

COMMUNITY Notice

The mission of DTSC is to protect California's people and environment from harmful effects of toxic substances through the restoration of contaminated resources, enforcement, regulation and pollution prevention.

Final Soil Investigation Work Plan and Environmental Impact Report Approved for PG&E Topock Compressor Station

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 and adjacent land, collectively known as the Topock Site in San Bernardino County, California.

Soil Investigation Overview

DTSC is testing for potential soil contamination at and near the Topock Compressor Station. In January 2013, PG&E revised and submitted to DTSC a Soil Investigation Work Plan that details the activities needed to collect soil samples at the Station, around its perimeter, in storm drains from the Station, and from other nearby areas that were historically used or affected by Station operations.

Soil sampling is expected to begin this Fall and be completed within several months. After the sampling program is complete, DTSC may direct PG&E to conduct additional activities that support future decisions about investigation and cleanup of contaminated soil. These activities may include geotechnical data collection, plant or biota sampling, and bench/pilot testing of cleanup technologies. If any of these follow-up activities become necessary, the specific actions will be further described in an additional work plan.

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Soil investigation activities are expected to begin this Fall and continue for several months to gather enough data for sound decision making. Sampling will occur on the Topock Compressor Station property and in pre-defined locations surrounding the Station, such as in Bat Cave Wash shown in the foreground of the photo at left.

See page 3 of this fact sheet for a more detailed map of the investigation area.

Soil Investigation Environmental Impact Report Complete and Certified

In July 2014, in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act, DTSC released a draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for public review and comment on the Soil Investigation Project. Public meetings were held in July 2014 to provide an opportunity for public comment. Approximately 27 individual comment letters and oral comments were received during the public comment period.

On April 15, 2015, DTSC released the Partially Recirculated DEIR, which was limited to Biological Resources, for public review and comment during a 45-day review period that ended on June 1, 2015. DTSC chose to recirculate the Biological Resources section of the DEIR based on additional information recently made available to the agency. For example, noted in the vicinity of the Station are potential suitable roosting habitat for the Townsend's big-eared bat, named by the California Fish and Wildlife service as a candidate for protection as an endangered species. Approximately 12 comment letters were received on the partially recirculated DEIR.

DTSC reviewed, considered, and responded to all the comments received and then published a final EIR (FEIR) that included responses to comments and all revisions made to the DEIR as a result of the comments received.

On August 24, 2015, DTSC certified the FEIR for the Soil Investigation Project; adopted a Statement of Decision and Resolution of Approval and Mitigation Monitoring Reporting Program; and filed a Notice of Determination. Concurrently, DTSC and the Department of the Interior (DOI) approved the revised final Soil Investigation Work Plan. Implementation of the sampling activities is expected to begin in Fall 2015.

Soil Investigation Next Steps

With oversight from DTSC and DOI, PG&E will implement the field work in accordance with the approved work plan and the mitigation measures provided in the certified FEIR. Collectively, these provisions focus on assuring the health and safety of all workers and others during the work at and around the

Station. Equally important are several measures required to protect natural and cultural resources present in the area. DTSC expects the following to occur:

- Investigation activities on and adjacent to the Station property are currently planned to begin in November 2015 and end in March 2016.
- Similar to previous soil sampling activities, a truck-mounted drill rig and a backhoe/excavator will be used, as will pickup trucks, small all-terrain vehicles, and delivery trucks.
- Activities may be visible from Interstate 40 and National Trails Highway, but work in any specific location is expected to be completed within a week or two.

Results of the investigation will be included in the Volume 3 - RFI/RI Report on Soil Characterization.

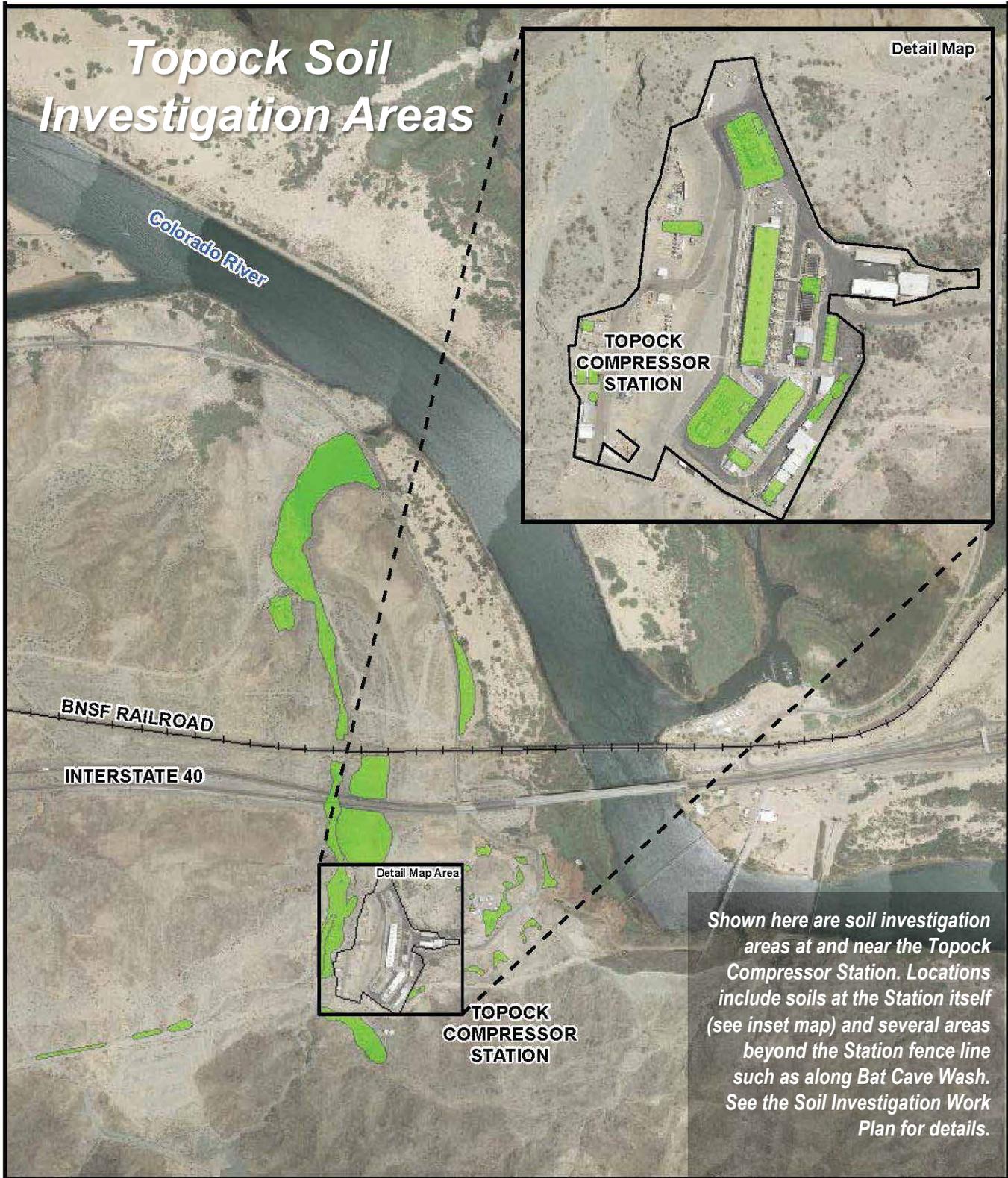


Health and safety of all workers and others during field work is a top priority, as is protection of natural and cultural resources. Access to sampling areas and sampling methods that avoid or minimize impacts will be used wherever possible.

Groundwater Remedy Update

Since 2005 the Interim Measures' goal of maintaining contaminated groundwater flow away from the Colorado River continues to be met, as reported in the Quarterly Performance Monitoring/Groundwater Monitoring Reports. Through its operation, the Interim Measures system has also removed approximately 8,334 lbs. of chromium from groundwater (through July 2015). Once the water is treated it is injected back underground.

In February 2015, PG&E submitted to DTSC and DOI the groundwater remedy Pre-Final Design Report. Comments were received from stakeholders and Native American tribes, and comment resolution is underway.



Legend

- Soil Investigation Areas
- Site Fence Boundary



0 500 1,000 Feet

Note: Perimeter and Storm Drain Investigation Areas not shown.

In May 2015, DTSC announced the preparation of a Subsequent EIR (SEIR) for the groundwater remedy. The SEIR will evaluate potential environmental impacts resulting from modification of the remedy design that occurred since approval of the conceptual Groundwater Remediation Project in the 2011 EIR and the 2013 Addendum to the EIR.

The groundwater remedy Final Design is pending completion of the SEIR. After agency approval of the SEIR and Final Design, PG&E will begin construction of the final groundwater remedy.

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.

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 DOI as the federal lead agency to protect lands owned by the federal government.

Where to Find Project Information

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

On the internet: www.dtsc-topock.com or 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

Colorado River Indian Tribes Library

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

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

Parker Public Library

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

Chemehuevi Indian Reservation

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

Department of Toxic Substances Control

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

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

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, EIR or other Project activities, please contact the following DTSC staff:

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

Notice to Hearing Impaired Individuals

TTY 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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

Postage

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Final Soil Investigation Work Plan and Environmental Impact Report Approved for PG&E Topock Compressor Station

The California Department of Toxic Substances Control has approved the Revised Final Soil Investigation Work Plan, and approved and certified the associated Final Environmental Impact Report. These major milestones allow soil sampling to begin during Fall 2015 at and near the PG&E Topock Compressor Station located in eastern San Bernardino County, California.

See inside this fact sheet for details,
including progress on the groundwater remedy and other activities.