

California Public Utilities Commission

DRAFT INITIAL STUDY / MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

- 1. Project Title:** Southern California Gas Company (SCG) / San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E) “Fiber in Gas” Project (Schedule No. G-FIG)
- 2. Lead agency name and address:** California Public Utilities Commission
505 Van Ness Avenue, Fourth Floor
San Francisco, California 94102
- 3. Contact person and phone number:** John Boccio, Regulatory Analyst
(415) 703-2641
- 4. Project location:** SCG/SDG&E Service Territories: Fresno, Imperial, Kern, Kings, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Tulare, Ventura, and San Diego Counties.
- 5. Project sponsor’s name and address:** Glen J. Sullivan, Attorney for SCG/SDG&E
101 Ash Street
San Diego, California 92101
- 6. General plan designation:** Not applicable.
- 7. Zoning:** Not applicable.
- 8. Description of project:** The proposed project is the request for authorization of a new tariff service allowing Carriers to place fiber optic cable in conduit placed in SCG/SDG&E’s active gas pipelines under new Schedule No. G-FIG. The new service would establish tariff rates, terms and conditions providing Carriers the option to request SCG/SDG&E to install conduit within its active gas pipelines using a proposed “fiber-in-gas” or “FIG” technology.
- 9. Surrounding land uses and setting:** The land-use setting for the project would be primarily urban metropolitan areas. Surrounding land uses would include high density, mixed-use residential, commercial, and industrial.
- 10. Other public agencies whose approval is required:** Public agencies whose approvals are required are listed in the Initial Study.

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a “Potentially Significant Impact” as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics | <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture Resources | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Air Quality |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Geology / Soils |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hazards & Hazardous Materials | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hydrology / Water Quality | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Land Use / Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mineral Resources | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Noise | <input type="checkbox"/> Population / Housing |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation / Traffic |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Utilities / Service Systems | <input type="checkbox"/> Mandatory Findings of Significance | |

Findings:

Based on the findings of the initial study and implementation of the mitigation measures identified therein, the project would not:

- degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or
- eliminate important examples of California history or prehistory;
- achieve short-term, to the disadvantage of long-term, environmental goals;
- have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable; and
- have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly.

DETERMINATION: (To be completed by lead agency)

The CPUC has reviewed the proposed project and has determined that the project, based on the initial study attached hereto, will not have a significant effect on the environment. An environmental impact report is not required pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970. This environmental review process and negative declaration is done in accordance with CEQA (PRC 21000 et seq.), the State CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR 15000 et seq.), and CPUC CEQA Rule 17.1, "Special Procedure for Implementation of CEQA."

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

- I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.
- I find that the proposed project may have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.
- I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.



Signature

October 31, 2002

Date

Paul Clanon, Director, Energy Division

Printed Name

California Public Utilities Commission

For

TABLE S-1
SUMMARY OF IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES FOR
SCG/SDG&E SCHEDULE NO. G-FIG “FIBER OPTIC CABLE IN GAS PIPELINES”

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT	SIGNIFICANCE BEFORE MITIGATION	MITIGATION MEASURES	SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION
<u>Aesthetics</u>			
Impact AES-1: Possible temporary, minor changes to the resources visible from a scenic vista or State Scenic Highway might result from project construction and operation.	Less than Significant	No mitigation required.	
Impact AES-2: Possible minor changes in the existing visual character or quality of a site might result from project construction and operation.	Potentially Significant	Mitigation Measure AES-2a: SCG/SDG&E would minimize visual impacts of project facilities and comply with local regulations, keep construction and staging areas orderly and free of trash and debris, and restore areas disturbed by project construction to their pre-project condition.	Less than Significant
<u>Agricultural Resources</u>			
Implementation of the proposed project would have no direct, indirect, or cumulative effect on agricultural resources, including conversion of farmland to other uses, conflict with agricultural zoning or contracts, or involvement with other changes that could result in conversion of farmland to other uses.	No Impact		
<u>Air Quality</u>			
Impact AIR-1: Introduction of additional emissions sources in a region for which air quality plans have been developed.	Less than Significant	No mitigation is required.	
Impact AIR-2: Increase in local pollutant concentrations.	Potentially Significant	Mitigation Measure AIR-2a: SCG/SDG&E would require the construction contractors to implement a dust abatement program to reduce dust and air emissions.	Less than Significant

TABLE S-1 (continued)
SUMMARY OF IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES FOR
SCG/SDG&E SCHEDULE NO. G-FIG “FIBER OPTIC CABLE IN GAS PIPELINES”

<u>ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT</u>	<u>SIGNIFICANCE BEFORE MITIGATION</u>	<u>MITIGATION MEASURES</u>	<u>SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION</u>
Impact AIR-3: Project construction would create an increase in local pollutant concentrations.	Potentially Significant	Mitigation Measure: Implement Mitigation Measure AIR-2a.	Less than Significant
Impact AIR-4: Project construction would expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.	Potentially Significant	Mitigation Measure: Implement Mitigation Measure AIR-2a.	Less than Significant
<u>Biology</u>			
Impact BIO-1: Proposed project activities located within or adjacent to areas that support natural habitat and special-status species may adversely affect these species.	Potentially Significant	<p>Mitigation Measure BIO-1a: Prior to construction, a qualified biologist will conduct preconstruction surveys of all project activity sites which, may support special status species habitat.</p> <p>Mitigation Measure BIO-1b: If the qualified biologist determines that project sites support natural habitat (i.e., wetlands, other water resources, upland communities) that may support special-status species, project activities will be relocated outside of these habitats. Natural habitat will be avoided by project activities that may impact special status species.</p> <p>Mitigation Measure BIO-1c: If the qualified biologist determines that project sites are adjacent to natural habitat (i.e., wetlands, other water resources, upland communities) that may support special-status species, the following measures will apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A qualified biological monitor will demarcate the construction zone in the field to ensure that special-status species habitat is not disturbed during project activities. • A qualified biological monitor will be present for project activities adjacent to sensitive habitat or areas, which may support special-status species. 	Less than Significant

TABLE S-1 (continued)
SUMMARY OF IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES FOR
SCG/SDG&E SCHEDULE NO. G-FIG “FIBER OPTIC CABLE IN GAS PIPELINES”

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT	SIGNIFICANCE BEFORE MITIGATION	MITIGATION MEASURES	SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION
Impact BIO-2: Potential short-term disturbance of waters of the U.S. (including wetland communities).	Potentially Significant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If preconstruction surveys determine that special-status wildlife species have the potential to enter the construction zone from adjacent natural habitat, exclusion fencing shall be constructed and maintained in good condition between construction areas and potential habitat for special-status wildlife species. The temporary fence shall be constructed with typical silt fencing, and shall be substantial enough to deter animals from entering the work area and to prevent parking construction vehicles or staging or storage of construction materials on road shoulders adjacent to habitat. The location of the fence shall be determined by the biological monitor. • If preconstruction surveys identify potential nesting habitat for special-status birds or roosting habitat for special-status bats adjacent to proposed project activities, a no-disturbance buffer zone would be established around active nests and roosts during the breeding season. If construction activities are scheduled to occur during the breeding season of birds (February through August) or bats (March through August), pre-construction surveys will be conducted within 500 feet of project activities. If construction activities are scheduled to occur during the non-nesting season, then no surveys would be required. If surveys indicate that nests/roosts are inactive or potential habitat is unoccupied during the construction period, no further mitigation would be required. If active nests/roosts are found, SCG/SDG&E would establish a no-disturbance buffer acceptable in size to CDFG around the active nest/roost. <p>Mitigation Measure: Implement Mitigation Measures BIO-1a, BIO-1b, and BIO-1c.</p>	Less than Significant

TABLE S-1 (continued)
SUMMARY OF IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES FOR
SCG/SDG&E SCHEDULE NO. G-FIG “FIBER OPTIC CABLE IN GAS PIPELINES”

<u>ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT</u>	<u>SIGNIFICANCE BEFORE MITIGATION</u>	<u>MITIGATION MEASURES</u>	<u>SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION</u>
Impact BIO-3: Construction of the project could result in impacts to heritage or other significant trees in the project area.	Less than Significant	No mitigation is required.	
Impact BIO-4: Project activities may conflict with provisions of Habitat Conservation Plans, Natural Community Conservation Plans, or other approved conservation plans.	Potentially Significant	Mitigation Measure BIO-4a: Comply with provisions of relevant HCPS, NCCPs, and other approved conservation plans.	Less than Significant
<u>Cultural Resources</u>			
Impact CUL-1: Possible substantial effects can occur to known, but unevaluated prehistoric and historic archaeological deposits from ground disturbing construction operations (construction related impact, particularly portals outside of previously excavated areas).	Potentially Significant	<p>Mitigation Measure CUL-1a: For any excavation outside of previously excavated areas, conduct a records search for the proposed project area and the lands within a one-mile radius from the appropriate California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS).</p> <p>Mitigation Measure CUL-1b: For any proposed locations that have the potential for buried prehistoric cultural material or fossils, all grading and excavation for FIG installation will be monitored by a qualified archaeologist. Monitoring is required within 500 feet of the boundaries of known cultural resources (including extant architectural features) and within 1,000 feet of the locations of modern and historic stream crossings. Monitors must have 2 years of professional experience and be certified by the CPUC. Monitors will be under the supervision of the cultural resources specialist.</p>	Less than Significant

TABLE S-1 (continued)
SUMMARY OF IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES FOR
SCG/SDG&E SCHEDULE NO. G-FIG “FIBER OPTIC CABLE IN GAS PIPELINES”

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT	SIGNIFICANCE BEFORE MITIGATION	MITIGATION MEASURES	SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION
<p>Impact CUL-2: Potential discovery or disturbance of unique paleontological resources during construction could constitute an impact. Because significant fossil discoveries can be made in areas designated as low, as well as moderate to high potential, excavation activities could possibly unearth significant paleontological resources. While this is unlikely, should such resources be encountered, this would be a significant impact.</p>	Potentially Significant	<p>Mitigation Measure CUL-2a: In the event that fossil remains are encountered, either by the cultural resources monitor or by construction personnel, qualified paleontological specialists will be contacted. Construction within 50 feet of the find will be temporarily halted or diverted until the discovery is examined by a qualified vertebrate paleontologist. The paleontologist shall notify the appropriate agencies to determine procedures that would be followed before construction is allowed to resume at the location of the find. Significant fossils will be salvaged through a program of excavation, analysis, and documentation. Fossil remains collected during the salvage program shall be cleaned, sorted, catalogued, and then deposited in a public, non-profit institution with research interests in the materials.</p>	Less than Significant
<p>Impact CUL-3: Possible substantial effects may occur to human burials from construction operations. Subsurface excavation in the areas known or suspected to contain burials or archaeological sites of the type known to possess burials (occupation sites), could disturb or destroy significant human remains. This could include burials of prehistoric remains or non-Indian pioneers.</p>	Potentially Significant	<p>Mitigation Measure CUL-3a: : If human remains are found at any time during site preparation or excavation activities, all work will immediately stop within 100 feet of the find. The project archaeologist will be notified immediately and will, in turn, immediately notify the county coroner for the appropriate county in compliance with Section 7050.5 of the California Health and Safety Code. Upon the completion of compliance with all relevant sections of the California Health and Safety Code, the cultural resources specialist will implement Mitigation Measure CUL-1b.</p>	Less than Significant
<p><u>Geology and Soils</u></p> <p>Impact GEO-1: Initial construction operations and periodic repairs for the project could result in temporary accelerated erosion and sedimentation from soil disturbance and/or vegetation removal.</p>	Less than Significant	No mitigation required.	

TABLE S-1 (continued)
SUMMARY OF IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES FOR
SCG/SDG&E SCHEDULE NO. G-FIG “FIBER OPTIC CABLE IN GAS PIPELINES”

<u>ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT</u>	<u>SIGNIFICANCE BEFORE MITIGATION</u>	<u>MITIGATION MEASURES</u>	<u>SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION</u>
Impact GEO-2: The FIG project area could be subjected to geologic hazards including settlement, and slope failure.	Less than Significant	No mitigation required.	
Impact GEO-3: The FIG project area could be subjected to geologic hazards relating to expansive soils.	Less than Significant	No mitigation required.	
<u>Hazards and Hazardous Materials</u>			
Impact HAZ-1: Possible temporary exposure to or release of hazardous materials during construction.	Potentially Significant	<p>Mitigation Measure HAZ-1a: Ensure proper labeling, storage, handling, and use of hazardous materials.</p> <p>Mitigation Measure HAZ-1b: Report all significant releases or threatened releases of hazardous materials.</p> <p>Mitigation Measure HAZ-1c: Reduce excavation impacts.</p>	Less than Significant
Impact HAZ-2: The project could require disposal of potentially contaminated soils.	Potentially Significant	<p>Mitigation Measure HAZ-2a: Implement an Awareness Training Program to educate field personnel regarding the unexpected discovery of contaminated soil.</p> <p>Mitigation Measure HAZ-2b: Characterize excavated materials for disposal if those materials have the odor or appearance of contamination and report all discovery of significant hazardous waste, including soil and groundwater contamination, to the inspector of the local agency.</p>	Less than Significant
Impact HAZ-3: Potential public health hazard associated with a pipeline rupture during FIG installation and operation that could lead to an explosion resulting in property damage or fatalities.	Potentially Significant	Mitigation Measure HAZ-3a: SCG/SDG&E will update safety procedures to address FIG installation procedures in compliance with all federal and state pipeline safety regulations and include in those procedures training requirements provided to all employees expected to work on pipelines serving as carriers.	Less than Significant

TABLE S-1 (continued)
SUMMARY OF IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES FOR
SCG/SDG&E SCHEDULE NO. G-FIG “FIBER OPTIC CABLE IN GAS PIPELINES”

<u>ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT</u>	<u>SIGNIFICANCE BEFORE MITIGATION</u>	<u>MITIGATION MEASURES</u>	<u>SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION</u>
Impact HAZ-4: Possible Exposure of the Public or Environment to Hazardous Materials Sites.	Potentially Significant	Mitigation Measure: Implement Mitigation Measure HAZ-2a and HAZ-2b .	Less than Significant
Impact HAZ-5: Possible Temporary Limited Emergency Access.	Potentially Significant	Mitigation Measure: Implement Mitigation Measure TRA-1a .	Less than Significant
<u>Hydrology and Water Quality</u>			
Impact HYD-1: Project construction could violate water quality standards or waste discharge requirements.	Less than Significant	No mitigation is required.	
Impact HYD-2: Dewatering activities would result in short-term, localized alterations in groundwater levels.	Less than Significant	No mitigation is required.	
Impact HYD-3: Dewatering activities would contribute runoff water that could exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems.	Less than Significant	No mitigation is required.	
<u>Land Use and Planning</u>			
Impact LUP-1: Possible conflict with applicable local land use plans, policies, and regulations might occur.	Less than Significant	No mitigation is required.	Less than Significant

TABLE S-1 (continued)
SUMMARY OF IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES FOR
SCG/SDG&E SCHEDULE NO. G-FIG “FIBER OPTIC CABLE IN GAS PIPELINES”

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT	SIGNIFICANCE BEFORE MITIGATION	MITIGATION MEASURES	SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION
<u>Mineral Resources</u>			
The developed portions of the project area are typically located within areas designated as MRZ-1, indicating that no significant mineral deposits are present or likely to be present. Therefore, the implementation of FIG technology would not reduce the availability of any minerals that could be of value to the region or state.	No Impact		
<u>Noise</u>			
Impact NOI-1: Construction activities could generate noise levels in excess of local standards during project construction and operation.	Potentially Significant	<p>Mitigation Measure NOI-1a: SCG/SDG&E would require construction contractors to comply with the construction hours limitations and construction equipment standards set forth in the local general plan noise element and the noise ordinance of all applicable jurisdictions of cities and counties, or in compliance with conditions outlined in acquired permits from those applicable jurisdictions.</p> <p>Mitigation Measure NOI-1b: To reduce daytime noise impacts due to construction, SCG/SDG&E shall require construction contractors to implement the following measures when operating adjacent to sensitive receptors in order to maintain compliance with local noise standards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equipment and trucks used for construction shall utilize the best available noise control techniques (e.g., improved mufflers, equipment redesign, use of intake silencers, ducts, engine enclosures and acoustically-attenuating shields or shrouds, wherever feasible); 	Less than Significant

TABLE S-1 (continued)
SUMMARY OF IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES FOR
SCG/SDG&E SCHEDULE NO. G-FIG “FIBER OPTIC CABLE IN GAS PIPELINES”

<u>ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT</u>	<u>SIGNIFICANCE BEFORE MITIGATION</u>	<u>MITIGATION MEASURES</u>	<u>SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION</u>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact tools (e.g., jack hammers, pavement breakers, and rock drills) used for construction shall be hydraulically or electrically powered wherever possible to avoid noise associated with compressed air exhaust from pneumatically powered tools. However, where use of pneumatic tools is unavoidable, an exhaust muffler on the compressed air exhaust shall be used; this muffler can lower noise levels from the exhaust by up to about 10 dBA. External jackets on the tools themselves shall be used where feasible, and this could achieve a reduction of 5 dBA. Quieter procedures shall be used, such as drills rather than impact equipment, whenever feasible; and • Construction equipment shall be located as far from sensitive receptors as possible. 	
Impact NOI-2: Exposure of sensitive receptors to localized groundborne vibration and groundborne noise during project construction.	Less than Significant	No mitigation is required.	
Impact NOI-3: Temporary and intermittent noise increases during project construction.	Less than Significant	No mitigation is required.	
<u>Population and Housing</u>			
Implementation of the proposed project would neither affect existing population nor generate additional population, nor would it affect or create additional demand for new housing, directly, indirectly, or cumulatively.	No Impact		

TABLE S-1 (continued)
SUMMARY OF IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES FOR
SCG/SDG&E SCHEDULE NO. G-FIG “FIBER OPTIC CABLE IN GAS PIPELINES”

<u>ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT</u>	<u>SIGNIFICANCE BEFORE MITIGATION</u>	<u>MITIGATION MEASURES</u>	<u>SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION</u>
<u>Public Services</u>			
Impact PUB-1: Project activities will temporarily disrupt existing transportation and circulation patterns in the vicinity, and impact response times for fire and police emergencies, by disrupting traffic flows and street operations.	Potentially Significant	Mitigation Measure: Implement Mitigation Measure TRA-1a.	Less than Significant
<u>Recreation</u>			
Impact REC-1: The project would intermittently and temporarily disrupt existing nearby recreational facilities for the duration of project construction.	Less than Significant	No mitigation is required.	
<u>Transportation and Traffic</u>			
Impact TRA-1: Pipeline access points for FIG installation within streets would reduce the number of, or the available width of, travel lanes on roads, resulting in temporary disruption of traffic flows and increases in traffic congestion.	Potentially Significant	Mitigation Measure TRA-1a: Obtain and comply with local and state road encroachment permits, and railroad encroachment permits.	Less than Significant
Impact TRA-2: FIG installation within or adjacent to roadways would temporarily increase the potential for accidents.	Potentially Significant	Mitigation Measure: Implement Mitigation Measure TRA-1a.	Less than Significant
Impact TRA-3: FIG installation within or adjacent to streets would affect emergency access.	Potentially Significant	Mitigation Measure: Implement Mitigation Measure TRA-1a.	Less than Significant

TABLE S-1 (continued)
SUMMARY OF IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES FOR
SCG/SDG&E SCHEDULE NO. G-FIG “FIBER OPTIC CABLE IN GAS PIPELINES”

<u>ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT</u>	<u>SIGNIFICANCE BEFORE MITIGATION</u>	<u>MITIGATION MEASURES</u>	<u>SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION</u>
Impact TRA-4: Construction required for FIG installation would generate a temporary demand for parking spaces for construction worker vehicles; in addition, FIG installation would temporarily displace existing on-street parking on a number of streets.	Potentially Significant	Mitigation Measure: Implement Mitigation Measure TRA-1a.	Less than Significant
Impact TRA-5: FIG installation could temporarily disrupt bus service near pipeline access points.	Potentially Significant	Mitigation Measure: Implement Mitigation Measure TRA-1a.	Less than Significant
<u>Utilities and Service Systems</u>			
Impact UTL-1: The placement of fiber optic cable within existing gas pipelines would reduce the service capacity of the existing gas pipelines.	Potentially Significant	Mitigation Measure UTL-1a: Application of the Schedule No. G-FIG’s Terms and Special Conditions shall address/avoid potentially significant impacts to pipeline service capacity.	Less than Significant
Impact UTL-2: The proposed new form of service will have service implications including potential impacts on operations.	Potentially Significant	Mitigation Measure UTL-2a: Primary operations and maintenance procedures shall be modified to address potential operational impacts.	Less than Significant