

From: **Jim Blickenstaff** <jpblick@comcast.net>
Date: Wed, Sep 5, 2018 at 7:41 AM
Subject: PGE Tree Cutting Agreement / Sierra Club Statement

To: <mmitchell@lovelafayette.org>, <manderson@lovelafayette.org>, <cburks@lovelafayette.org>, <SFalk@lovelafayette.org> Cc: <drosario@ebparks.org>, <wdotson@ebparks.org>, <ecorbett@ebparks.org>, <awieskam@ebparks.org>, <ccoffey@ebparks.org>, <bdoyle@ebparks.org>, <blane@ebparks.org>

Date: 9/5/18

To: Lafayette City Council; Cam Burks, Mike Anderson, Mark Mitchell, and City Manager, Steve Falk.

From: Jim Blickenstaff, Chair, Mt. Diablo Sierra Club.

Re: Tree Cutting Agreement with PGE.

The Sierra Club has reviewed the proposed tree cutting plan by PGE, and the City cooperation under the Tree Cutting Agreement, and has concluded the cutting down over 200 healthy, and/or mature, and/or Heritage Trees, in Lafayette proper, is not justified; and the City of Lafayette would be well advised to cancel its cooperative agreement with PGE.

PGE has had a series of misguided managerial decisions – some ending tragically, others, often prioritizing financial advantage for PGE, at the expense of customer and resident's best interests. Sadly, this Lafayette Tree Cutting Agreement seems to reflect a continuation of their narrowly focused priorities.

Analysis demonstrates that, so called "safety," is not a governing issue. The misrepresentation on this issue, alone, is disturbing. In fact, a case can be made that safety will actually be diminished, overall, for the proper running and maintenance of PGE infrastructure; as \$100's of millions of customers dollars are devoted/diverted to a massive, Briones – Lafayette, tree removal project, at the expense of an array of other, more deserving safety matters. In fact, while tree removal may facilitate a more convenient above ground operational benefit for PGE, the underground consequence of dead and rotting tree roots could actually add to future degradation of those pipelines. Convenience is no justification for destroying 100's of mature trees, many of Heritage stature, and most, of significant environmental value. These trees are not a nuisance, they are not a danger, and they are not the problem.

The problem is obvious; and the City of Lafayette should take the necessary steps to -not- be a cooperative partner in the problem. It's Sierra Club's position that Lafayette should rescind the PGE Tree Cutting/Destruction Agreement; and reinstate the City's tree protection ordinance.

This communication will also be sent to officials at East Bay Parks, including Ward 2 Director, Dee Rosario, and General Manager Robert Doyle; as we also have concern for a significant portion of the additional 250 trees to be cut down in Briones Park. And again, in this case, PGE is not forthcoming on important information as to number of mature, healthy, heritage trees to be removed in southern Briones. I expect E. B. R. P. D. will demonstrate greater concern as to the total number of high value trees, under their stewardship, to be destroyed. Thank you all, for your thoughtful attention to this matter.

Jim Blickenstaff, Board Member, Sierra Club, S. F. Bay Chapter.
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cc: East Bay Parks.