



CPUC Public Meeting for PG&E's Fulton-Fitch Mountain Reconductoring Project Draft Supplemental Initial Study/ Mitigated Negative Declaration

June 18, 2019





Introduction

- Speakers
 - **Lisa Orsaba** – California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) – Lead Agency
 - **Aaron Lui** – Panorama Environmental, Inc. (Panorama) – Environmental Consultant to the CPUC
- Meeting Format
- Agenda
 - Purpose of Meeting
 - Environmental Review Process and Project History
 - Approved Project and Proposed Modifications
 - Supplemental Environmental Review
 - Public Participation
 - Clarifying Questions and Public Remarks

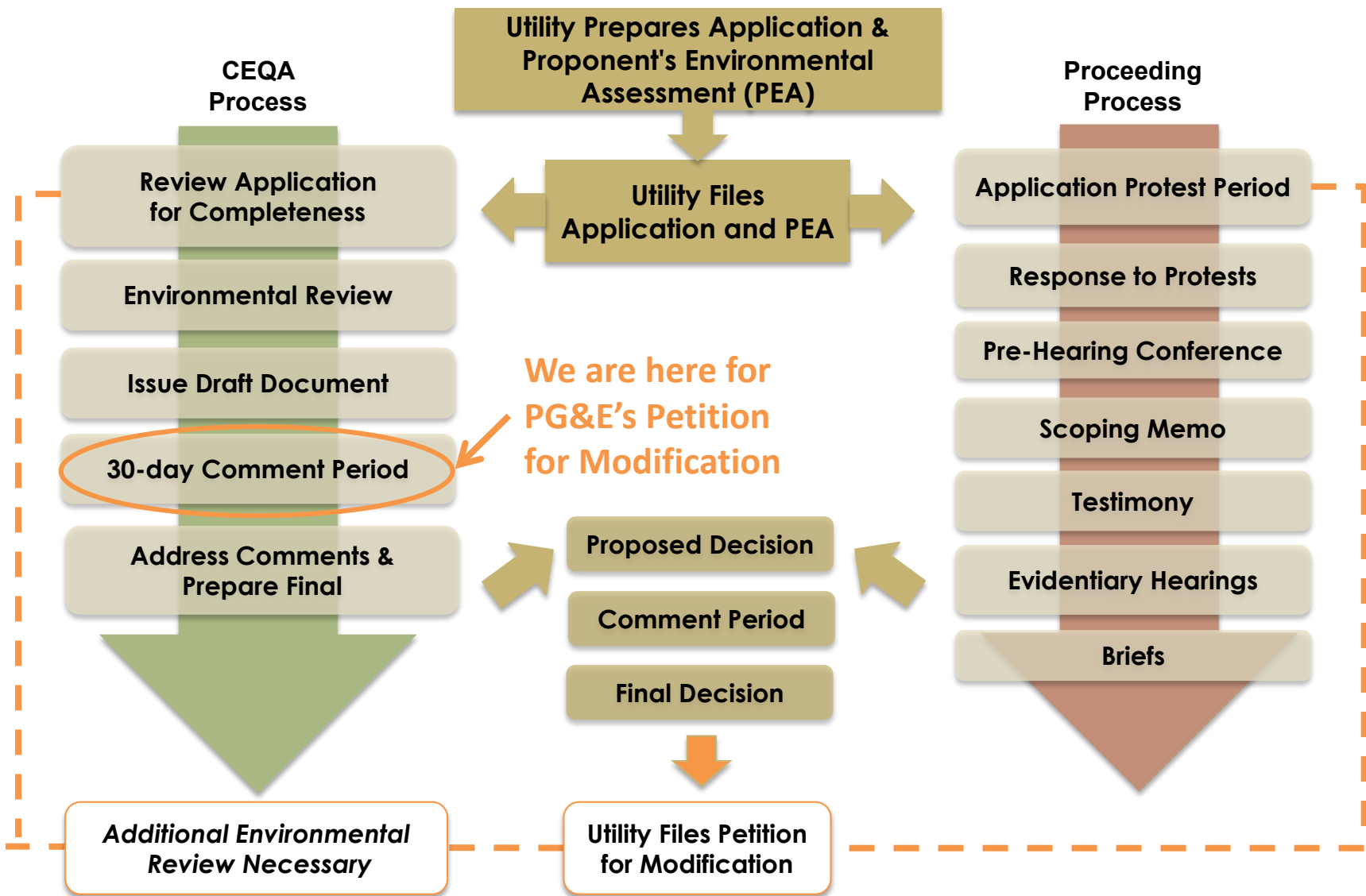


Purpose of the Meeting

- The purpose of this meeting is to explain:
 - Process under California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)
 - CPUC's Final IS/MND for the project
 - PG&E's proposed modifications to the approved project
 - CPUC's supplemental environmental review for PG&E's proposed modifications, including:
 - Decision to prepare a Supplemental Initial Study (IS)/ Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND)
 - Approach to preparing the Supplemental IS/MND
 - Key findings presented in the Supplemental IS/MND
 - How to submit written comments on the Draft Supplemental IS/MND



CPUC Proceeding and Environmental Review Process





Environmental Review Process and Project History

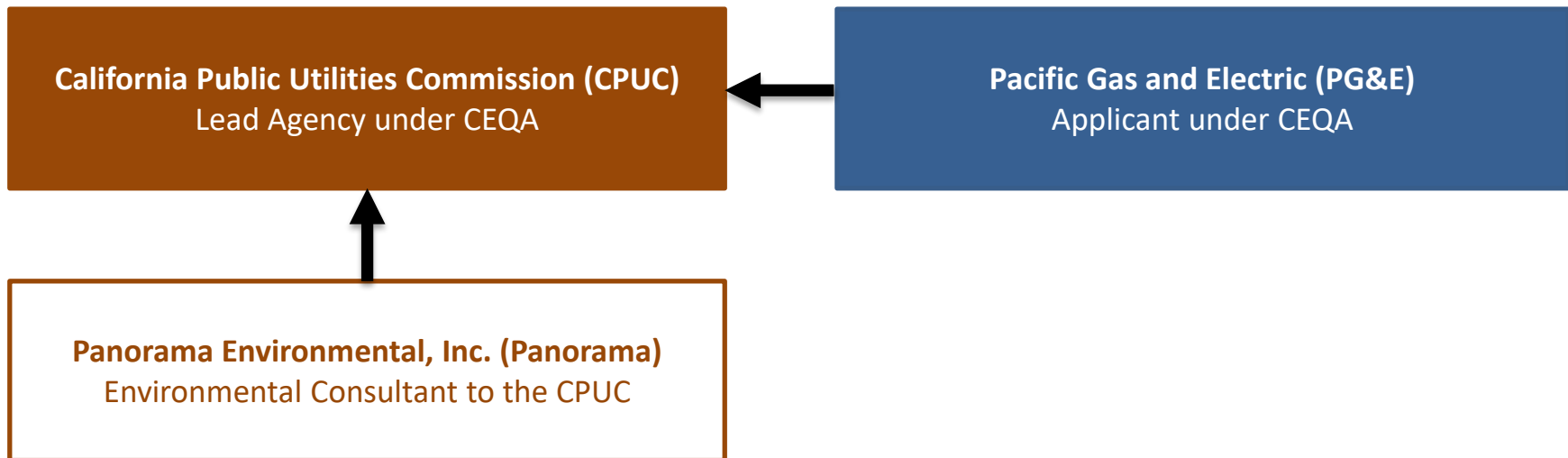


Environmental Review Process

- CEQA requires agencies to identify and mitigate significant environmental impacts of their actions
- PG&E must apply for permits from the CPUC for certain projects
- PG&E must also apply for any proposed modifications to CPUC decisions
- Prior to making a decision on PG&E's application or proposed modifications, the CPUC:
 - Conducts an environmental review under CEQA;
 - Identifies significant impacts and mitigation measures to avoid them; and
 - Provides an opportunity for public review and comment



Roles and Responsibilities





Project History

Timeline	Milestone
December 2015	PG&E filed an application for a Permit to Construct (PTC)
August 2016	CPUC held public scoping meeting in Windsor, CA
December 2017	CPUC approved the proposed project and issued PG&E a PTC
June 2018	PG&E filed Petition for Modification proposing changes to the Southern Segment
June 2018 to May 2019	CPUC requested additional data from PG&E and conducted supplemental environmental review for the proposed changes
June 7, 2019	CPUC issued Notice of Intent (NOI) to adopt a Supplemental IS/MND and initiated public review and comment period (closes July 15, 2019)



Why Supplemental Environmental Review?

- PG&E's Petition for Modification (PFM) identifies proposed changes to the approved project that were not included in the 2017 Final IS/MND
 - Replace 21 existing poles in the Southern Segment
 - Approved project included reconductoring only
- The CPUC must issue a separate decision to approve or deny PG&E's PFM
- The scope of the proposed changes requires CPUC to conduct additional environmental review



Why Supplemental Environmental Review? (continued)

- CPUC determined a Supplemental IS/MND is the appropriate type of CEQA document because:
 - No new significant environmental effects would occur; only minor increases in previously identified effects
 - All potentially significant impacts would remain less than significant after application of mitigation measures
 - Only minor changes are needed to make the 2017 Final IS/MND adequate



Approved Project and Proposed Modifications

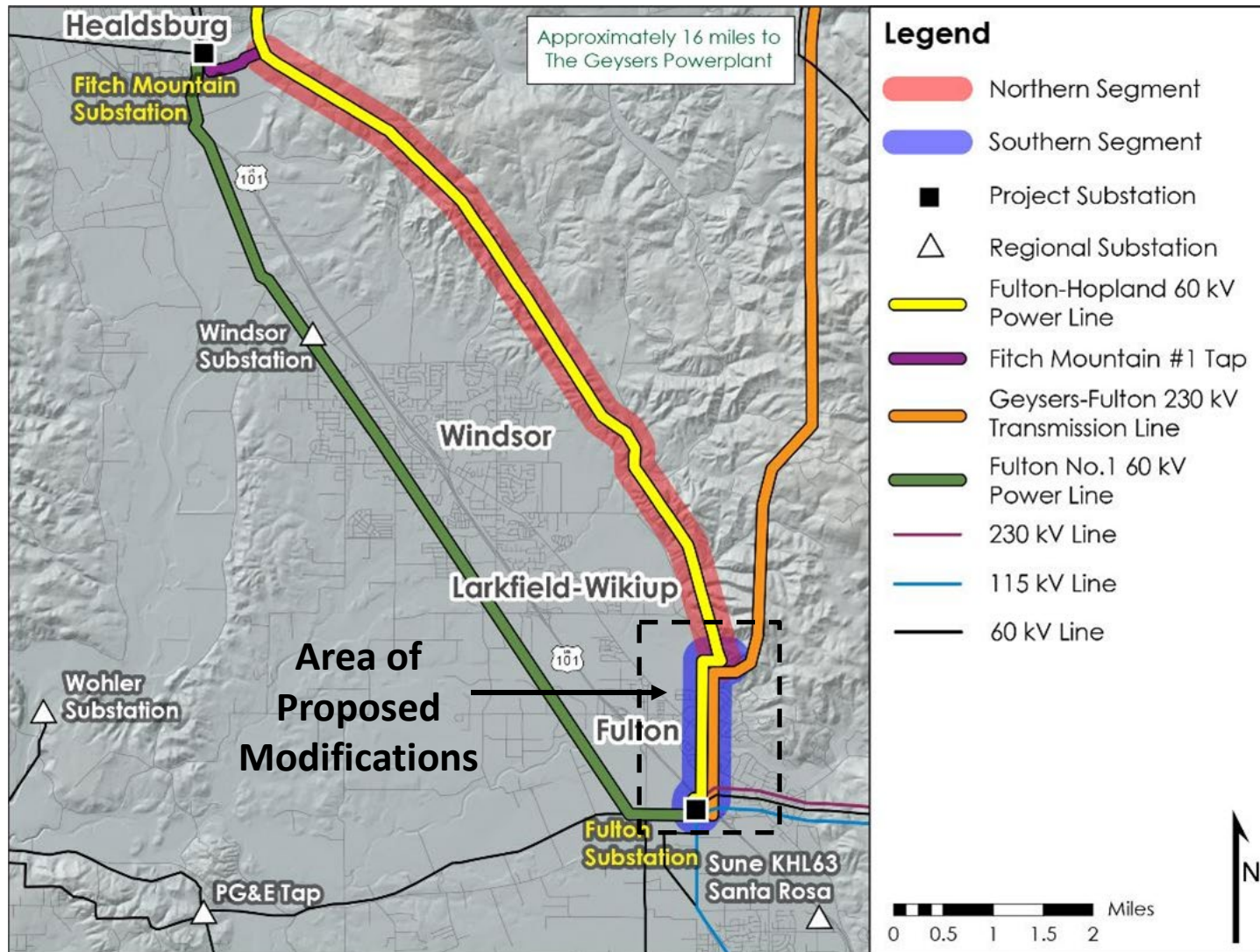


Approved Project Objectives

- Replace 9.9 miles of conductor for the 60-kilovolt (kV) Fulton-Hopland line with higher capacity conductor
- Address system reliability issues by alleviating a potential overload condition identified by the California Independent System Operator (ISO)
- Help meet increasing energy demand in the region



Approved Project Area





Approved Project Components

- Northern Segment (8.1 miles) – Completed May 2019
 - Reconductor Fulton-Hopland 60-kV line
 - Replace ~70 wood poles with new steel poles (3 to 30 feet taller)
 - Constructed June 2018 and May 2019
- Southern Segment (1.8 miles) – Subject of PG&E's PFM
 - Reconductor Fulton-Hopland 60-kV line
 - Reconductor Geysers-Fulton #12 230-kV line
 - Retain existing tubular steel poles (TSPs)
 - No construction initiated to date
- Fitch Mountain Substation Modifications



Why has PG&E Proposed Modifications?

- PG&E identified corrosion on the cross-arms of TSPs in the Southern Segment
- Poles are safe and meet General Order 95 requirements; however, substantial tension would be put on the cross-arms during the reconductoring process that could cause cross-arm failure
- PG&E proposes to replace the poles to address the risk of cross-arm failure
- Pole cross-arms could not be independently replaced due to the age of the poles and lack of parts (installed in the 1970s)
- Project objectives would remain the same



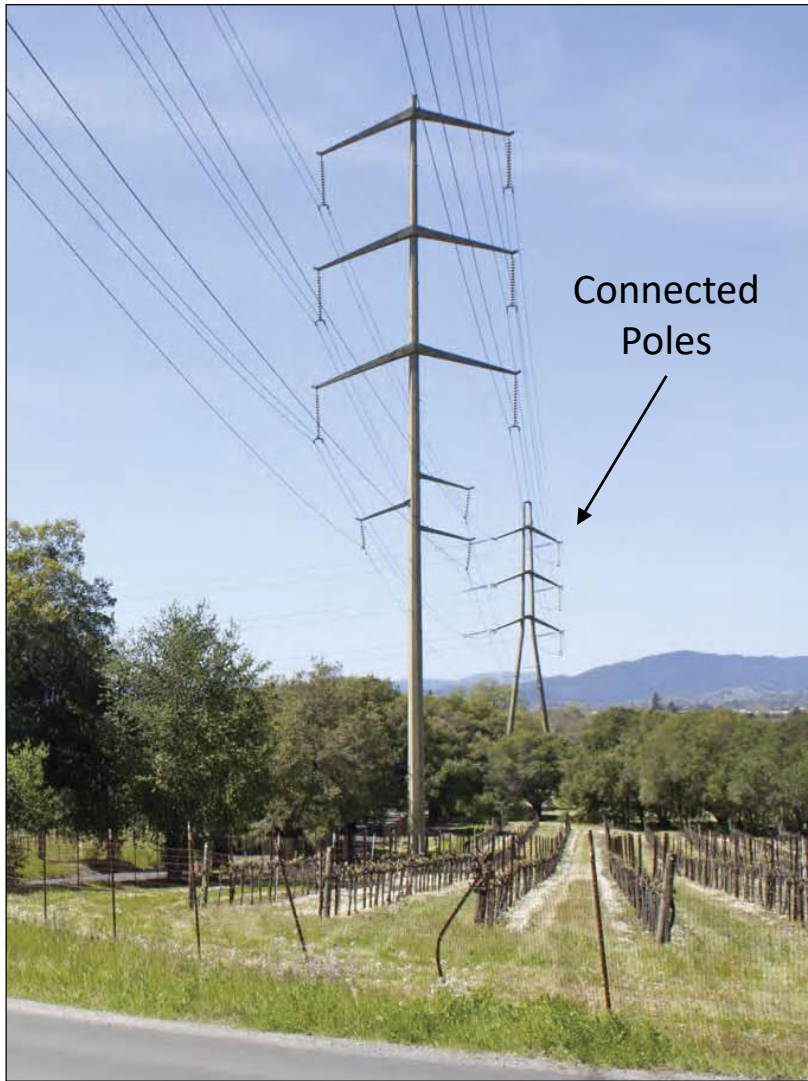
What are the Proposed Modifications?

- Poles
 - 21 TSPs would be replaced as part of the reconducting process
 - New TSPs would be similar size to existing poles (up to 20 feet taller)
 - Installed within 15 to 35 feet of the existing locations
- Conductor
 - Existing 60-kV conductor would be replaced on new poles
 - Existing 230-kV conductor mostly transferred to the new poles; reconducted over US 101
- Additional equipment use, excavation, and short-term road closures
- Construction in the Southern Segment would increase from approximately 4 to 8 months
- PG&E proposes construction from approximately October 2019 to June 2020

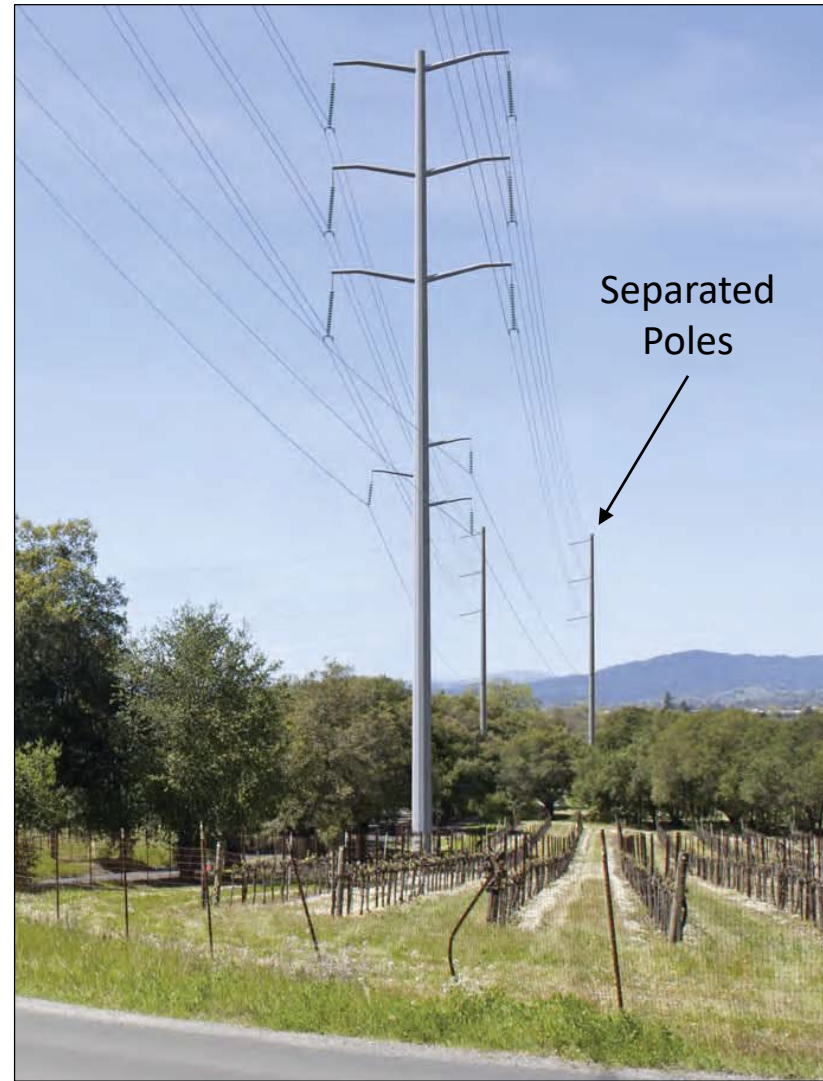


Simulation of Proposed TSP Replacement

Existing



Proposed





Electric and Magnetic Fields (EMF)

- CPUC requires utilities to evaluate low-cost methods for reducing EMF when replacing existing power lines
- PG&E would meet CPUC requirements to reduce existing EMF by increasing pole heights by 5 feet
- Normal operating voltages of the lines would remain the same (e.g., 60-kV and 230-kV)



Clarifying Questions So Far?





Supplemental IS/MND – Approach & Key Findings



Approach to Supplemental IS/MND

- Similar to the 2017 IS/MND prepared for the proposed project, but focuses on the proposed modifications to the Southern Segment (i.e., TSP replacement)
- Followed the updated CEQA Guidelines (effective Dec. 2018):
 - New sections on Wildfire and Energy
 - Changes to Transportation, Noise, and Hydrology and Water Quality
- References and supplements previous analysis from the 2017 IS/MND that remains accurate



Key Findings – Overview

- No significant impacts: less than significant with mitigation
- **Bold** = impacts that require mitigation
- * = additional summary details provided on following slides

Resource Topics Addressed from the CEQA Guidelines	
*Aesthetics	Land Use and Planning
Agriculture and Forestry Resources	Mineral Resources
Air Quality	*Noise
*Biological Resources	Population and Housing
Cultural and Tribal Cultural Resources	Recreation
Energy	*Transportation
Geology, Soils, and Paleontological Resources	Utilities and Public Services
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	*Wildfire
Hazards and Hazardous Materials	Mandatory Findings of Significance
Hydrology and Water Quality	

Key Findings – Aesthetics and Biological Resources



- Aesthetics
 - New poles would be similar in location, size, and appearance
 - Mitigation required to restore temporarily disturbed areas
- Biological Resources
 - New poles would have a similar disturbance area
 - Limited tree trimming or removal may be necessary to provide access
 - Mitigation required to survey and monitor certain habitat
 - Mitigation required to restore temporarily disturbed habitat and offset any oak tree removal



Key Findings – Noise

- Concentrated construction at poles would increase by a few weeks but would be spread out over a longer construction period
- Noise levels would be the same as described for the approved project
- Mitigation required to notify residents in advance
- Mitigation required to report and respond to noise complaints



Key Findings – Transportation

- Additional short-term lane and road closures would occur in phases at a few active poles at a time
 - 1 to 3 days at a time
 - 2 to 3 weeks in total spread out over the construction period
- Mitigation required to reduce potential road hazards, manage safe access, and maintain emergency access
- Revised MM Traffic-1 from 2017 Final IS/MND based on the updated CEQA Guidelines

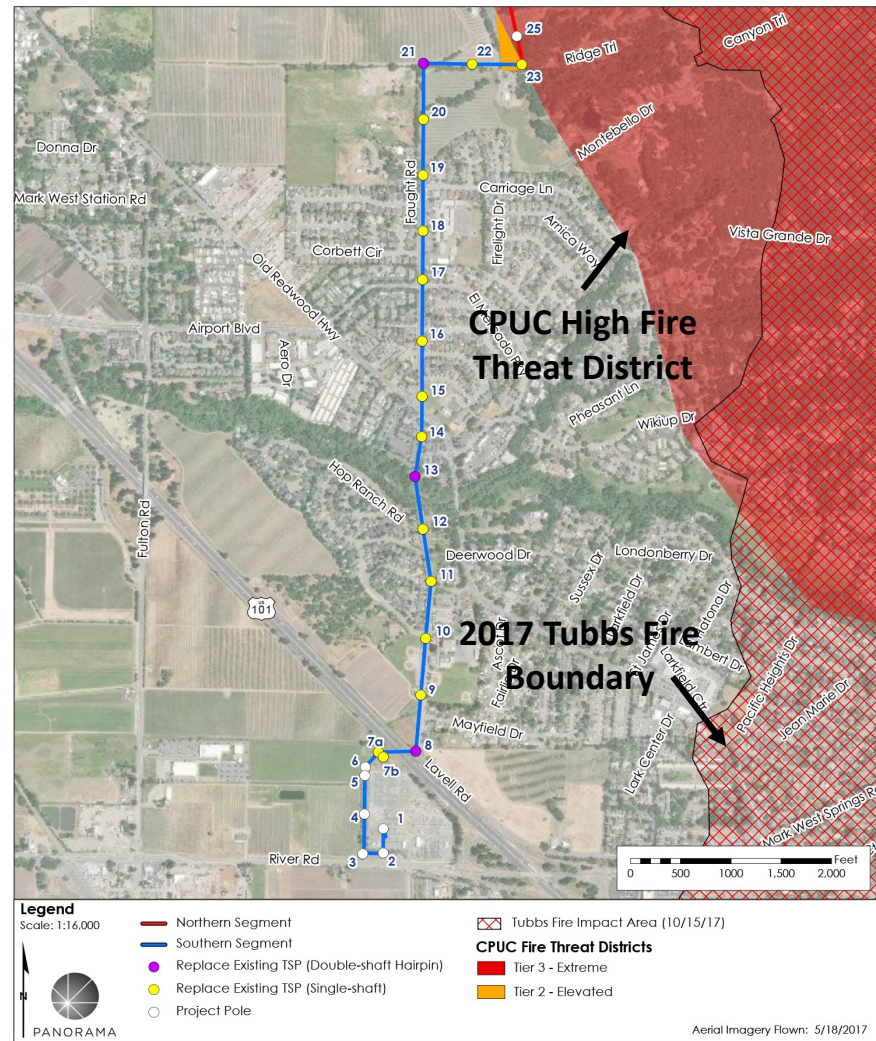
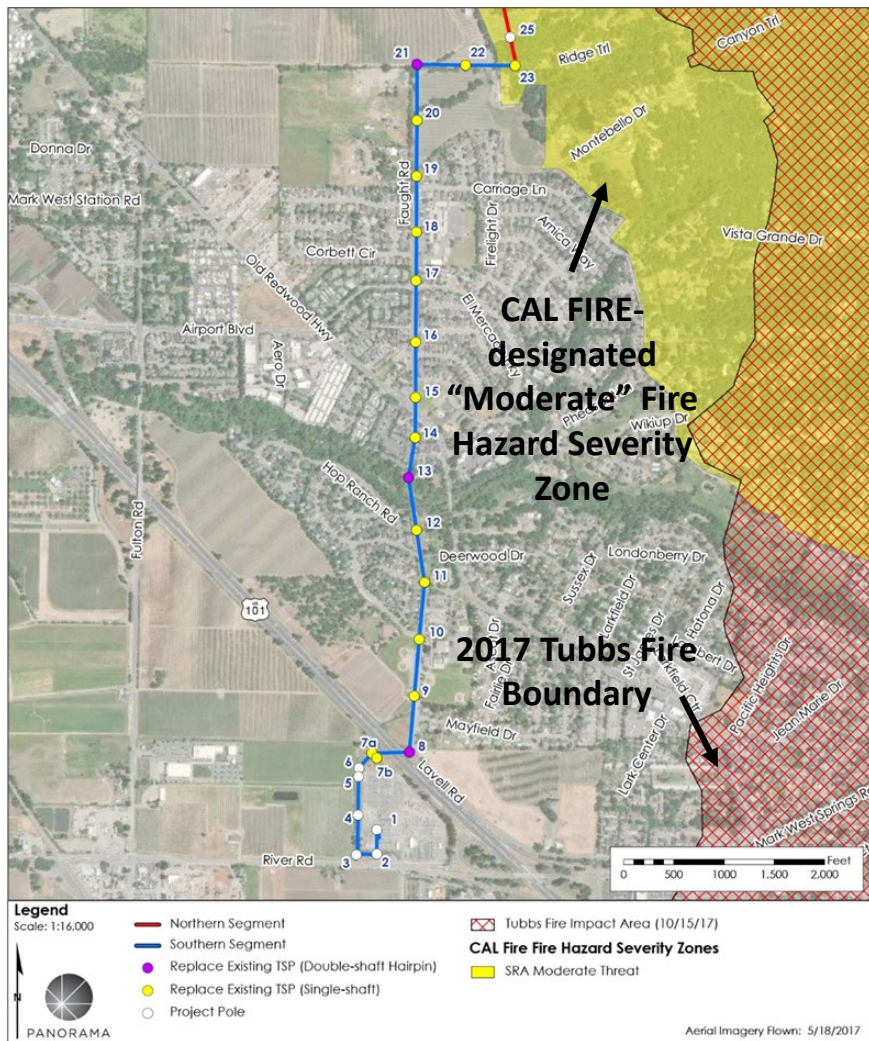


Key Findings – Wildfire

- CEQA requires an evaluation of impacts compared to existing baseline conditions
- The 2017 Tubbs Fire and wildfire risk mapping prepared by CAL FIRE and CPUC indicate existing wildfire risk in the area
- The supplemental analysis evaluates if pole replacement in the Southern Segment would increase existing wildfire risk



Key Findings – Wildfire (continued)





Key Findings – Wildfire (continued)

- Replacing existing poles with new taller and stronger poles would not increase existing wildfire risks
- Mitigation required to address risk of wildfire during construction; PG&E is required to:
 - Implement CPUC-approved Construction Fire Prevention Plan
 - Restricts high-risk activities (i.e., potentially spark producing) during high-risk periods (i.e., Red Flag Days)
 - Requires workers to carry fire response equipment (i.e., shovels and water tanks)
 - Requires worker training
 - Coordinate with local emergency response providers prior to construction
 - Maintain emergency access throughout the construction period



Public Participation



Written Comments on the Draft Supplemental IS/MND

- Submit written comments during the public comment period (June 15 through July 15, 2019)
- The CPUC will respond to comments when preparing the Final Supplemental IS/MND
- Fill out a comment card available tonight or send to:

Email:	fulton2fitch@panoramaenv.com
Mail:	California Public Utilities Commission Attn: Fulton-Fitch Mountain c/o Panorama Environmental, Inc. 717 Market Street, Suite 650 San Francisco, CA 94103
Fax:	(650) 373-1211

**Comments due by
Monday, July 15,
2019**

- For more information visit the project website:
<https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/environment/info/panoramaenv/Fulton-Fitch/Fulton-Fitch.html>



Clarifying Questions and Public Remarks

