

## A CONVERSATION ON CALIFORNIA'S CLEAN ENERGY FUTURE

# Of bees, birds, and chillin' chinook: All in a sustainable day at PG&E

BY TONY EARLEY, CHAIRMAN & CEO, PG&E CORPORATION

CATALINA REYES' SUMMER JOB IS KEEPING fish cool. Not in a display case at the local market, but in the upper reaches of Butte Creek, where it winds through the foothills of the Sierra Nevada mountains.

The spring-run Chinook salmon that depend on this tributary of the Sacramento River are at increasing risk of heat stress as California's years-long drought dries up seasonal water flows. Reyes is part of a PG&E scientific team that collaborates with wildlife officials to import cold water from elsewhere in our hydroelectric system needed to keep the fish healthy.

With the help of 35 staff biologists like Catalina, Pacific Gas and Electric Company has worked for decades to manage the land and waters in our 70,000-square-mile service area in an environmentally responsible way. This includes protecting threatened and endangered species and their habitats during operations, managing watershed

sustainability, and good management of our natural resources. Our view must be for the long-term. That's why we live our commitment to conservation through a number of programs.

Our efforts to protect migratory, threatened, and endangered birds while improving system safety and electric reliability for customers are among the most comprehensive in the nation. Since 2002, PG&E has retrofitted more than 28,000 utility poles and towers to make them bird-safe. In 2008, PG&E won Audubon California's first Corporate Achievement Award for protecting California birds and important habitat.

We have also developed innovative vegetation management programs along our electric transmission rights-of-way to support pollinators such as bees, bats, birds, beetles, and butterflies. The research we funded on pollinator-friendly vegetation management in the American River Parkway was published in the *Journal of Pollination Ecology* and led to briefings at the White House.

On all 52,000 acres of forest lands that we own, PG&E practices sustainable forestry, including collecting and banking seeds for future restoration purposes. We take special care to maintain those lands in ways that help head off the spread of wildfires, and to engage nearby communities in prevention programs.

We work with the Pacific Forest and Watershed Lands Stewardship Council to permanently

PG&E's efforts to protect migratory and endangered birds like the California condor are among the most comprehensive in the nation.



protect 140,000 acres of watershed lands associated with our hydroelectric system. Funded by PG&E, this non-profit foundation aims to protect natural habitats, open space, and public recreation; farms and forests; and historic resources on more than

1,000 parcels across 22 counties.

On California's Central Coast, our land stewardship at the Diablo Canyon nuclear power plant has won special recognition from the Wildlife Habitat Council for habitat management and environmental education programs. PG&E's program covers 14 miles of pristine coastline and is supported by a team of archeologists, biologists, engineers, land planners, and foresters.

In addition to safeguarding the ecological future, PG&E is also taking responsibility for environmental errors committed in the past. For example, we are cleaning up soil compromised by old manufactured gas companies that we acquired, and groundwater polluted years ago by our natural gas compressor stations.

Catalina Reyes and her fellow biologists who work for PG&E represent a fraction of PG&E's 23,000 employees who live and work in your communities, hike the same trails, camp in the same forest, enjoy the same wildlife and fish the same waters. PG&E will continue to listen, to learn, and to act in ways that help to ensure a cleaner, and greener, California.

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**The days are long past when energy businesses could afford to think of their mission as separate from conservation, sustainability, and good management of our natural resources.**

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lands that PG&E has committed to preserving in perpetuity, and maintaining forest lands to minimize the threat of wildfire.

Utility companies are not usually thought of as environmental stewards. But the days are long past when energy businesses could afford to think of their mission as separate from conservation,

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