

DETERMINATION of NO IMPAIRMENT
PG&E Gas Line 109 Pipeline Replacement Project – San Francisco Peninsula Watershed

National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior
Golden Gate National Recreation Area
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National Park Service (NPS) *Management Policies 2006 (§1.4)* requires analysis of potential effects to determine whether or not actions will impair a park's resources and values. The fundamental purpose of the national park system established by the Organic Act and reaffirmed by the General Authorities Act, as amended, mandates that NPS conserve park resources and values. NPS managers must always seek ways to avoid, or to minimize to the greatest degree practicable, adverse impacts on park resources and values. However, the laws do give NPS management discretion to allow impacts on park resources and values when necessary and appropriate to fulfill the purposes of the park, although that discretion is limited by the statutory requirement that the NPS must leave resources and values unimpaired unless a particular law directly and specifically provides otherwise.

The prohibited impairment is an impact that, in the professional judgment of the responsible NPS manager, will harm the integrity of park resources or values, including the opportunities that otherwise will be present for the enjoyment of those resources or values. Non-resource topics are generally not subject to impairment assessment. Whether an impact could lead to impairment depends on the particular resources that will be affected; the severity, duration, and timing of the impact; the direct and indirect effects of the impact; and the cumulative effects of the impact in question and other impacts. An impact on any park resource or value may, but does not necessarily, constitute impairment. An impact will be more likely to constitute impairment to the extent that it affects a resource or value whose conservation is:

- Necessary to fulfill specific purposes identified in the establishing legislation or proclamation of the park, or
- Key to the natural or cultural integrity of the park or to opportunities for enjoyment of the park, or
- Identified in the park's general management plan or other relevant NPS planning documents as being of significance.

An impact may be less likely to constitute impairment if it is an unavoidable result of an action necessary to preserve or restore the integrity of park resources or values and it cannot be further mitigated. Impairment may result from visitor activities, NPS administrative activities, or activities undertaken by concessioners, contractors and others operating in the park. Impairment may also result from sources or activities outside the park.

An impairment determination is not made for all resource impact topics analyzed for the Proposed Action Alternative. An impairment determination is not made for land use, visitor use and experience, transportation and utilities, socioeconomics, and visitor health and safety because impairment findings relate back to park resources and values. These impact areas are not generally considered to be park resources or values according to the Organic Act, and cannot be impaired in the same way that an action can impair park resources and values.

Biological Resources

The nearest NPS lands are in San Mateo County at Rancho Corral de Tierra (Rancho), approximately 4.9 miles west of the selected action and Phleger Estate (Phleger) approximately 1.7 miles southwest of the selected action. No actions will occur on NPS lands and no NPS biological resources will be affected, therefore the selected action will not lead to an impairment of biological resources.

Cultural Resources

As above, the nearest NPS lands are in Rancho, approximately 4.9 miles west of the selected action and Phleger approximately 1.7 miles southwest of the selected action. No actions will occur on NPS lands and no NPS cultural resources will be affected, therefore the selected action will not lead to an impairment of cultural resources.

Visual Resources

As above, the nearest NPS lands are in Rancho and Phleger. No actions will occur on NPS lands. There will not be any visual resource impacts in Rancho and any potential visual impacts in Phleger will be negligible and therefore will not lead to the impairment of these resources.

Water Resources

As above, no actions will occur on NPS lands. Due to the location of the selected action and surrounding topography, no waters in Rancho and Phleger Estate will be affected, therefore the selected action will not lead to the impairment of these resources.

Geology, Mineral Resources, and Soils

Due to the distance of the selected action described above from the nearest NPS lands, the selected action will not lead to the impairment of these resources.

Soundscapes

Due to the distance of the selected action described above from the nearest NPS lands, the selected action will not affect the soundscape within Rancho Corral de Tierra. Any potential soundscape effects within Phleger will be negligible. Therefore the selected action will not lead to the impairment of this resource in either location.

Conclusion

This determination, which has been rendered solely by the park manager, applies only to NPS lands, not any adjacent areas, including the San Francisco Peninsula Watershed. There would be no major adverse impacts to a resource or value whose conservation is 1) necessary to fulfill specific purposes identified in the park's establishing legislation; 2) key to the natural or cultural integrity of the park or to opportunities for enjoyment of the park; or 3) identified as a goal in the park's general management plan or other relevant NPS planning documents.

As guided by this analysis, good science and scholarship, advice from subject matter experts and others who have relevant knowledge and experience, and the results of public involvement activities, it is the Superintendent's professional judgment that there will be no impairment of park resources and values from PG&E's implementation of the selected action for replacing gas pipelines in the adjacent San Francisco Peninsula Watershed.