

Notice of Exemption**- 1 -**

To:
Office of Land Use and Climate
Innovation
[CEQA Submit](#)

From:
California Department of Fish and Wildlife
Central Region
1234 East Shaw Avenue
Fresno, CA 93710



SUBJECT: *Filing of Notice of Exemption pursuant to Public Resources Code § 21108*

State Clearinghouse Number: 2025070458

Project Title: California Endangered Species Act (CESA) Incidental Take Permit (ITP) No. 2081-2023-046-04 (Minor Amendment No. 1) for the Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas) Line 85 Mile Post 55.91 Deep Well Anode Install Project (Project)

Project Location: The Project is located in the southern San Joaquin Valley approximately 3.5 miles northeast of the community of McKittrick in Kern County, California. The Project is specifically located on the northwest side of State Route (SR) 58 within the West Elk Hills United States Geological Survey 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle map in Township 30 South, Range 22 East, and Section 3, Mount Diablo Base and Meridian. The approximate center of the site is located at latitude 35.34946° N and longitude -119.60254° W.

Project Description: The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) has issued a CESA (Fish & G. Code, § 2050 et seq.) ITP and this Amended ITP (Minor Amendment No. 1) authorizing SoCalGas (Permittee) to incidentally take giant kangaroo rat (*Dipodomys ingens*), a species listed as endangered under CESA (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 670.5, subd. (a)(6)(C)), and San Joaquin antelope squirrel (*Ammospermophilus nelsoni*) and San Joaquin kit fox (*Vulpes macrotis mutica*), species listed as threatened under CESA (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 670.5, subd. (b)(6)(B) and (b)(6)(E), respectively).

The ITP authorizes take of giant kangaroo rat, San Joaquin antelope squirrel, and San Joaquin kit fox (Covered Species) for Project activities to install a deep well anode to Line 85 at approximate Mile Post 55.91 to distribute cathodic protection and protect the integrity of the pipeline from corrosion to ensure this pipeline complies with federal and state pipeline safety regulations and ensure a safe and constant supply of natural gas to customers. This Amended ITP (Minor Amendment No. 1) extends the expiration date for an additional 12 months, extends the deadline to complete the Habitat Management Lands requirement to January 10, 2028, and extends the timeline for submitting the Security. The resulting impacts of the Project to the Covered Species remain the same. Construction for the Project has experienced delays associated with obtaining federal take authorization through a Habitat Conservation Plan, but is anticipated to begin in June 2026.

Public Agency Approving Project: **CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE**

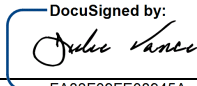
Person or Public Agency Carrying Out Project: Southern California Gas Company, Pourya Arefi, Project Manager, 9400 Oakdale Ave, Chatsworth, California 91311

Exempt Status:

- ☒ Statutory Exemption. California Code of Regulations, Title 14, section 15269, subdivision (b); Public Resources Code, section 21080, subdivision (b)(4)
☐ Categorical Exemption.

Reasons why project is exempt: See Attachment

CDFW Contact Person: Sarah Bahm (Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist)), sarah.bahm@wildlife.ca.gov

Signature:  **Date:** 2/3/2026
 Julie A. Vance
 Regional Manager, Central Region

Date received for filing at OPR: _____

**Attachment to Notice of Exemption
State Clearinghouse No. 2025070458**

**CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
CALIFORNIA ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT
Amended Incidental Take Permit No. 2081-2023-046-04**

**Southern California Gas Company
Line 85 Mile Post 55.91 Deep Well Anode Install Project**

Approval of this Project is subject to the statutory exemption for “Specific actions necessary to prevent or mitigate an emergency” (Emergency Project; Pub. Resources Code, §21080, subd. (b)(4)) and California Code of Regulations, Title 14, section 15269, subdivision (b)), “Emergency repairs to publicly or privately owned service facilities necessary to maintain service essential to the public health, safety, or welfare which includes those actions that require a reasonable amount of planning to address an anticipated emergency” under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA; Pub. Resources Code, §21000 et seq.). “Emergency” is defined as “A sudden, unexpected occurrence, involving a clear and imminent danger, demanding immediate action to prevent or mitigate loss of, or damage to, life, health, property, or essential public services” (Pub. Resources Code, §21060.3).

The purpose of the Project is to distribute cathodic protection (CP) current to protect the integrity at the Project location along the existing 26-inch natural gas pipeline 85 (Line 85) by controlling the corrosion of the metal surface by connecting it to a metal that is more easily corroded to act as the anode of the electrochemical cell. Southern California Gas Company (Permittee) is required to maintain natural gas pipelines by the California Public Utilities Commission General Order 112 E, which incorporates the U.S. Department of Transportation regulations (Code of Federal Regulations, Title 49, Part 192), Transportation of Natural and Other Gas by Pipeline, as well as the California Department of Water Resources California Well Standards Bulletins 74-81 and 74-90, to ensure a safe and constant supply of natural gas to customers. The CP system has been out of tolerance for many years, and the associated pipeline segment faces an elevated and time-sensitive risk of failure. The Project has been subject to delays associated with the Permittee obtaining federal take authorization for federally listed species through a Habitat Conservation Plan.

The Project will ensure this pipeline complies with federal and state pipeline safety regulations and ensure a safe and constant supply of natural gas to customers. The Project includes drilling new 8-inch diameter anode well to a depth of approximately 500 feet, installing associated wires within the well, capping and abandoning the existing anode well, trenching to install and connect the new anode wire conduits and structure wires, installing a well vent pipe, excavating a bellhole to connect electrical wires to the pipeline, and replacing the Electronic Test Station and aboveground fink head.

On December 23, 2025, the Permittee requested a minor amendment to extend the expiration date for an additional 12 months, extend the deadline for completing the Habitat Management Lands requirement, and extend the timeline for submitting the Security due

to the delays described above. This Amended ITP (Minor Amendment No. 1) amends the ITP to extend the expiration date to December 31, 2026, extends the deadline for completing the Habitat Management Lands requirement to January 10, 2028, and extends the deadline for submitting the Security. The resulting impacts of the Project to the Covered Species remain the same.

CDFW has determined that this Minor Amendment No. 1 will not increase the amount take of the Covered Species, nor will it increase Covered Species habitat impacts. Impacts will be minimized and fully mitigated through the implementation of measures required by Incidental Take Permit No. 2081-2023-046-04, as amended. Measures include: 1) Weekly Compliance Reports; 2) establishment of avoidance zones; 3) worker education; 4) species relocation; and 5) permanent habitat protection.