

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Project Background

On September 30, 2015, San Diego Gas & Electric Company (SDG&E) and Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas) (the applicants or proponents) filed an application (A.15-09-013) with the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity to construct, operate, and maintain the Pipeline Safety and Reliability Project – New Natural Gas Line 3602 and De-rating Line 1600 (PSRP, or the proposed project). The CPUC deemed the application complete on August 23, 2016.

The CPUC determined that an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) needed to be prepared to address the impacts of the applicants' proposed project. A Notice of Preparation for the EIR was published in May 2017. Preparation of a Draft EIR for PSRP was initiated in June 2017 and was anticipated to be published in summer of 2018. If the CPUC had approved the proposed project or an alternative that crossed Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Miramar land, MCAS Miramar would have been required to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act as the applicants would request an easement to construct the pipeline on MCAS Miramar land. In a letter dated March 17, 2017, MCAS Miramar indicated to the CPUC and the applicants that it would continue to support the preparation of the EIR but would not participate in developing a joint environmental document (Environmental Assessment/EIR) for the proposed project.

Finalization and publication of the Draft EIR for PSRP ceased based on the Administrative Law Judge's decision (D.18-06-028) on June 21, 2018, to deny the applicants' proposed certificate of public convenience and necessity for PRSP. This Master Environmental Assessment (MEA) documentation was compiled pursuant to D.18-06-028, which states:

In order to retain the benefit of the data gathered to date and the comprehensive technical and scientific analysis generated by the Pipeline Safety and Reliability Project - New Natural Gas Line 3602 and De-rating Line 1600 (PSRP, or the proposed project) CEQA process, the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) shall properly preserve all Cultural Reports and prepare a Master Environmental Assessment (MEA) document pursuant to Public Resources Code § 21083, CEQA, Guideline 15169. The Energy Division staff shall determine the appropriate format and content of the MEA based on the completion of the draft and final technical reports and studies undertaken for this proceeding to date. The MEA may be used or referenced in any related, future EIR or Negative Declaration requiring study of the baseline environment in the San Diego region.

Information included in this MEA was compiled from the applicants' application, including the Proponents Environmental Assessment (PEA) (November 2015), the applicants' Amended Application (March 2016), subsequent deficiency and data request responses (November 2015 through March 2018), and the CPUC's subsequent preliminary Draft EIR sections.

Included with the MEA is an appendix that describes potential alternatives to the proposed natural gas pipeline project (see Appendix B). This information may be useful for the consideration of future natural gas pipeline projects, specifically, or similar linear energy projects that may be proposed in San Diego County. Among the potential alternatives considered to the proposed Line 3602 pipeline are those that would include the construction of battery storage facilities. A compilation of geospatial data for the

proposed project and alternatives is available for download on the project website at:
<http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/environment/info/ene/sandiego/sandiego.html>.

1.2 About Master Environmental Assessments

An MEA is a document described in the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Title 14 *California Code of Regulations*, Chapter 3 *Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act*, Article 11 *Types of EIRs*, Section 15169 *Master Environmental Assessment*, that a public agency may elect to prepare to include an “inventory, data base for all, or a portion of, the territory subject to its control in order to provide information which may be used or referenced in EIRs [Environmental Impact Reports] or negative declarations.”

An MEA may contain an inventory of the physical and biological characteristics of a study area, as well as any additional data that the public agency may consider useful or necessary to describe the environmental characteristics of the study area. An MEA may be prepared to provide information on existing environmental conditions and constraints within a study area, which may be used to influence the design and location of future projects, and assist in identifying the long-range, area-wide cumulative impacts within that area. Further, an MEA may serve as a reference document to assist public agencies in reviewing other environmental documents within the study area.

There are no mandatory requirements for the content or organization of an MEA—these are left to the judgment and discretion of the CEQA lead agency that is preparing the MEA. An MEA is not a CEQA review document for any project and does not provide environmental clearance under CEQA or any other laws. It is prepared for informational purposes only.

1.3 Project Location and Component Overview

Components of the proposed project would have been located in the cities of Escondido, San Diego, and Poway and unincorporated communities of San Diego County, terminating on federal land within MCAS Miramar. See Table 1.3-1 for a milepost by milepost breakdown of where the proposed project would have been located. See Figure 2.1-1 for a project overview.

Table 1.3-1 Locations of the Proposed Project

Beginning MP	End MP	Community/City
0.0	14.5	Unincorporated San Diego County
14.5	15.7	Hidden Meadows West, Unincorporated San Diego County
15.7	21.0	Unincorporated San Diego County
21.0	27.9	Escondido
27.9	28.3	North County Metro East, Unincorporated San Diego County
28.3	29.6	Escondido
29.6	34.5	San Diego
34.5	39.7	Poway
39.7	44.4	San Diego
44.4	46.6	MCAS Miramar

Key:
 MCAS = Marine Corps Air Station
 MP = Milepost

The applicants' proposed project as described in the PEA and responses to data requests consisted of the following:

- New Natural Gas Line 3602 - Construction of a 46.6-mile-long, 36-inch-diameter pipeline. Proposed facilities to support Line 3602 included:
 - Construction of the Rainbow Pressure-Limiting Station;
 - Construction of 10 mainline valves;
 - Construction of three cross-tie facilities (i.e., one at existing Line 1600, one at existing Line 1601, and one at existing Line 2010); and
 - Construction or installation of minor operation support facilities, including pipeline inspection launching and receiving equipment, a cathodic protection system, and a fiber optic intrusion and leak detection system.
- De-rating Line 1600 – de-rating approximately 45 miles of existing Line 1600 in order to convert it from a transmission pipeline¹ into a distribution pipeline.² This conversion would require system modifications at various locations along existing Line 1600, including:
 - Removal of eight existing regulator stations that would not be replaced with other facilities;
 - Removal of two existing regulator stations that would be replaced with check valves;
 - Removal of one existing regulator station that would be replaced with a new regulator stations;
 - Construction of three new regulator stations and connection pipelines;
 - Construction of the Mira Mesa Pipeline Extension (a 0.9-mile-long, 8-inch-diameter pipe);
 - Line 49-31B Replacement (replacement of an existing 0.7-mile-long segment of Line 49-31B with 6-inch-diameter pipe); and
 - Line 49.31C Pre-Lay Segment Replacement (installation of 1.1 miles of 8-inch-diameter pipe in a segment in Pomerado Road).

1.4 Project Objectives

Project objectives under CEQA are defined in order to allow proper consideration of alternatives to the proposed project. During the CEQA environmental review process for the proposed project, the CPUC would have evaluated the applicants' objectives and identified a final project objective/s. For the purposes of this MEA, SDG&E and SoCalGas's project objectives are provided for reference.

¹ A "transmission line", as defined in 49 CFR § 192.3, "means a pipeline, other than a gathering line, that: (1) transports gas from a gathering line or storage facility to a distribution center, storage facility, or a large volume customer that is not down-stream from a distribution center; (2) operates at a hoop stress of 20 percent of more of specified minimum yield strength (SMYS); or (3) transports gas within a storage field."

² A "distribution line", as defined in 49 CFR § 192.3, "means a pipeline other than a gathering or transmission line".

In their PEA, the applicants explained the objectives of the proposed project as follows:

1. Implement pipeline safety requirements for existing Line 1600, thereby enabling the applicants to comply with their CPUC-approved Pipeline Safety Enhancement Plan (PSEP) and modernize the system with state-of-the-art materials;³
2. Improve system reliability and resiliency⁴ by minimizing dependence on a single pipeline; and
3. Enhance operational flexibility to manage stress conditions by increasing system capacity.

1.4.1 SDG&E and SoCalGas Objective 1

SDG&E and SoCalGas's first objective was to comply with their CPUC-approved PSEP by replacing existing Line 1600 with a new gas transmission line as soon as practicable. Construction of a new gas transmission line would allow SDG&E and SoCalGas to de-rate, or lower the pressure of, Line 1600 to a distribution pipeline. This would add a greater margin of safety by replacing the transmission function of Line 1600 with a new pipeline using modern, state-of-the-art materials. Additionally, replacing the transmission function of Line 1600 would avoid any potential customer impacts associated with pressure-testing Line 1600.

1.4.2 SDG&E and SoCalGas Objective 2

Replacing Line 1600 with a 36-inch diameter gas transmission pipeline would improve system reliability and resiliency by enabling core and noncore customers to continue to receive gas service in San Diego in the event of a planned or unplanned service reduction or outage of Line 3010 or the Moreno Compressor Station. San Diego County is completely reliant on the Moreno Compressor Station and Line 3010, which combined provide approximately 90 percent of SDG&E's capacity. A system outage on the Moreno Compressor Station or Line 3010 would constrain available capacity in San Diego, and could lead to gas curtailments. New natural gas line 3601 would alleviate this constraint by providing resiliency for both the Moreno Compressor Station and Line 3010.

1.4.3 SDG&E and SoCalGas Objective 3

The proposed project would increase the transmission capacity of the gas system in San Diego County by approximately 200 MMcfd [million cubic feet per day]. This provides the applicants with flexibility and would allow the applicants to manage the fluctuating peak demand of core and noncore customers by expanding the options available to handle stress conditions.

³ Per SDG&E's September 2015 PEA: Line 1600 is an existing, approximately 50-mile natural gas transmission line constructed in 1949 that has not been pressure tested in accordance with modern day practices and recently-adopted regulations. In Decision 14-06-007, the CPUC adopted the Applicant's Pipeline Safety Enhancement Plan (PSEP), which calls for pressure testing or replacing the transmission function of Line 1600.

⁴ Per SDG&E's September 2015 PEA: The term "resilience" means the ability to prepare for and adapt to changing conditions, and withstand and recover rapidly from disruptions. Resilience includes the ability to withstand and recover from deliberate attacks, accidents, or naturally occurring threats or incidents. Press Release (dated February 12, 2013, titled "Presidential Policy Directive – Critical Infrastructure Security and Resilience," available at <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2013/02/12/presidential-policy-directive-critical-infrastructure-security-and-resil>). The applicants use the term "resiliency" and "redundancy" interchangeably throughout the PEA because a redundant transmission pipeline enables a gas system to be resilient.

1.5 Reader's Guide to this Master Environmental Assessment

This MEA is organized as follows:

- **Chapter 1: Introduction.** Discusses MEAs in general, project background, project location and components, and project objectives.
- **Chapter 2: Project Description.** Describes in detail the proposed project, and summarizes permits and consultation that may be required.
- **Chapter 3: Environmental Setting.** Summarizes the environmental and regulatory setting, as well as draft significance criteria for each resource area.
- **Appendices:** Draft Scoping Report, Description of Potential Alternatives, biological surveys, preliminary draft mitigation measures, and other technical reports for the proposed project are also included as appendices. For a complete list of appendices, refer to the table of contents for this MEA.