



Preliminary Ignition Investigation Report

Ignition Database Index:	20241461
Electric Incident Investigation (EII) Number:	NR241008A
Incident Name:	Piney
PG&E Facility Ignition?	Yes
CPUC Reportable Ignition?	Yes
Date & Time of Incident:	October 8, 2024 @ 1500 hours
Street Address:	38675 E Carmel Valley Rd
City:	Carmel Valley
County:	Monterey County
Latitude/Longitude:	36.38296321457728, -121.57254642709965
State Responsibility Area (SRA) / Local Responsibility Area (LRA) / Federal Responsibility Area (FRA)	State Responsibility Area (SRA)
PG&E Division:	Central Coast
High Fire Threat District (HFTD):	Tier 2
High Fire Risk Area (HFRA):	Yes
EPSS Buffer:	No
Fire Index Area (FIA):	550
Fire Potential Index (FPI) Rating: FIA	R4
Fire Potential Index (FPI) Rating: Circuit	R4
Was there a PSPS event at the time of ignition?	No
Suspected Initiating Event:	Vegetation
Failure Driver:	Contact from object
Failure Sub-driver:	Contact – Vegetation
Circuit:	LAURELES 1111
Circuit Protection Zone:	LAURELES 1111 198478
Nominal Voltage:	12kV
Pole SAP Equipment ID:	101702581
Subject to PRC 4292 Veg Pole Clearance:	No
PG&E Equipment associated with ignition:	2 ACSR Conductor
EPSS enabled at time of ignition?	Yes
Fault Type:	Line to Ground
Wire Down (Primary)?	Yes
Lead Agency/Agency Having Jurisdiction:	CAL FIRE
Fire Size:	100-299

FAS Field Remarks:	"4-5 poles burnt in Piney fire per SIPT [REDACTED] Energized up to 198478 more info post cal fire meeting 7am 10/9/24." ¹
HAWC Summary:	"Resources responded to a vegetation fire at 38301 E Carmel Valley Rd-Monterey County, in a Tier 2 area. The fire is being reported as forward progress stopped at 221 acres and 15% contained. EPSS enabled circuit LAURELES 1111 in the area with outage OIS #2589747 impacting a total of 840 customers. PSS [REDACTED] reported 4 to 5 poles burnt/damaged. SIPT did respond and was reported to be treating poles on the south end of the fire. Everbridge Initial/Update/Final was sent, no Incident Report or Preliminary Fire Report sent. Notifications were made to HAWC OPS, PSS, DCC. Closing the incident barring any significant changes to the situation." ²
Injuries / Fatalities / Property Damage / Media Attention:	0/0/0/0
Weather Conditions:	At 1500 hours near the Incident Location: Temperature: 90.6°F Relative Humidity: 18% Wind Speed: 3.7 mph Wind Gust: 8.3 mph out of the west
Red Flag Warning (RFW) / High Wind Warning (HWW):	No
911 Standby Relief Time:	207 Minutes
OIS #:	2589747
ILIS #:	24-0120828
FAS #:	T006521333
TOTL #:	N/A
Assigned Attorney:	N/A
Ignition Investigator & Phone:	[REDACTED]

¹ FAS Field Remarks entered verbatim

² HAWC Summary entered verbatim

Executive Summary

On October 8, 2024, at approximately 1500 hours, LR 2020 opened on the EPSS enabled Laureles 1111 12kV three phase primary overhead distribution circuit, deenergizing 840 customers. In response to the LR opening, at 1505 hours, PG&E dispatched a troubleshooter to investigate the outage. At approximately 1545 hours, the troubleshooter arrived at the CAL FIRE incident command post (East of intersection Carmel Valley Road and Martin Road) and observed an active fire and was not granted access to the Incident Location. This fire was named the Piney Fire. CAL FIRE was already onsite working to contain and extinguish the fire. CAL FIRE relayed to PG&E that a tree had fallen across the Laureles 1111 between SAP ID 101702581 (Pole #1) and SAP ID 101702582 (Pole #2). In coordination with CAL FIRE, PG&E was able to reenergize 601 customers through remote and physical switching to isolate the circuit at 2020 hours on October 8, 2024.

The incident site was released to PG&E investigators on October 9, 2024, at approximately 1430 hours. PG&E observed that the Incident Tree was a coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*) tree that had fallen across all three phases of conductor at what was determined to be the ignition site. The Incident Tree was approximately 65-foot tall with a diameter at breast height (DBH) of 26 inches. The tree broke seven feet above the base and fell in the north-northeast direction, downhill toward the conductors. The base of the tree was approximately 25 feet from the closest conductor.

The trunk of the fallen tree was still on fire and smoldering at the time of inspection. The tree appeared to be externally green and healthy at the time of the ignition based on observations of its color and condition by PG&E investigators. After reviewing photographs provided by CAL FIRE investigators, PG&E investigators were able to determine the Incident Tree likely had a codominant top with two main stems emerging partway up its trunk. This was not evident based on the visual investigation completed on October 9, 2024 by PG&E investigators. At that time, the remains of the Incident Tree had no evidence of defects or decay.

The closest pole to the Incident Tree was Pole #1. Pole #2 was the pole to the east and up the hill from the ignition location. Pole #2 was completely burned and appeared to have been cut by CAL FIRE at its base. The pole was sawed at the base and was found leaning into a nearby tree.

All three phases of the entire span between Pole #1 and Pole #2 were inspected by the VM and the ignitions investigation team on site on October 9, 2024. The conductor was found intertwined with the Incident Tree at the ignition site and was broken in multiple locations to the east of the ignition site. None of the broken sections of conductor were broken at connectors or splices.

Related to the ignition, three poles and their associated equipment and conductor were identified for repair/replacement on October 9, 2024. All repairs were completed on October 11, 2024.

- EC tag 129662057: at SAPID 101702581 Pole #1 — Replace three spans of conductor
- EC tag 129662056: at SAPID 101702582 Pole #2 — Replace burnt pole and reconductor
- EC tag 129669307: at SAPID 103946432 Pole #3 — Replace one span of conductor

A review of Vegetation Management (VM) records shows the date of the last routine inspection of the incident span occurred on August 26, 2024, under the Local Maintenance program. No work was prescribed for the Incident Tree during this inspection of the incident span. The Incident Tree was located in a High Fire Threat District and was also inspected as part of the Second Patrol program on March 21, 2024. No work was prescribed for the Incident Tree during this inspection. A Vegetation Management Operational Mitigation (VMOM) Reactive, was completed, starting on October 10, 2024, and finishing on October 11, 2024. Twenty-one oak trees were identified as having burn damage with strike potential and were prescribed for removal. The

work was issued to a tree contractor on work order 00196167 with an expected completion date of November 26, 2024. The work order was closed with all work complete on November 30, 2024.

Meteorology data obtained from the Mesowest weather observation site approximately 2.4 miles west of the Incident Location indicated it was a warm and dry day near the Incident Location. The high temperature for the day was 91.5°F at 1440 hours. The relative humidity was as high as 35% at 2120 hours and as low as 18% at 1350 hours. The strongest wind speed recorded was 15.8 miles per hour (mph) out of the west at 1310 hours. At the time of the ignition wind speeds were recorded at 3.7 mph with wind gusts of 8.3 mph out of the west. It is undetermined, but likely that the heat, humidity and wind conditions contributed to the tree failure. There were no High Wind Warning or Red Flag Warnings in effect on the day of the incident.

The fire was contained to 225 Acres and there were no reported injuries or property damage.

This information is preliminary and subject to change based on new data.

System Protection Analysis

PG&E confirmed that EPSS was enabled on the Laureles 1111 Circuit and its respective devices. The incident location was protected by Downed Conductor Detection on LR 2020. On October 8, 2024, a line to ground fault was detected (Phase A: 41A; Phase B: 56A; Phase C: 51A; Ground:4A). A 1.2 second delay was recorded between LR 2020 DCD pickup and timeout. A delay of 41ms was recorded between timeout and fault cleared. The protection scheme operated as designed, a positive high impedance fault was detected followed by a successful tripping of the LR.

Ignition Impact

The ignition event on October 8, 2024, resulted in a brush and tree fire measuring 225 acres in size. The associated outage from the incident lasted a total of 532,708 minutes affecting 840 customers. Due to fire suppression efforts by CAL FIRE, repairs were not completed until October 11, 2024. There were no reported injuries, fatalities, property damage or significant media attention associated to the event.

Sequence of Events

October 8, 2024

- 1500 hours – LR 2020 opens on DCD – 840 customers out of power
- 1500 hours – First SmartMeters™ went offline
- 1505 hours – PG&E Dispatch calls for troubleshooter response to LR outage
- 1510 hours – IRWIN Dispatch
- 1521 hours – Watch Duty report of fire with dispatch of resources. Smoke seen on camera Pinion Peak 1
- 1544 hours – First PG&E troubleshooter reported to the area, but access not granted to the fire site
- 1928 hours – Fuse Saver 198478 is opened in order to restore service outside of the fire area
- 2019 hours – LR 2020 is closed picking up 601 customers

October 10, 2024

- Approx 1100 hours – Repair crews onsite to begin repair and restoration

October 11, 2024

- 1900 hours – Fuse Saver 198478 closed after repairs completed

This report is preliminary and based on available information as of **February 13, 2025**; event data is subject to change based upon subsequently discovered information.

Doc. R18 – Mar 2024

Internal

CONFIDENTIAL

Corrective Notification Associated with Ignition

Three priority “A” EC tags were created as a result of this incident. EC tag 129662057 was created to replace one phase of conductor as well as replace dead end insulators and clean jumper insulators. EC tag 129669307 was created to replace one phase of conductor and install spiral dampened and guy guards. EC tag 129662056 was created for a full pole replacement.

Pending Work

Type	Number	Description	Priority	Date Identified	Due Date
EC Notification	117138167	Pole Decay; Replacement	E	5/1/2019	5/1/2020
EC Notification	124186729	Pole Broken; Replacement	E	7/28/2022	7/28/2023

Please note this may not include pending major program or project work at the incident location.

Asset Info & Most Recent Inspections and Tests

Source Side Structure	101702581 Pole #1 (Closest Pole to Veg Contact)	
Info / Inspection	Most Recent Date	Findings
Install Date:	January 1, 1950	40’ Class 4, Douglass Fir w/ Creosote
Inspection:	July 28, 2022	GO165 Inspection identified bottom of pole damage, insulinks installed on primary jumpers (intended for secondary connectors) and loose guys. See EC tag 124186729.
Corrective History:	N/A	No additional corrective tags other than the associated tag from the inspection and corrective tag associated with the incident
Aerial Inspection Records:	July 24, 2019	SharperShape imagery of the incident span. No abnormal findings.
VM Inspection:	August 26, 2024	Incident tree was not identified for any work as a result of this inspection.
EVM Inspection:	March 13, 2020	Incident tree was not identified for any work as a result of this inspection.
Pole Intrusive Test:	October 6, 2017	Pole Test and Treat: Complete Excavation with Visual Sound and Bore Test. Wood Strength: 100%.
WSIP Inspection:	May 1, 2019	There were no Compelling abnormal conditions for the Pole, equipment, and its associated spans.

Load Side Structure	101702582 Pole #2	
Info / Inspection	Most Recent Date	Findings

Install Date:	January 1, 1950	40' Class 5, Douglass Fir w/ Creosote
Inspection:	July 28, 2022	GO165 Inspection identified
Corrective History:	N/A	No additional corrective tags other than the associated tag from the 2019 inspection noted in the pending work (above), and the corrective tag associated with the incident.
VM Inspection:	August 26, 2024	Incident tree was not identified for any work as a result of this inspection.
EVM Inspection:	March 13, 2020	Incident tree was not identified for any work as a result of this inspection.
Pole Intrusive Test:	October 6, 2017	Pole Test and Treat: Complete Excavation with visual sound and bore test. Wood Strength 100%.
WSIP Inspection:	May 1, 2019	EC tag 117138167 was created for pole damage. This is the same tag noted above in the pending work from 2019.

*Incident Location: Pole #1 and SAP ID: 101702582

Hazard Barrier Analysis:

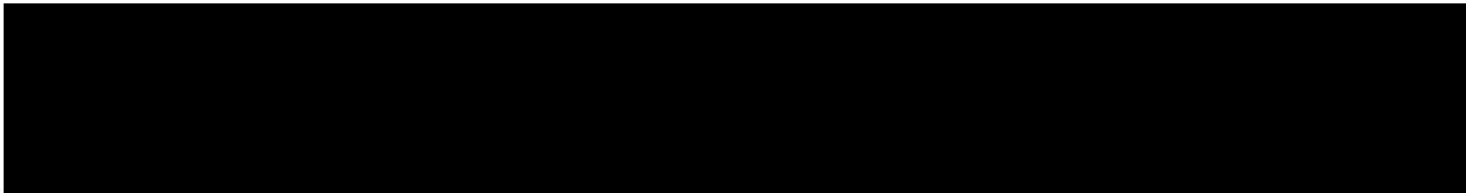
Hazard	Vegetation Contact	Sub-Hazard	Fallen Tree
Target	Fallen Tree contacting PG&E assets leading to 225-acre fire in Tier 2 HFTD		
Barrier	Expected vs. Observed Performance	Why did the barrier not prevent the ignition event? (See ICF Codes)	Opportunity
Barriers that Positively Affected Ignition			
Enhanced Powerline Safety Settings - Downed Conductor Detection	<p>Expected Performance: Automatically turn off power when down conductors are detected.</p> <p>Observed Performance: Barrier performed as expected</p>	A1B2C2D3 – Device tripping time is limited	DCD detected a line to ground fault after a 1.2 second delay.
Other Barriers Assessed			
Distribution Second Vegetation Patrol	<p>Expected Performance: Identify any trees that pose hazards to PG&E assets or equipment.</p> <p>Observed Performance: Barrier performed as expected</p>	A1B1C1D3 – Trees can fail with no defects (visible or non-visible)	The failed tree appeared green and healthy prior to failure.

Distribution Annual Vegetation Patrol	<p>Expected Performance: Identify any trees that pose hazards to PG&E assets or equipment.</p> <p>Observed Performance: Barrier performed as expected</p>	A1B1C1D3 – Trees can fail with no defects (visible or non-visible)	The failed tree appeared green and healthy prior to failure.
---------------------------------------	---	--	--


Potential Next Steps / Associated CAP Items:


- None identified.


Single Line Diagram




LEGEND

 Substation

 Fuse

 Line Recloser

 Area of Interest

Photos and Diagrams of Events

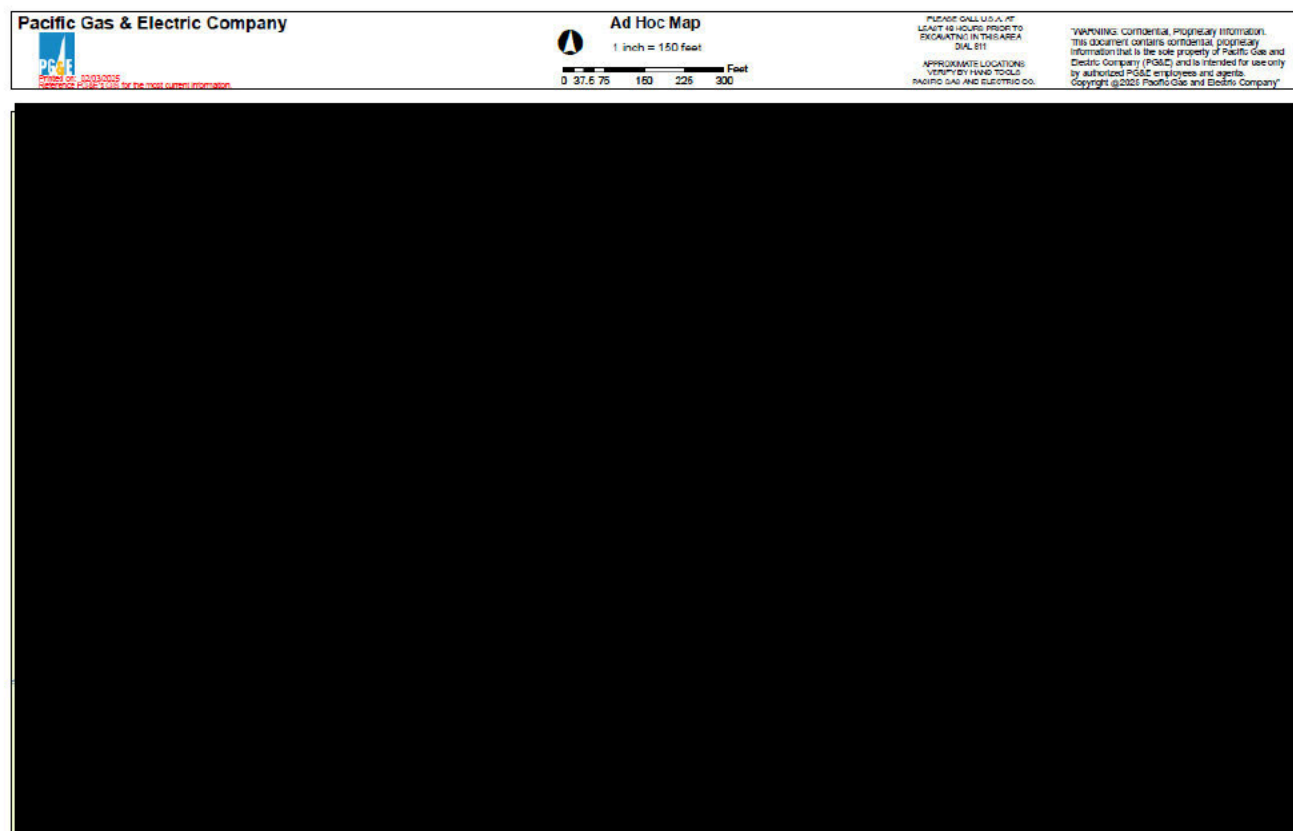


Figure 1: Incident Diagram from EDGIS

This report is preliminary and based on available information as of February 13, 2025; event data is subject to change based upon subsequently discovered information.

Doc. R18 – Mar 2024

Internal

CONFIDENTIAL

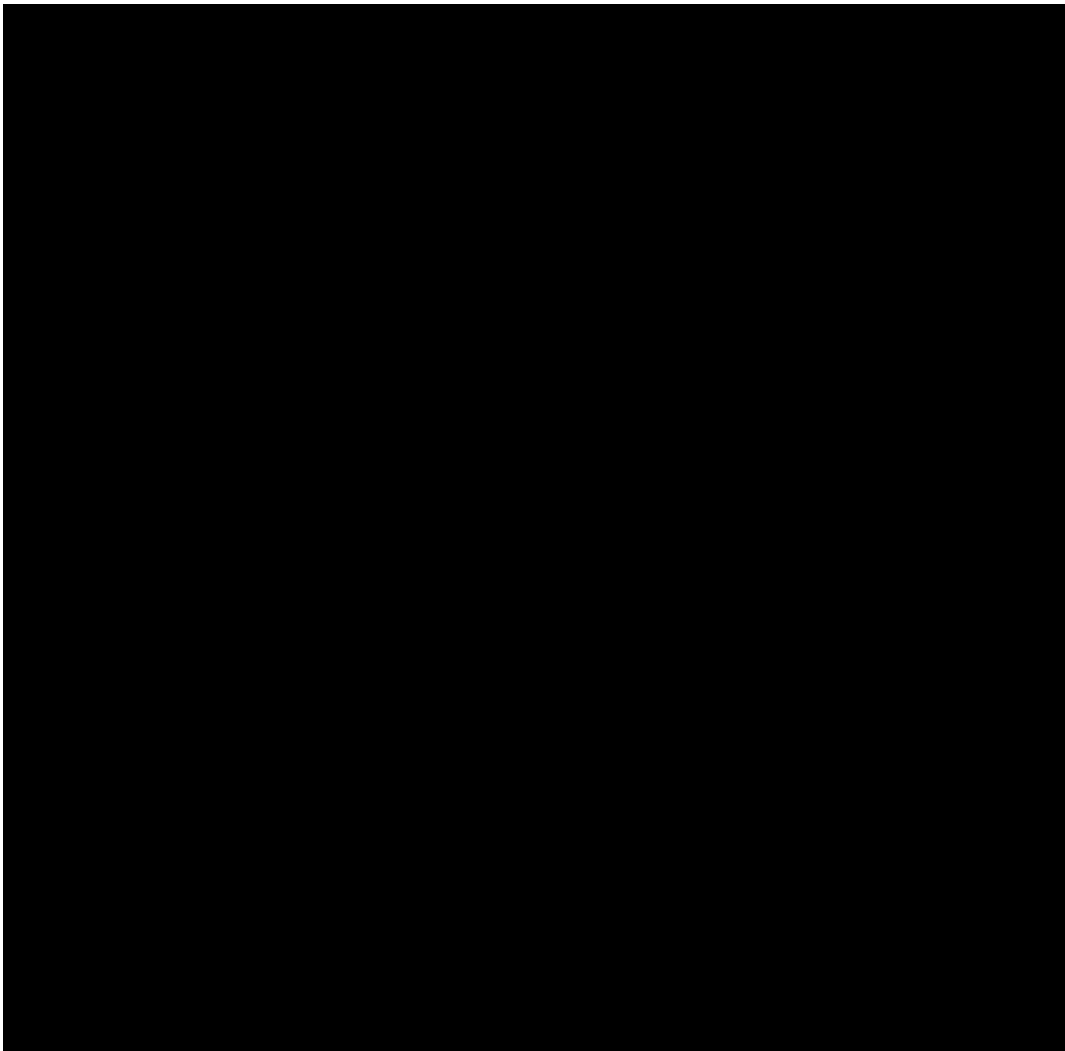


Figure 2: Incident Diagram from Google Earth



Figure 3: Smoke view from wildfire camera on October 8, 2024



Figure 4: Fire burn area per CAL FIRE website



Figure 5: Pole #1 (SAPID 101702581) closest to the ignition site; photo taken by ignitions investigator October 9, 2024



Figure 6: Pole #1 (SAPID 101702581) closest to the ignition site; photo taken by ignitions investigator October 9, 2024



Figure 7: Failed tree stump: photo taken by ignitions investigator October 9, 2024



Figure 8: Failed tree and stump: photo taken by ignitions investigator October 9, 2024



Figure 9: Bottom of the top half of failed tree: photo taken by ignitions investigator October 9, 2024



Figure 10: Failed tree in relation to overhead lines: photo taken by ignitions investigator October 9, 2024



Figure 11: Conductor laying on ground heading looking uphill; photo taken by ignitions investigator October 9, 2024



Figure 12: Conductor laying on ground looking downhill; photo taken by ignitions investigator October 9, 2024



Figure 13: Burned/broken Pole #2 (SAPID 101702582) at top of hill; photo taken by ignitions investigator October 9, 2024



Figure 14: Fire burn area; photo taken by ignitions investigator October 9, 2024

Attachments

Attachments and references can be located in the ESA folder, located below:



-----END of REPORT-----