately 330-foot-long section of this existing dirt access road to the project design. This new, existing dirt access road will run south from the distribution pole and connect to an approved project access road.

~~PG&E would also like to request the installation and use of additional temporary distribution switches that may need to be accessed during the remainder of the project. Although temporary switches are necessary during clearances, the locations of these switches are not always known and based on the project needs as well as PG&E's overall transmission and distribution system needs. PG&E would therefore like to request a variance that approves the installation of temporary switches in locations within and outside the project alignment.~~

~~The addition of these temporary distribution switches will be located in areas that are regularly accessed by PG&E as part of their operations and maintenance activities. It is anticipated that all the temporary switches will be installed on existing distribution poles from the shoulder of existing public roads, paved roads, or dirt/gravel roads.~~

All proposed activities associated with the installation of the temporary switches will require up to two bucket trucks, two crew trucks, and approximately seven to ten crew members. The proposed activities will include the installation of a temporary switch by installing temporary wires that can be connected and disconnected, as necessary. Construction activities for temporary switch installation are anticipated to last approximately two hours on two separate days per temporary switch. Additionally, periodic switching of these wires during the remainder of the project will be required during scheduled clearances for the project. Periodic switching will require one bucket truck, as well as a small crew consisting of approximately three people. These periodic activities require the manual installation/removal of a fuse in the switch and are anticipated to take up to 20 minutes. No excavation or other earthwork is required for the installation of temporary switches.

Variance Justification:

PG&E is requesting this variance because installation of temporary switches is necessary to minimize power outages to customers during power line reconductoring and maintenance. Construction activities associated with this variance will not require ground disturbance or permanent impacts. Construction activities will occur from existing public roads, paved roads, or dirt/gravel roads, and will be short in duration; therefore, potential impacts associated with this variance are consistent with those evaluated during the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and variance reviews and will not result in any new significant impacts that were not previously identified. Additional details regarding potential impacts as a result of this variance are described in the following resource evaluation section. 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		
<p>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.</p>		
CEQA SECTION	Applicable	(Y) Define Potential Impact or (N) Briefly Explain Why CEQA Section is Not Applicable
Aesthetics	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N	<p><i>No Change.</i> Installation of temporary switches will not introduce new sources of light or glare to the temporary switch installation areas. The installation of the temporary switches will not adversely affect the quality of the installation sites or their surroundings. In addition, environmental protection measures will be implemented as described in the MND. Therefore, potential impacts are consistent with those evaluated in the MND, and the installation of temporary switches will not create significant additional impacts to aesthetics.</p>
Agriculture and Forestry Resources	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N	<p><i>No Change.</i> The installation and use of the temporary switches will not significantly impact agricultural activities because the temporary switches will be located at existing distribution poles and the work will be conducted from existing public roads, paved roads, or dirt/gravel roads. Therefore, the installation and use of the temporary switches will not convert agricultural land to non-agricultural use. Installation and use of the temporary switches will not result in impacts to forestry resources because the location will not require additional tree trimming or removal. Installation and use of the temporary switches 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 installation and use of the temporary switches will not create significant additional impacts to agriculture or forestry resources.</p>
Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	<p><i>No Change.</i> The proposed temporary switches are located on existing distribution poles along existing public roads, paved roads, or dirt/gravel roads. The two known locations for proposed temporary switches are surrounded by agricultural land. The installation and use of the temporary switches will not increase traffic beyond the estimated 200 construction-related vehicle trips per day that were analyzed in the MND. In addition, the installation and use of the temporary switches will not significantly 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. Work associated with the temporary switches will occur from existing public roads, paved roads, or dirt/gravel roads that are regularly used by local traffic, farm equipment or by PG&E for operations and maintenance; 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 installation and use of the temporary switches will not create significant additional impacts to air quality or greenhouse gas emissions.</p>



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<p style="text-align: center;">Biological Resources</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N </p>	<p><i>No Change.</i> The proposed temporary switches will be located on existing distribution poles that are located along existing public roads, paved roads, or dirt/gravel roads. The proposed work would occur from or adjacent to these existing roads that are regularly used by local traffic, farm equipment, or by PG&E for operations and maintenance. The two known locations for proposed temporary switches are surrounded by agricultural land and are not located within any California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), or United States (U.S.) Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) jurisdictional areas. If a temporary switch location is identified within a jurisdictional area, PG&E will consult with the appropriate agencies. The known proposed temporary switches are located in areas already disturbed by light and heavy-duty agricultural equipment. The additional temporary switch locations are located in areas that are regularly accessed by PG&E operation and maintenance activities. In accordance with project permits, pre-construction wildlife surveys for San Joaquin kit fox, western burrowing owl, and American badger were performed at the two known switch locations by a project-approved biologist on June 13, 2013. The results of these surveys are included in Attachment B: Wildlife Survey Memorandum. The habitat at each of the two known proposed temporary switch locations was determined to be unsuitable for these species, and no sign or evidence of these species was observed during the surveys. In addition pre-construction nesting bird surveys were completed on June 13, 2013. No evidence of nesting activity or active nests was observed during the survey. Pre-construction surveys for San Joaquin kit fox, western burrowing owl, and American badger will be conducted for all additional temporary switch locations prior to the commencement of construction. In addition, if construction activities occur at the additional temporary switch locations during the nesting bird season (February through August), nesting bird surveys will be conducted no more than 7 days prior to construction. In addition, surveys for California tiger salamander, California red-legged frog, and nesting birds will be conducted immediately prior to construction. 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. Installation of the temporary switches 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 installation and use of the temporary switches will not create significant additional impacts to biological resources.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Cultural Resources</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N </p>	<p><i>No Change.</i> No excavation or other ground-disturbing work is required to install the temporary switches; therefore, no impacts to cultural resources are anticipated. 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 installation and use of the temporary switches will not create significant additional impacts to cultural resources.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Geology, Soils, and Seismicity</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N </p>	<p><i>No Change.</i> The proposed work is limited in size and scope. The installation of the temporary switches will occur above ground at existing distribution pole locations and no new impacts to geology, soils, and seismicity are anticipated. Environmental protection measures will be implemented as described in the MND. Therefore, potential impacts are consistent with those evaluated in the MND, and the installation and use of the temporary switches will not create additional impacts to geology, soils, or seismicity.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Hazards and Hazardous</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Y </p>	<p><i>No Change.</i> Installation of the temporary switches will not create new significant hazards or require new hazardous materials. Environmental</p>



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Materials	<input type="checkbox"/> N	protection measures will be implemented as described in the MND. Therefore, potential impacts are consistent with those evaluated in the MND, and the installation and use of the temporary switches will not create significant additional impacts from hazards or hazardous materials.
Hydrology and Water Quality	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N	No Change. Installation of the temporary switches is not anticipated to will not occur within any hydrologic features and will not result in new significant impacts to hydrology or water quality. If any of the additional temporary switch locations are located within a hydrologic feature no activities will occur until the resource agencies have been consulted and the appropriate permits have been secured. Therefore, potential impacts are consistent with those evaluated in the MND, and the installation and use of the temporary switches will not create significant additional impacts to hydrology or water quality.
Land Use and Planning	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N	<i>No Change.</i> Installation of the temporary switches will not result in new significant impacts to land use because the current land use will not be converted. Work will be conducted at existing distribution poles from the shoulder of a paved road and from an existing dirt road. Therefore, potential impacts are consistent with those evaluated in the MND, and the installation and use of the temporary switches will not create significant additional impacts to land use or planning.
Mineral Resources	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N	<i>No Change.</i> The existing distribution poles where the temporary switches will be installed are not located on any known mineral resources. Therefore, potential impacts are consistent with those evaluated in the MND, and the installation and use of the temporary switches will not create additional significant impacts to mineral resources.
Noise	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	<i>No Change.</i> The installation and use of the temporary switches will not result in new significant impacts from noise because the temporary switches will be installed along existing public roads, paved roads, or dirt/gravel roads which are currently used for local traffic, farm equipment, and/or PG&E operations and maintenance. The installation of the temporary switch located 300 feet south of Pole 20/04 will occur approximately 330 feet from the closest residence. The installation of the temporary switch located 300 feet north of Pole 21/05 is located approximately 1,500 feet from the nearest residence. The installation and use of the temporary switches will have less than significant impacts on noise because activities will be short in duration. In addition, the installation and use of the temporary switches will not increase traffic beyond the estimated 200 construction-related vehicle trips per day that were analyzed 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 installation and use of the temporary switches will not create additional significant impacts from noise.
Population and Housing	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N	<i>No Change.</i> Installation and use of the temporary switches will not induce population growth or displace existing housing or people. Therefore, potential impacts are consistent with those evaluated in the MND, and the installation and use of the temporary switches will not create additional significant impacts to population or housing.
Public Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N	<i>No Change.</i> The installation and use of the temporary switches will not result in any impacts to public services because installation of the temporary switches will be of relatively short duration. The work at each temporary switch location will require no more than two hours on two separate days. In addition, construction activities are temporary and do not require construction of new or physically altered governmental facilities for public services; therefore, impacts to emergency response services, fire protection services,



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		police services, school facilities, recreational facilities, public libraries, and hospitals will be less than significant. Environmental protection measures will be implemented as described in the MND. Therefore, potential impacts are consistent with those evaluated in the MND and installation and use of the temporary switches will not create additional significant impacts to public services.
Recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N	<i>No Change.</i> Impacts to recreational resources will not increase substantially beyond those identified in the MND because the known-proposed temporary switches are not located near any recreational facilities and PG&E does not anticipate that the other locations of temporary switches will be located near recreational facilities. The installation and use of the temporary switches 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 installation and use of the temporary switches will not create additional significant impacts to recreation.
Transportation and Traffic	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	<i>No Change.</i> The proposed temporary switches will be located along existing public roads, paved roads, or dirt/gravel roads. The se two known temporary switch locations will occur on the shoulder of a public road; therefore, PG&E does not anticipate impacts to traffic. In addition, PG&E does not anticipate that work at the additional temporary switches will occur within a public roadway. Therefore; no other encroachment permit is required because no work within public roads will occur. The paved roads associated with the temporary switch located south of 20/04, and the dirt road associated within the temporary switch located north of 21/05, are currently used for local traffic, farm equipment, and PG&E operations and maintenance. The roads associated with the additional temporary switch locations are currently used for PG&E operations and maintenance. The installation and use of the temporary switches will not result in new significant impacts to transportation or traffic because the installation process will not create new routes for transportation. The installation of the temporary switches will not increase traffic beyond the estimated 200 construction-related vehicle trips per day that were analyzed in the MND. As described in the MND, where necessary, traffic control will be provided during installation of the temporary switches, and as specified in Caltrans, San Benito County, and Monterey County encroachment permits. Environmental protection measures will be implemented as described in the MND. Therefore, potential impacts are consistent with those evaluated in the MND, and the installation and use of the temporary switches will not create additional significant impacts to transportation or traffic.
Utilities and Service Systems	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N	<i>No Change.</i> The installation and use of the temporary switches will not result in new significant impacts to existing utilities or service systems because the duration of work will be very brief. Environmental protection measures will be implemented as described in the MND. Therefore, potential impacts are consistent with those evaluated in the MND, and the installation and use of the temporary switches 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)	
Environmental Compliance Supervisor	Keith Miller	KM	6/13/13	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Lead Environmental Inspector	Nick Fisher	NF	6/13/13	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
PG&E Project Biologist (if applicable)	Andrea Henke	AH	6/13/13	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
PG&E Project Archaeologist (if applicable)	Wendy Nettles	Not Applicable (NA)		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
PG&E Storm Water Program Manager (if applicable)	Keith Baker	NA		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
PG&E Environmental Compliance Lead	Andy Smith	AS	6/13/13	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
PG&E Project Manager (if applicable)	Mike Montoya	MM	6/13/13	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 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		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
CDFG		NA		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
USACE		NA		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
RWQCB		NA		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No



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CPUC and CPUC CONSULTANT SECTION

Variance Approved: Yes No

AFFECTED RESOURCE(s) and APPLICABLE MITIGATION MEASURES

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics: | <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture and Forestry Resources: | <input type="checkbox"/> Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources: | <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources: | <input type="checkbox"/> Geology, Soils, and Seismicity: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hazards and Hazardous Materials: | <input type="checkbox"/> Hydrology and Water Quality: | <input type="checkbox"/> Land Use and Planning: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mineral Resources: | <input type="checkbox"/> Noise: | <input type="checkbox"/> Population and Housing: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public Services: | <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation: | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation and Traffic: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 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:

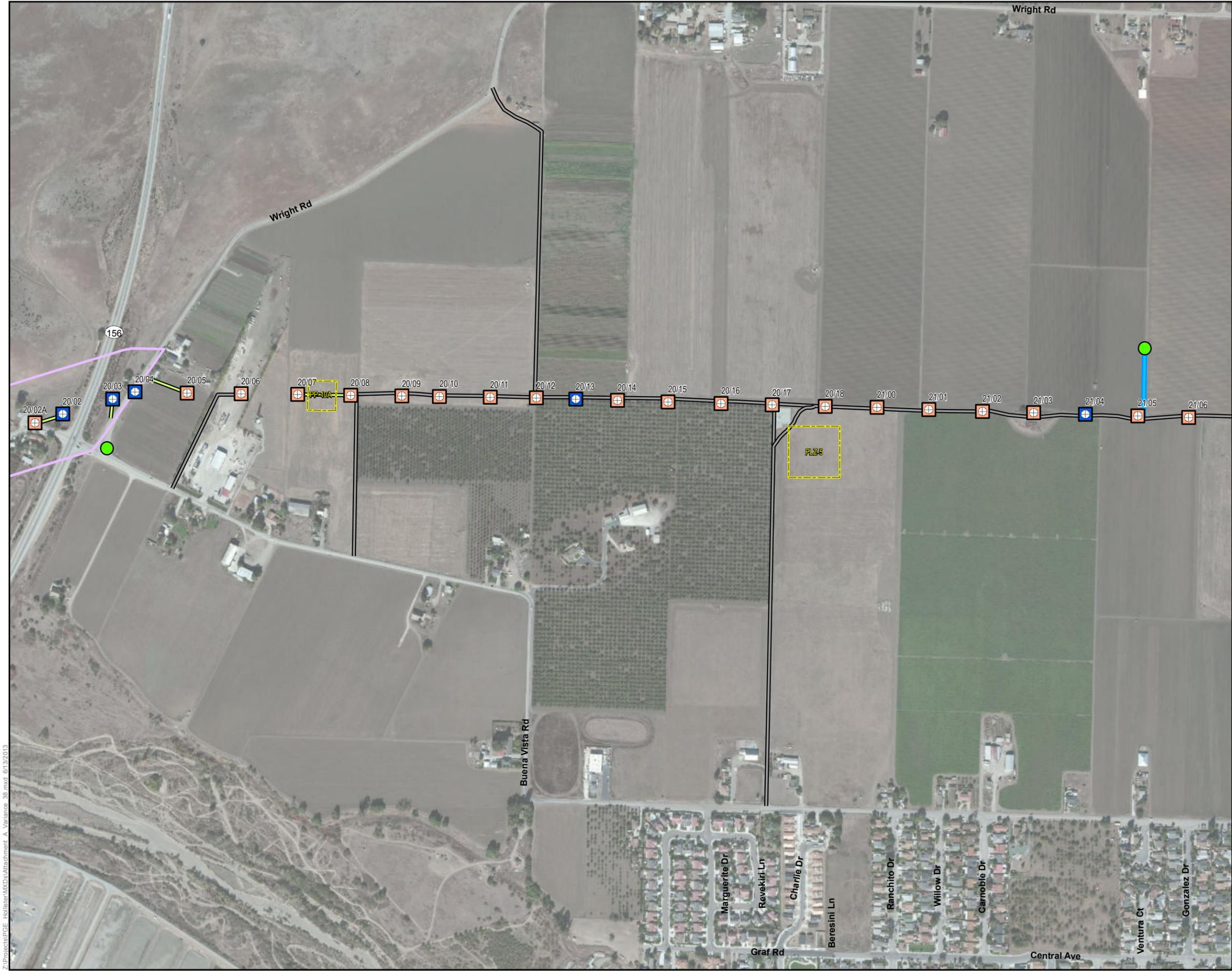
Conditions:

Condition Name:

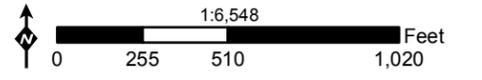
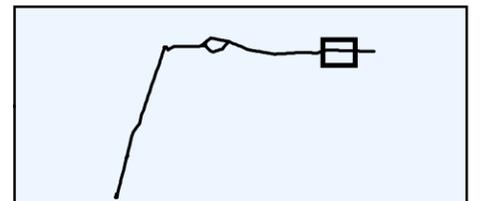
Conditions:

Attachment A Variance 38 Map

Hollister 115 kV Power Line Reconductoring Project



- Proposed Existing Road
- Temporary Distribution Switch
- New Tower
- Existing Tower
- Existing Pole
- Existing Pole to be Removed
- Existing Pole to be Topped
- LDS Location
- TSP Location
- Construction Area
- ⋯ ATV
- Existing Road
- Existing Road - Needs Improvement
- New Road
- Overland Travel Route
- Burrowing Owl Burrow (Insignia 2012)
- Burrowing Owl Burrow (Insignia 2011)
- Burrowing Owl (ICF 2011)
- Great blue heron rookery (Insignia 2012)
- California Tiger Salamander
- California red-legged frog (Insignia 2012, 2013)
- Wetland (ICF 2008)
- Water Crossing (ICF 2008 Delineation)
- High Cultural Resource Sensitivity Area



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Source: ICF, 2008; Insignia, 2012; PG&E, 2012; USGS, 2012



Pre-Construction Biological Survey Results Memorandum
Hollister 115 kV Power Line Reconductoring Project
Hollister, California

MEMO

To: Andi Henke, Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E)
From: Keith Miller, Insignia Environmental (Insignia)
Date: June 13, 2013
Re: Pre-construction Biological Surveys of the Hollister 115 Kilovolt Power Line Reconductoring Project Survey Report #41

Introduction : This memorandum (memo) summarizes the results of pre-construction wildlife surveys for San Joaquin kit fox (*Vulpes macrotis mutica*), western burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*), and American badger (*Taxidea taxus*) that were conducted for portions of the Hollister 115 Kilovolt Power Line Reconductoring Project (project).

The areas evaluated during this survey include the following locations:

- Distribution Pole 300 feet south of Pole 20/04
- Distribution Pole 300 feet north of Pole 21/05
- Pole 20/02A

Project permits and authorizations—which include the United States (U.S.) Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Biological Opinion (BO) (No. 81440-2010-F0404), California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) Section 2081 Incidental Take Permit (ITP) (No. 2081-2011-032-04), and the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) (No. A.09-11-016)—require pre-construction surveys for special-status species. More specifically, the USFWS BO and the CDFW ITP require pre-construction surveys for San Joaquin kit fox and the CPUC MND requires pre-construction surveys for San Joaquin kit fox, American badger, and western burrowing owl.

Methodology: Prior to the field surveys, Insignia reviewed the USFWS BO, CDFW ITP, and CPUC MND for the project in order to determine the required survey areas, the required timing of the surveys, and for information describing suitable habitat designations and previous survey results. A search of the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) had been conducted during previous planning and permitting by ICF International for the surveyed areas.

Insignia biologist Nick Fisher conducted the pre-construction biological

surveys for San Joaquin kit fox, western burrowing owl, and American badger on June 13, 2013. The biologist evaluated the work areas as well as a 200-foot buffer around the work areas for San Joaquin kit fox and American badger, and a 250-foot buffer around the work areas for western burrowing owl.

During the pre-construction surveys, biologists searched for the special-status species and evaluated the survey area for potential habitat or evidence of the species, including burrows, using the following minimum criteria for each animal:

- San Joaquin kit fox: Natural or artificial burrows that measured between 4 and 12 inches in diameter for a minimum of 36 inches in length.
- American badger: Natural burrows that measured approximately 7 to 12 inches in diameter (typically with a half-moon shaped entrance), with claw marks along the side walls of the entrance, prey remains or scat, that would indicate badger activity.
- Western burrowing owl: Natural or artificial burrows with evidence of western burrowing owl occupation, including sign of their presence, such as feathers, whitewash, or pellets.

Burrows were examined using a 3-inch diameter ball attached to a 36-inch-long flexible conduit handle. Each burrow was examined by probing the burrow with the ball and conduit, carefully working it down to the point where the diameter of the burrow narrowed to less than 3 inches. The depth of the burrow was determined using the length of the handle. A flashlight or a mirror was used to illuminate the burrow to help evaluate the dimensions. Each entrance was examined for scat, tracks, claw marks, prey remains, feathers, whitewash, and pellets. Areas with loose soil such as dry drainages and dirt access roads were also examined for scat or tracks. A Global Positioning System unit was utilized to record the location of any suitable den or burrow feature that was found. When a suitable den or burrow for San Joaquin kit fox or American badger is found, the biologists surround the den with a powder tracking medium. This medium is then groomed to provide a smooth surface to enable the biologists to visually detect animal tracks and to determine if special-status species were occupying the burrow. The tracking material is inspected and maintained daily for three consecutive days.

Results:

None of the burrows observed during the survey were suitable for San Joaquin kit fox or American badger. No San Joaquin kit fox or American badger or any evidence of these species, including scat, tracks, claw marks, or prey remains was observed. No western burrowing owl, or evidence of this species, including feathers, whitewash, or pellets was observed within 250-feet of a project location.