

## 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:** 001-200-023

**Case No.:** 23EMP-00008

**Location:** Highway 150/Rincon Road (Long: -119.471707 Lat: 34.384328)

**Project Title:** SoCal Gas Rincon Creek - Emergency Permit

**Project Applicant:** James Chuang

The project is the request by SoCal Gas for an Emergency Permit to repair an exposed section of Line 1004, a 16-inch natural gas pipeline on the northwest bank of Rincon Creek near Carpinteria. Approximately 10 feet of pipeline was exposed during January 2023 storms and subsequent flood events which eroded Rincon Creek's northwest slope. The project includes clearing the adjacent agricultural area to prepare the laydown area, hand-excavating an anchor trench approximately 3 feet wide and 2 feet deep on three sides of exposed pipe, and installing "Tuff N Nuff Rockshield" around the exposed pipe. Approximately ten 3'x3'x3' sandbags will be placed around and over the pipe with smaller individual sandbags filling any gaps. The sandbags will be secured with ratchet straps. The project area is located on the northwest bank, which is comprised of an eroded vertical slope approximately 10 feet in height. Work will occur from the top of the bank with either crane or excavator lowering materials down the bank from a distance far enough back to prevent additional bank failure. Total excavation will be roughly 10 feet long and 2 feet around the pipeline to allow placement of the rockshield. 5 cubic yards of soil will be excavated and used to refill the excavation area. All disturbed areas will be restored to pre-project conditions. No trees or riparian vegetation is present within the project area and no impacts to riparian vegetation are anticipated. Equipment to be used includes an excavator, skid steer, pickup trucks, utility trucks and hand tools. No mechanized equipment will be used within the bank. All work and staging areas will occur in the adjacent agricultural fields and along the existing roads. The parcel will continue to be served by the Carpinteria-Summerland Fire District. Access will be provided off of Highway 150/Rincon Road and adjacent agricultural roads. The property is a 22.08-acre parcel zoned AG-I-10 and shown as Assessor's Parcel Number 001-200-023, located along HWY 150/Rincon Road in Carpinteria, First Supervisorial District.

The project constitutes an emergency because erosion and river scour of Rincon Creek's bank has exposed a 10 foot portion of Line 1004, a 16-inch natural gas pressurized line. Once the pipeline is exposed, debris in the flowing water can directly impact the pipeline, resulting in failure of the

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pipeline crossing. Also, an exposed pipeline may experience increased vibration due to the flowing water leading to a higher likelihood of pipeline leaks and failure.

**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. Emergency action is warranted in this case because erosion and river scour of Rincon Creek’s bank has exposed a 10 foot portion of Line 1004, a 16-inch natural gas pressurized line in the creek bank. Once the pipeline is exposed, debris in the flowing water can directly impact the pipeline’s integrity, resulting in potential failure of the pipeline crossing. Exposed pipelines may experience increased vibration due to the flowing water leading to a higher likelihood of pipeline leaks and failure. If SoCal Gas does not cover the exposed portion of the pipeline, it could cause a potential release to the environment. Therefore, this statutory exemption applies to the proposed project.

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

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

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



**Date:** May 22, 2023

**Acceptance Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Distribution:** Hearing Support Staff

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