

## NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

**TO:** Santa Barbara County Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

**FROM:** Katie Nall, Planner, Planning & Development

The project or activity identified below is determined to be exempt from further environmental review requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) of 1970, as defined in the State and County Guidelines for the implementation of CEQA.

**APN:** 081-250-014, 081-230-035; 081-150-033,                   **Case No.:** 23EMP-00017  
081-150-042; 079-080-001.

**Location:** 11560 Calle Real (Lat: 34.4640716 Long: -120.0226569); 14470 Calle Real (Lat: 34.4731964 Long: -120.1271722); 10021 Calle Real (Lat: 34.4589505 Long: -119.9867977).

**Project Title:** SoCal Gas Gaviota - Emergency Permit

**Project Applicant:** Chris Sowell

**Project Description:** The project is a request by SoCalGas for an Emergency Permit to inspect, repair, and replace three sections in SoCal Gas' existing 16-inch high pressure natural gas transmission pipeline identified as Line 24 (L247) located along the Gaviota Coast. An internal inspection of Line 247 identified a dent with metal loss within the pipeline, as well as two additional locations where possible "stress, corrosion & cracking" (SCC) had been identified. The three identified work areas include an Immediate Repair Condition (IRC) within El Capitan Creek, and Direct Assessments at Dig #2 near Tajiguas Landfill Road, and Dig #3 near Gato Canyon Road. All sites are within intermittent drainages within SoCalGas's existing right-of-way (ROW) and could therefore affect waterways and environmentally sensitive habitat areas. The IRC and the Direct Assessment digs are necessary to bring Line 247 back to its full operational pressure to support the north coast region.

The IRC is a dent interacting with the long seam of the pipeline and due to proximity to El Capitan Campground, is in a high-consequence area and a regulatory emergency by code. SoCal Gas will use the existing parking lot to support fabrication of a bypass assembly to facilitate the IRC. The approximately 101,000 square-foot (sf) temporary work area will include work zones adjacent to the easement, an access area, a laydown yard, an on-site staging area for work performed during weekdays only and off-site storage area to store construction equipment during weekends. Work will occur on APNs 081-230-035 and 081-250-014.

SCCDA Dig #2 is located at in 14440 Terra Vista Drive, approximately 600 feet east of the Tajiguas Landfill Road. SoCal Gas will access Dig 2 via Tajiguas Landfill Road and a private Ag road. A temporary lay down area of 100'x185' (18,500-sf) is proposed just north of the existing SoCal Gas

pipeline easement on APN 081-150-033. A second laydown area of approximately 10,000-sf, is also proposed over the SoCal Gas pipeline easement on APN 081-150-042.

SCCDA Dig #3 is located at 10021 Calle Real, within Gato Creek. Calle Real will be used to access the temporary 37,500-sf laydown yard and excavation site, on APN 079-080-001 and Cal Trans ROW. The laydown yard will be approximately 0.3 miles west of the excavation site. Each temporary work areas would be used to store spoil and construction materials and to facilitate pipeline inspection/repair activities.

A 10-foot wide, 15-foot deep trench will be dug at each site to expose the pipeline. Work activities will require the installation of three stopple fittings and a temporary bypass on the existing pipeline. The bypass is required to ensure continuous natural gas supply beyond the work areas, while isolating the section of pipe to be inspected and repaired/replaced. Equipment and personnel would be mobilized to the work areas using existing access roads. No new access roads would be needed or constructed. All equipment, personnel, and vehicles would be constrained to the existing SoCalGas ROW and temporary easement. Trenches would be excavated using a rubber-tired or tracked excavator. If soils are unstable and the trench walls become compromised, then shoring, sheet piling, or another type of soil reinforcement may be required during construction. After the work has been completed, the temporary work area would be de-compacted to pre-project conditions, if necessary, and the project area would be restored to as near-pre-construction contours as feasible. Backfilling the trench would involve replacing the excavated subsoil in the trench and re-spreading the stockpiled topsoil to return the surface to its original grade. Native material excavated from the pipeline trench would be used to backfill the trench and the ROW including the temporary work areas would be restored to as close to its original condition as is reasonably possible.

Topsoil would be stored separately from subsoil. Trench spoils may be temporarily stockpiled (<24 hours) within the streams during active construction, but generally would be stored outside of the top of bank. If rock conditions are encountered during trench excavation, the trench bottom would first be padded with a layer of imported, rock-free sand. A water diversion plan is required as water could be flowing at all three repair locations. Temporary dewatering of the work area would use an approach to pass flows around the worksite using a gravity coffer dam and/or pumping with appropriate entrapment protection screening and sediment control. A temporary constructed low flow channel may be constructed within the ROW to re-route low flows around the work area in-lieu of installing a coffer dam or pumping. Any groundwater encountered during excavation would be discharged to the ground/surface water as authorized under the Statewide General Order for Discharge from Natural Gas Utility Construction, Operation, and Maintenance Activities (Order 2017-0029-DWQ).

SoCalGas (including its subcontractors) would have access to and use of the Temporary Workspace for approximately three (3) months, tentatively arranged to start on or about September 11, 2023, to on or about December 11, 2023. However, work on each individual dig site is expected to take approximately 6 weeks. Hours of work are 7:00am to 5:30pm. Work that would create cause for disruptive level noise shall be performed between the hours of 8:00am and 4:00pm. Where the work requires disruptive level noise before 8:00am or after 4:30pm, SCG shall provide 48 hour advance written notice so that ECC may inform camping guests. SCG would provide traffic control associated with the work on property at all times during the work to ensure camping guests, staff and others safety. Biologist and cultural monitor would be on hand for the duration of the project, as necessary. The project would implement appropriate Storm Water Best Management Practices (BMPs) from the SoCalGas Water Quality and Storm Water Best Management Practices Manual.

**Name of Public Agency Approving Project:** County of Santa Barbara

**Name of Person or Entity Carrying Out Project:** SoCal Gas, James Chuang

**Exempt Status:**

- Ministerial
- Statutory Exemption
- Categorical Exemption
- Emergency Project
- Declared Emergency

**Cite specific CEQA and/or CEQA Guidelines Section:** CEQA Guidelines Section 15269(b) (Emergency Repair for Service Facilities).

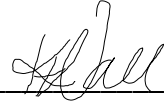
**Reasons to support exemption findings:** CEQA Guideline Section 15269(b) exempts “Emergency repairs to publicly or privately owned service facilities necessary to maintain service essential to the public health, safety or welfare. Emergency repairs include those that require a reasonable amount of planning to address an anticipated emergency. The project constitutes an emergency because the pipeline pressure in Line 247 had to be reduced due to the three anomaly sites and the pipeline’s full operating pressure could not be returned until the inspections and repairs were completed. The lowered pressure on Line 247 would not be able to support customers. The IRC and the SCCDA digs were necessary to bring Line 247 back to its full operational pressure which is what supports the north coast region; additionally, and all three sites had potential to impact waterways and ESHA. As such, the timeframe to permit these as “standard” projects would have resulted in reduced gas availability which was projected to result in curtailment of non-core customers and if demand was high enough, possible loss of gas to core customers from Goleta to Morro Bay. As such, the remediation of the IRC and SCCDA locations were determined to be emergency activities in order to avoid a disruption of essential public services. Therefore, this statutory exemption applies to the proposed project.

SoCal Gas Gaviota – Emergency Permit, Case No. 23EMP-00017  
November 21, 2023  
Attachment 2

**Lead Agency Contact Person:** Katie Nall, Planner

**Phone #:** (805) 884-8051

**Department/Division Representative:** \_\_\_\_\_



**Date:** November 21, 2023

**Acceptance Date:** November 22, 2023

**Distribution:** Hearing Support Staff

**Date Filed by County Clerk:** \_\_\_\_\_