

**Tri-Valley 2002 Electric Power Capacity
Increase Project**

Environmental Impact Report

SCOPING REPORT

Prepared for:

California Public Utilities Commission

Contract PS 5027

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CALIFORNIA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
Tri-Valley 2002 Electric Power Capacity Increase Project
EIR SCOPING REPORT

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1. INTRODUCTION

The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) is directing the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Tri-Valley 2002 Electric Power Capacity Increase Project proposed by the Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E Co.). The CPUC, as the lead California State agency, has selected Aspen Environmental Group (Aspen), an independent contractor, to prepare a Draft and Final EIR to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

This Scoping Report presents a summary of the issues and concerns presented by the public and various agencies during the comment period for the CPUC's Notice of Preparation (of EIR). Comments were submitted in written form, and verbal comments were given at three scoping meetings held in the cities of Dublin and Livermore on May 8, 2000 and Pleasanton on May 9, 2000. Questions and oral and written comments are summarized in Sections 2.3.A through 2.6. Copies of all written comment letters are included in Volume 2, which is available at library repositories only (see list in Appendix C).

1.1 PURPOSE OF SCOPING

The EIR on the Tri-Valley 2002 Electric Power Capacity Increase Project will evaluate the potential significant environmental effects of the proposed project and its alternatives. (Note that the Proposed Project is described in the Notice of Preparation, Appendix A). The process of determining the focus and content of the EIR is known as scoping. Scoping helps to identify the range of actions, environmental effects, and mitigation measures to be analyzed in depth, eliminates from detailed study those issues that are not pertinent to the final decision on the Proposed Project, and focuses the selection of alternatives. Scoping is also an effective way to bring together and address the concerns of the public, affected agencies, and other interested parties and ensure that community values are taken into consideration in the conduct of the environmental study. Significant issues for study in the EIR may be identified through public and agency comments.

Scoping is not conducted to resolve differences concerning the merits of the project or to anticipate the ultimate decision on the proposal. Rather, the purpose of scoping is to help ensure that a comprehensive and focused EIR will be prepared that provides a fair and thorough analysis of the potential environmental impacts of the proposed project and its alternatives that can be used as a sound basis for the decision-making process. Members of the public, affected Federal, State, and local agencies, the proponent of the action, interest groups, and other interested parties may participate in the scoping process for this project by providing written and verbal comments or recommendations concerning the issues to be analyzed and the alternatives to be studied in the EIR.

The intent of the Tri-Valley 2002 Electric Power Capacity Increase Project EIR scoping process is to:

- 1) Inform the agencies and interested members of the public about the proposed project and the CPUC's actions in relation to it, including compliance with CEQA requirements.
- 2) Identify the range of concerns and project-related issues that form the basis for identification of significant environmental issues to be addressed in the EIR.
- 3) Identify a range of alternatives to the proposed project, which may be considered in the EIR.
- 4) Identify suggested mitigation measures, or ideas and approaches to mitigation that may be useful and explored further in the EIR.
- 5) Add scoping participants to the mailing list of agencies and individuals interested in future activities related to the preparation of this EIR.

1.2 SCOPING PROCESS

The scoping process for the Tri-Valley 2002 Electric Power Capacity Increase Project EIR consists of four elements:

- 1) Issuance of a Notice of Preparation (NOP)/Notice of Public Scoping Meetings to solicit comments from public agencies, as required by CEQA (copy included in Appendix A). Responsible agencies are required to provide their comments and concerns to the lead agency within 30 days of NOP issuance. During this 30-day period, CEQA encourages early consultation with all interested members of the public (scoping) about the issues and alternatives to be studied in the EIR.
- 2) Public scoping meetings (copy of meeting notice included in Appendix B).
- 3) Summarization of scoping comments and feedback in the form of brief responses (Section 2 of this Scoping Report).
- 5) Distribution of the Scoping Report, including scoping comments and feedback, as appropriate, to the commenting agencies, Scoping Meeting attendees, the EIR team members for use in work planning and impact analysis, and to public libraries designated as project repository sites for members of the public interested in reviewing the report and comments.

1.2.1 Notice of Preparation (NOP)

The CPUC issued the NOP on April 20, 2000 and distributed it to the State Clearinghouse and city, county, state and federal agencies, affected state and federal legislators, and local elected officials, as well as to the four local project information repositories, and posted on the CPUC's project website. There is a 30-day legally required period for agencies and others to submit comments regarding the scope and content of the EIR. Approximately 180 copies of the NOP were mailed out and additional copies were distributed at the scoping meetings. A copy of the NOP is included in Appendix A of this report.

1.2.2 Scoping Meetings

Dates and Locations. On Monday, May 8, 2000, two Scoping Meetings were held:

- From 2:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Dublin Branch of the Alameda County Public Library, Dublin, California
- From 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at the Livermore Rod & Gun Club, Livermore, California.

On Tuesday, May 9, 2000, one Scoping Meeting was held:

- From 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. at the Pleasanton Public Library, Pleasanton, California.

Public Notice. A project mailing list was developed based on PG&E Co.'s database of property owners located on or near the route of the proposed project and its alternatives as well as names of groups and individuals with a vital interest in the project compiled by the Aspen Team; 1,141 meeting announcements were mailed out. A copy of the meeting announcement can be found in Appendix B. Following are the newspapers in, and the date on, which the public notices appeared:

- *Tri-Valley Herald* (May 3 and 4, 2000)
- *Alameda Times Star* (May 3 and 4, 2000)

Format and Process: Jim Marks of Urban Alternatives, the EIR public participation consultant, acted as meeting facilitator, welcomed the attendees, introduced the speakers and summarized the agenda. Beth Shipley of the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) then described the CPUC's environmental review and General Proceeding processes, including a schedule for completion of the environmental planning/decision-making processes. Martha Sullivan of Aspen Environmental Group, the CPUC's environmental consultant, then described PG&E Co.'s preferred project, its alternatives and the EIR process.

Beth Shipley completed the presentation with an explanation of the purpose of scoping. Jim Marks then facilitated the presentation of questions and comments by audience members, explained how to get more information and, at adjournment, thanked the attendees for their participation in these meetings.

Attendance: The majority of people attending the meetings signed in when they arrived. A total of 225 people, excluding California Public Utilities Commission staff, EIR consultant staff and representatives of Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E Co.), attended the three scoping meetings: 20 at the May 8th afternoon meeting, 37 at the May 8th evening session, and 168 at the May 9th evening meeting. (A list of the individuals who signed in at these scoping meetings is found in Appendix D.)

Oral Comments: Seven (7) members of the public provided oral comments at the May 8th afternoon session, eleven (11) at the evening session. Twenty-four (24) commenters spoke at the May 9th evening meeting. Commenters, their remarks and the CPUC's responses are presented in the tabular summary in Section 2 of this report.

1.3 PROJECTED EIR SCHEDULE

Table 1 below presents the anticipated schedule for publication of the Draft and Final EIR.

Table 1. EIR Schedule

Draft EIR Published	November 2000
DEIR Review and Comment Period	50 - 60 days
Final EIR Published	March 2001

1.4 ADDITIONAL PROJECT INFORMATION

Interested members of the public and agency representatives may obtain more information on the status of the project as follows:

- Check the Internet website:
<http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/divisions/energy/environmental/info/aspn/tri-valley/tri-valley.htm>
- Send e-mail to EIR preparation team: *tri-valley@aspeneg.com*
- Call or fax the Project Information Line: (925) 397-3041.

Project information can also be found in five information repositories, including public libraries in Dublin, San Ramon, Pleasanton and Livermore and at CPUC headquarters in San Francisco (see Appendix C).

2. SCOPING COMMENTS

This section summarizes the questions and comments received at the three scoping meetings as well as those received by mail, e-mail, fax and voicemail. Scoping meeting attendees had the opportunity to ask questions both during the CPUC's presentation and after it was completed. Attendees were also invited to provide comments verbally at the end of the Scoping Meeting's presentation and/or submit comments on a form provided at each meeting. Comment forms or letters could also be submitted by mail, fax or email to the CPUC. The official deadline for receipt of public comments on scoping was May 22, 2000. Due to the number of written comments submitted after this date, written submissions for the record were accepted through June 1, 2000. Forty-two (42) people spoke at the scoping meetings. Two hundred twenty-nine (229) written submissions and five (5) telephoned voicemails were received.

All of the "responses" to questions and comments noted in this Scoping Report, in sections 2.3.A through 2.6 were not provided at the scoping meetings. These are, in fact, post-meeting responses prepared by the environmental consulting team to provide feedback to all who commented either at the scoping meetings themselves or through written submissions.

2.1 COMMENT ORGANIZATION

Factual questions raised and oral comments presented by speakers at the scoping meetings are grouped according to the Tri-Valley city in which the scoping meeting was held. Review of the written and telephoned comments received indicated that the concerns and issues identified by the public for consideration during scoping reflected, for the most part, the commenter's geographic locale within the study area. As a result, scoping written comments and responses are presented in tables organized by study area community (i.e., Dublin, Livermore or Pleasanton). The relatively few comments that pertained to the project or study area as a whole are summarized in a separate table.

Accordingly, the analysis of public comments for this Scoping Report is organized as follows:

- 2.3 Dublin Area (Dublin, CA Meeting: May 8, 2000, Afternoon Meeting)**
- 2.3.A Questions Raised by Speakers at the Dublin Meeting
- 2.3.B Oral Comments Presented at the Dublin Meeting
- 2.3.C Written Comments: Dublin Area Concerns/Issues
- 2.4 Livermore Area (Livermore, CA Meeting: May 8, 2000, Evening Meeting)**
- 2.4.A Questions Raised by Speakers at the Livermore Meeting
- 2.4.B Oral Comments Presented at the Livermore Meeting
- 2.4.C Written Comments: Livermore Area Concerns/Issues
- 2.5 Pleasanton Area (Pleasanton, CA Meeting: May 9, 2000, Evening Meeting)**
- 2.5.A Questions Raised by Speakers at the Pleasanton Meeting
- 2.5.B Oral Comments Presented at the Pleasanton Meeting
- 2.5.C Written and Telephoned Comments: Pleasanton Area Concerns/Issues
- 2.6 Written Comments: Overall Project and Study Area Concerns/Issues**

2.2 HOW TO READ THE SCOPING COMMENTS SUMMARY TABLES

The tables found in the body of the Scoping Report catalogue the comments received from the public during

scoping and indicate how each of these was used in shaping the environmental consultant’s final scope of work for EIR issues. Tables 2.3.B, 2.4.B and 2.5.B summarize the oral comments presented by members of the public at the three scoping meetings. Tables 2.3.C, 2.4.C, 2.5.C and 2.6 present the comments received from the public in writing and by telephone during the scoping review and comment period. The tables also present the corresponding responses by the CPUC to each comment.

Symbols are used in each of the tables to provide basic information about the extent of the EIR’s analysis of issues raised by the public. To help readers use the tables effectively, these symbols, and some of the ways in which they are used are illustrated and explained in the following table.

Status of Suggested Scope Item			EXPLANATION
Already In Scope	Incorporated Into Scope	Not Incorporated Into Scope	
X			= Suggested scope item is reflected throughout much of the final scope of work
	X		= The suggested scope item was added as a result of commenter suggestion(s).
		X	= The suggested scope item has not been included in the final workscope.
X	X		= Some of the suggested scope items are already part of the scope of work; others were added as a result of commenter suggestions
X		X	= Some of the suggested scope items are already part of the scope of work; some items have not been included in the final scope of work
		NA	= Not applicable. Comment not pertinent to the EIR scope of work, but may have some value to the Project in other ways.

2.3 DUBLIN AREA (DUBLIN, CA MEETING: MAY 8, 2000, AFTERNOON MEETING)

2.3.A RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS RAISED BY SPEAKERS AT THE MAY 8, 2000 AFTERNOON MEETING: DUBLIN, CA

1. How many megawatts will each part (North/South) of the project provide under the Phase 2 scenario?

PG&E Co.'s proposed Phase 2 would only involve the North Area; there are no South Area project components proposed for Phase 2. The South Area portion of the proposed project would be completed during Phase 1. Phase 2 does not provide additional megawatts, per se. It is designed to change the source of power supply for the new substations. PG&E Co.'s proposed Phase 2 would supply power to the new Dublin and North Livermore Substations proposed in Phase 1 from the Tesla transmission substation, near the Alameda-Stanislaus County line, rather than the Contra Costa-Newark Transmission Line, which is expected to be overtaxed by demand around 2000-2008, based on PG&E's Proponent's Environmental Assessment (PEA).

2. How many feet from the transmission line could telephone or radio transmission be affected?

There is no specific distance at which electric power transmission lines interfere with telephone and radio transmission. However, the following experience and general considerations do apply:

Power lines can generate high-frequency energy and electro-magnetic fields that can interfere with broadcast signals or electronic equipment, however, this is generally not a problem for power lines of the type and size proposed for this project. Radio and television interference problems, when they do occur, tend to be associated with loose or worn power line hardware, and the sources of interference can be located and remedied. It is also recognized that certain levels of magnetic fields may interfere with electronic equipment or computer monitors; these problems can be resolved with a variety of measures, including relocation of the monitor, use of magnetic shield enclosures, or replacement with liquid crystal displays that are not susceptible to magnetic fields.

3. How will the EIR evaluate PG&E Co.'s "preferred" alternative?

The EIR will subject PG&E Co.'s proposed project to a thorough, independent analysis of its potential environmental effects, in accordance with the requirements of CEQA and the CPUC. As required by CEQA, the CPUC will also evaluate a range of reasonable alternatives to PG&E Co.'s proposed project, including the No Project Alternative.

4. Will local generation be considered as an alternative?

Yes, local generation, which was identified by the public during the scoping phase, as well as in PG&E Co.'s Proponent's Environmental Assessment (PEA), has been considered as an alternative for study in the EIR. Please see Section 3 for the results of the CPUC's alternatives screening process for the EIR. Alternatives eliminated from consideration and those retained are briefly described and the reason(s) for their status explained.

5. Will a connection from the Dublin to San Ramon substations be built in the future? Some of PG&E Co.'s alternatives include this connection, but the proposed project does not. If these stations are not connected, how will the system be improved?

Alternative No. 2 in PG&E Co.'s PEA does include a connection from the San Ramon to the Dublin Substation. Whether this component of Alternative No. 2 will be built depends on the results of the overall environmental study and decision making process for this project. (Please see Section 3 of this Scoping Report for a summary of the alternatives and components selected/not selected for study in the EIR and the reasons for these decisions.)

Even if this component of Alternative No. 2 were not implemented, the system would be improved as follows:

According to the description in PG&E Co.'s PEA, both the north and south portions of the Transmission Reinforcement Project would drain power from the 230kV Contra Costa-Newark Circuit #2, to the East, in Phase 1. Eventually, the Dublin and North Livermore substations would be connected to the Tesla Substation in Phase 2. The system is proposed to be improved by bringing additional electric power into the Tri-Valley area from these sources, not from the San Ramon Substation or the San Ramon-Pittsburgh Transmission Line.

6. How is it decided whether lines are built above ground or underground?

Undergrounding is considered in limited circumstances (due to the higher cost) where overhead lines would present a substantial adverse impact, such as visually or from a safety perspective (such as air traffic safety). Constraints to undergrounding also need to be evaluated, including the availability of space in the Right of Way (ROW) or engineering factors affecting an underground cable (e.g., crossing of an active fault or landslide) where an overhead line could more easily avoid those hazards.

7. Why isn't population and housing listed in the list of issue areas?

The issue areas listed in the Scoping Meeting Presentation were not intended to be exhaustive, but only examples of the issues evaluated under CEQA. Population and housing is one of the issue areas required for study by CEQA and, therefore, will be analyzed in this EIR.

8. Will PG&E Co.'s proposed project provide enough capacity for all development now submitted in plans to local jurisdictions?

According to its proponent's environmental assessment, PG&E Co.'s proposed project is intended to provide enough electric power capacity to serve existing, approved and planned development in the Tri-Valley area to 2007.

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