

COMMUNITY Notice

The mission of DTSC is to protect California’s people and environment from harmful effects of toxic substances by restoring contaminated resources, enforcing hazardous waste laws, reducing hazardous waste generation, and encouraging the manufacture of chemically safer products.

Draft Soil Investigation Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for Pacific Gas & Electric Company (PG&E), Topock Compressor Station Available for Public Review and Public Meeting Announcement

The California *Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC)* is the lead state agency overseeing a soil and *groundwater* investigation and cleanup (also known as *remediation*) for the Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) Topock Compressor Station (Station) and adjacent land, collectively known as the Topock Site (Site) in San Bernardino County, California. Pursuant to the *California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)*, DTSC determined an *Environmental Impact Report (EIR)* should be prepared to evaluate potential environmental impacts of implementing soil investigation activities to determine the extent of contamination and gather data to determine if soil cleanup is needed. If soil cleanup is necessary, DTSC will conduct a separate *CEQA* evaluation for the future remedy selection in the future.

This Fact Sheet provides information on:

- Site Background and History
- Soil Investigation Overview
- *CEQA*
- What is Being Proposed - Draft *EIR*
- How You Can Participate
- Where to Find Project Information
- Next Steps and Groundwater Remedy Update
- Glossary of Terms



Soil sampling event at the Site in 2008. Soil sample collection in a ravine using a track mounted drilling rig.

Public Comment Period



July 7th – August 21st, 2014

All public comments on the draft *EIR* must be post-marked or e-mailed by **August 21st, 2014**, and sent to:

Aaron Yue, Project Manager
 Dept. of Toxic Substances Control
 5796 Corporate Avenue
 Cypress, CA 90630-4732
 E-mail: Aaron.Yue@dtsc.ca.gov

Two Upcoming Public Meetings & How You Can Participate

Please join us to learn more about the CEQA Project and to submit public comments. An informal Open House will precede each Public Hearing:

July 22, 2014 – Needles, CA
 Open House: 5:30 – 6:30 pm
 Public Hearing: 6:30 – 8:00 pm

July 23, 2014 – Golden Shores, AZ
 Open House: 5:30 – 6:30 pm
 Public Hearing: 6:30 – 8:00 pm

Public meeting location addresses provided on page 3 under Draft *EIR* Content.

Italicized words appear in the glossary on pages 4 and 5.



Site Background and History

The PG&E Topock Compressor Station compresses natural gas so it can be transported through pipelines to PG&E’s customers in northern and central California. The Station is located in eastern San Bernardino County, about 12 miles southeast of the city of Needles, California, south of Interstate 40, and one-half mile west of the Colorado River.

In 1951, the Station began compressing natural gas for transportation through pipelines to PG&E’s service area in central and northern California. As natural gas is compressed at the Station, its temperature increases and must be cooled. From 1951 to 1985, PG&E added *chromium* to the water used in the cooling towers and other equipment to prevent equipment corrosion. From 1951 to 1964, cooling tower wastewater containing *hexavalent chromium* was discharged into a natural wash adjacent to the Station. Over time, the *hexavalent chromium* seeped into the *groundwater* and created a *groundwater plume* that extends from below the Station towards the Colorado River. Based on results from periodic testing of the river water, the *hexavalent chromium plume* is not impacting the quality of the river water. In addition, historical operations at the Station have also resulted in contamination in soils located both outside and inside the Station fence line. The known soil contamination is based on past soil sampling activities and additional sampling is now currently proposed (see Soil Investigation Overview below).

In 1996, PG&E entered into a voluntary agreement with DTSC to investigate the nature and extent of contamination at the Site and to clean up any such contamination. In 2005 and 2013, PG&E signed similar agreements with the United States *Department of the Interior (DOI)* as the federal lead agency to protect lands owned by the federal government.

Soil Investigation Overview

On January 14, 2013, a revised *Soil Resource Conservation Recovery Act (RCRA) Facility Investigation/ Remedial Investigation (RFI/RI) Work Plan* was submitted to DTSC that details soil investigation activities that are necessary for the Site (see Soil Investigation Areas Figure, page 6). Perimeter areas outside of the Station fence line and the storm drains leading from the Station to areas outside the fence line are also included in the investigation.

The purpose of the *Work Plan* is to describe the investigation work that is proposed to define potential contaminants in soils at the Site by collecting soil samples for chemical analysis. In addition to the sampling activities in the *Work Plan*, DTSC is also considering additional activities that would provide data to support future decisions on the cleanup of contaminated soil at the Site including geotechnical data collection, plant or biota sampling, and bench/pilot testing of clean up technologies. These activities collectively are defined as the Project.

CEQA

CEQA is a state law that requires a project’s lead agency to consider and disclose potential environmental effects of its proposed actions before approving the actions. Pursuant to *CEQA*, DTSC is currently evaluating the potential environmental impacts associated with the Project. DTSC will consider the approval of the Project after public comments are received and considered. PG&E will implement the field investigation after the certification of the *EIR* and approval of the proposed soil investigation activities. Results of the investigation will be made available to the public, in the Information Repositories (page 3) and on the Project website (www.dtsc-topock.com).

Draft EIR Content

In accordance with *CEQA*, a draft *EIR* has been prepared to evaluate the potential environmental impacts of implementing the proposed Soil Investigation and other work necessary for a separate future soil remedy decision. If a soil remedy is needed, a separate *CEQA* evaluation will be conducted for the remedy decision. The draft *EIR* is organized to include a summary, introduction, project description, and an analysis of environmental resource areas that could potentially be affected by the Project. These include, but are not limited to:

- Aesthetics
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Noise

The draft *EIR* also addresses other topics that are required by *CEQA* such as *growth inducement*, *cumulative impacts*, alternatives to the proposed Project and areas where no effect by implementation of the proposed action are found.

Italicized words appear in the glossary on pages 4 and 5.



How You Can Participate – Public Comment Period and Public Meetings

We want to know what you think of the draft *EIR*. A 45-day public comment period is being held to accept public comments on the draft *EIR*. **The 45-day public comment period begins July 7th, and ends August 21st, 2014. DTSC will evaluate and respond to all comments received during the public comment period prior to making a decision on the Project. Public comments must be postmarked or e-mailed no later than August 21st, 2014, and sent to:**

Aaron Yue, Project Manager
Department of Toxic Substances Control
5796 Corporate Avenue
Cypress, CA 90630-4732
E-mail: Aaron.Yue@dtsc.ca.gov

DTSC is also hosting two public meetings about the draft *EIR* and will also accept public comments at those meetings. The draft *EIR* and the Soil Investigation *Work Plan* will be available for viewing.

Please join us to learn more:

Needles Senior Citizens Center
1699 Bailey Avenue
Needles, CA 92363-3119
July 22nd, 2014
Open House: 5:30 – 6:30 pm
Public Hearing: 6:30 – 8:00 pm

Golden Shores Community Center
13136 S. Golden Shores Parkway
Topock, AZ 86436-1356
July 23rd, 2014
Open House: 5:30 – 6:30 pm
Public Hearing: 6:30 – 8:00 pm

If you require an accommodation due to a disability or need a translator/interpreter for this event, please contact Stacey Lear Public Participation Specialist (714) 484-5354 or toll free 1-888-877-5378 (press 4 then 5) no later than 10 business days before the scheduled event.

Where to Find Project Information

Project reports, fact sheets, and other Project documents can be found at the Information Repositories listed to the right.

On the internet: www.dtsc-topock.com, or
http://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/profile_report.asp?global_id=80001836

Needles Branch Library

1111 Bailey Avenue
Needles, CA 92362-3101
(760) 326-9255
Mon – Wed: 11 am – 7 pm
Thurs: 10 am – 6 pm
Fri: Closed
Sat: 9 am – 5 pm

Golden Shores/Topock Station Library

13136 S. Golden Shores Parkway
Topock, AZ 86436-1356
(928) 768-2235
Mon: Closed
Tues, Thurs, Sat: 9 am – 1 pm
Wed: 2 pm – 5 pm

Chemehuevi Indian Reservation

Environmental Protection Office
2000 Chemehuevi Trail
Havasu Lake, CA 92363
(760) 858-1140
Mon – Fri: 8 am – 4 pm

Lake Havasu City Library

1770 North McCulloch Boulevard
Lake Havasu City, AZ 86403-6559
(928) 453-0718
Mon and Wed: 9 am – 6 pm
Tues and Thurs: 9 am – 8 pm
Fri and Sat: 9 am – 5 pm
Sun: Closed

Colorado River Indian Tribes Library

26600 Mohave Road
Parker, AZ 85344
(928) 669-1332
Monday - Friday: 8 am - 5 pm
Saturday: 10 am – 2 pm
Sunday: Closed

Parker Public Library

1001 Navajo Avenue
Parker, AZ 85344-4930
(928) 669-1332
Mon – Thurs: 10 am – 7 pm
Fri – Sun: Closed

Department of Toxic Substances Control

5796 Corporate Avenue
Cypress, CA 90630-4732
(714) 484-5337
Mon – Fri: 8 am – 5 pm
Please contact Ms. Julie Johnson at the above number to make an appointment.

Italicized words appear in the glossary on pages 4 and 5.

Alternate Format: Documents made available to the public by DTSC may be made available in an alternative format (Braille, large format print, etc.) or in another language as appropriate, in accordance with state and federal law. Please contact Stacey Lear, DTSC Public Participation Specialist, for assistance with alternative formats.

Whom to Contact at DTSC for Information

If you have any questions about the Project, draft EIR or other related Project activities, please contact the following DTSC staff:

Aaron Yue, Project Manager
Department of Toxic Substances Control
5796 Corporate Avenue
Cypress, CA 90630-4732
E-mail: Aaron.Yue@dtsc.ca.gov
(714) 484-5439

Stacey Lear, Public Participation Specialist
Department of Toxic Substances Control
5796 Corporate Avenue
Cypress, CA 90630-4732
E-mail: Stacey.Lear@dtsc.ca.gov
(714) 484-5354

For more information about our department, please visit our website at www.dtsc.ca.gov.

Notice to Hearing Impaired Individuals

TYY users may use the California Relay Service at 711 in state or 1-800-855-7100 outside California. You may also call (714) 484-5354 to reach Stacey Lear, DTSC Public Participation Specialist or toll-free 1-866-495-5651.

Next Steps

DTSC will consider all public comments received on the draft EIR during the public comment period before making a final decision on the Project and the certification of the EIR.

Groundwater Remedy Update

The cleanup of *groundwater* contamination at the Site is proceeding on a separate timeline from the proposed soil investigation work. The *Groundwater Remedy Design*, which will define the technical specifications of the final remedy (a network of *groundwater* wells, pumps, and pipelines) to clean up contaminated *groundwater* is being developed.

The final *groundwater* remedy will require a supply of fresh water. On January 28th, 2013, PG&E submitted the Final Implementation Plan for Evaluation of Alternative Freshwater Sources in the Topock Remediation Project Area.

On September 4, 2013, DTSC and DOI approved the Final Implementation Plan and field work commenced on October 2, 2013 and continues in 2014. It is anticipated that PG&E will submit the Pre-Final (90%) Design during the third quarter of 2014. The 90% Design Report will include a fresh water source from a *groundwater* well in Arizona.

Media Inquiries

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P.O. Box 806
Sacramento, CA 95812-0806
(916) 327-9114
E-mail: Sandy.Nax@dtsc.ca.gov

Glossary of Terms:

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA): A law mandating review of environmental impact of governmental action. It requires that public agencies study the significant environmental effects of proposed activities and that the public be informed and allowed to comment on project decisions.

Cumulative Impacts: Total effect on a natural resource, ecosystem, or human community due to past, present, and future activities or actions of federal, non-federal, public, and private entities.

Department of the Interior (DOI): The United States department charged with conservation and development of natural resources. The U.S. Department of the Interior uses sound science to manage and sustain America's lands, water, wildlife, and energy resources, honors our nation's responsibilities to tribal nations, and advocates for America's island communities.

Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC):

The department within the California Environmental Protection Agency in charge of the regulation of hazardous waste from generation to final disposal. DTSC oversees the investigation and cleanup of hazardous waste sites.

Environmental Impact Report (EIR): A report designed to examine the potential environmental impacts of proposed activities.

Groundwater: Water beneath the Earth's surface (aquifers) that flows through soil and rock openings.

Italicized words appear in the glossary on this page and page 5.

Growth Inducement: The effects of a proposed project could have on economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment.

Hexavalent Chromium: Hexavalent chromium is a form of chromium. Chromium is a metal naturally found in rocks, soil, and the tissue of plants and animals. Hexavalent chromium can be found naturally at low concentrations, but it is also used in industrial products and processes and is a known carcinogen. On May 28, 2014, the California Department of Public Health adopted a new California drinking water standard at 10 parts per billion for hexavalent chromium.

Groundwater Plume: A body of contaminated groundwater. The movement of a groundwater plume can be influenced by such factors as local groundwater flow patterns, the character of the aquifer in which the groundwater is contained, and the density of contaminants.

Remediation: Actions taken to remove or contain a toxic release or spill of hazardous substances at a site.

Resource Conservation Recovery Act (RCRA) Facility Investigation/Remedial Investigation (RFI/RI): An investigation that occurs in the corrective action process following a Facility Assessment under RCRA and/or a Site Inspection under Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act. It is an in-depth study designed to gather data needed to determine the nature and extent of contamination at a site.

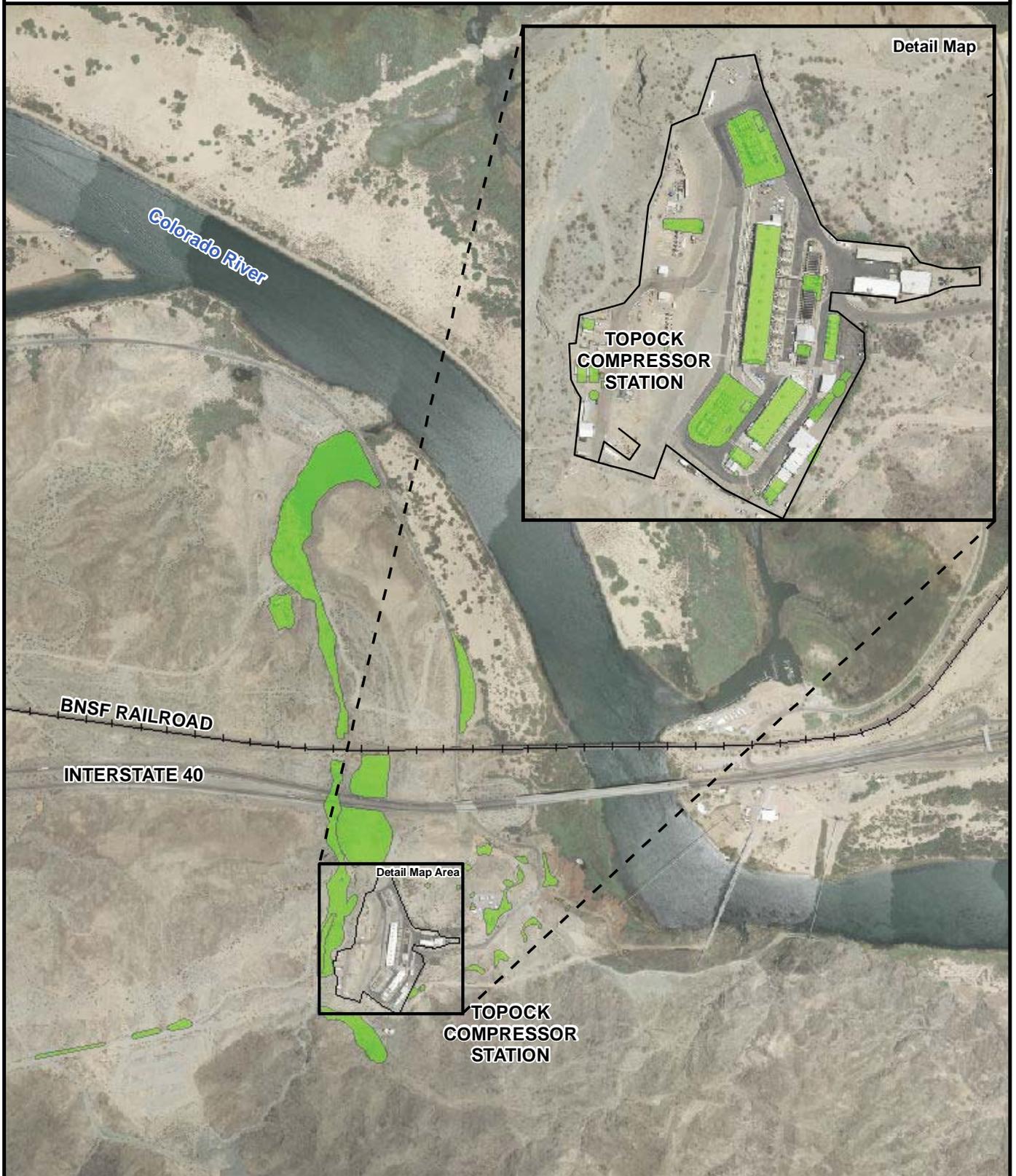
Soil Investigation Work Plan: A document that presents key elements of the approach for collecting soil samples at various areas requiring investigation. It may also include health and safety, waste management, data collection, construction activities and methods, the schedule, approvals, a reporting plan and reporting schedule.



Soil sampling event at the Site in 2008 using a backhoe.

NOTICE TO HEARING IMPAIRED INDIVIDUALS: TTY users may use the California Relay Service at 711 in state or 1-800-855-7100 outside CA.

Soil Investigation Areas Outside Compressor Station



Legend

-  Soil Investigation Areas
-  Site Fence Boundary



0 500 1,000 Feet

Note: Perimeter and Storm Drain Investigation Areas not shown.

