

Going beyond compliance and building “best practices” for our industry.

PG&E has a long history of protecting habitat and species, including bird populations. For example, we were a founding member of the Avian Power Line Interaction Committee, a collaboration between utilities and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service that began nearly 20 years ago.

In 2002, PG&E and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service entered into an agreement that required PG&E to implement various measures to protect migratory, threatened, and endangered birds. When this agreement expired in 2007, PG&E voluntarily adopted a proactive Avian Protection Plan that expands PG&E’s commitments in public outreach, collaborative research, and “bird safe” technology demonstration projects. This plan has set the standard for our industry and is one of the most comprehensive in the nation.

BIRD PROTECTION PROGRAM (BIRD-SAFE RETROFITS)

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Poles Planned	2,000	2,011	2,000	2,050	2,075	2000
Poles Completed	1,930	2,089	2,023	2,073	2,117	2000
% Poles Completed	97%	103%	101%	101%	102%	100%

Since 2002, in compliance with the settlement agreement, PG&E has retrofitted more than 12,230 existing utility poles and towers with “bird-safe” equipment (see chart above). We have also retrofitted more than 11,100 poles in high-risk areas where bird injuries or fatalities have occurred previously, or where there have been bird-related power outages. All new poles and replacement poles in “Raptor Concentration Zones” are also built “bird-safe.”



Many bird species build nests on power poles and structures; unfortunately, this behavior increases risks for both the birds and our electric system. PG&E’s Avian Protection Plan minimizes these risks by protecting birds and their nests, while improving safety and reliability for our customers.

SOME OF OUR PARTNERS:

- Ventana Wildlife Society
- Avian Power Line Interaction Committee (APLIC)
- Wildcare
- Audubon California
- UC Santa Cruz Predatory Bird Research Group



AVIAN PROTECTION PLAN

Pacific Gas and Electric Company’s (PG&E) service area spans over 70,000 square miles and is home to wildlife and other important natural resources. More than 300 species of migratory birds live in northern and central California either permanently or during migration along the “Pacific Flyway.”

Since utility poles are often the highest and most prominent point in a landscape, birds often perch on the poles to hunt or rest. Also, it is often easier for birds to build nests on the flat surfaces of electric equipment than in trees.

When birds seek out power lines for perching and various other uses, they can come into direct contact with live electric wires and become electrocuted, which, in turn, can cause electric outages and fires. Birds can also collide with power lines while in flight. PG&E’s Avian Protection Plan seeks to protect migratory, threatened, and endangered birds, while improving safety and reliability for our customers.

AVIAN PROTECTION PLAN

Helping protect California’s birds and keep customer service flying high.

For more information, visit www.pge.com/environment



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Breeding bald eagles in California have increased from a low of only about 30 pairs in the early 1980s to more than 200 pairs today due to a variety of federal, state, and private protection efforts.

Together, we can make a difference to Californians on the ground—and in the air.

Targeted species enhancement programs:

For the past 25 years, PG&E has led various bird species conservation initiatives.

- **Bald Eagle:** PG&E has put in place tailored plans to protect bald eagles at our facilities as part of a long-term, statewide effort to monitor our national symbol. PG&E has surveyed more than 50 bald eagle nesting territories and provided scientific research and data to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Today, PG&E’s hydroelectric watershed lands support about one-quarter of the state’s entire breeding population of bald eagles.



A PG&E crew installs a nest platform near Clear Lake. Nest platforms reduce outages and are preferred by large birds, such as ospreys.

A plan designed to take wing.

PG&E’s Avian Protection Plan consists of several key components:

- **Employee training and compliance:** We educate our employees to ensure we comply with all federal and state bird protection laws. PG&E has developed training in “bird-safe” construction practices and in the proper reporting and tracking of all avian electrocutions or collisions.
- **Making our poles “bird-safe”:** Since 2002, we have proactively retrofitted a growing number of our utility poles. Each year, we identify high-risk poles based on the type of electric equipment, risk of electrocution, local biology, geography, and regional conservation initiatives. When needed, we also install platforms above or near our equipment to give birds a safe place to build a nest.
- **Public education and partnerships:** We promote the need for migratory bird and habitat conservation in cooperation with federal and state agencies and non-profit organizations. We also partner with a variety of bird conservation organizations to raise awareness about sensitive bird species, such as the Purple Martin in Lake County or the Tricolored Blackbird in Tulare County.



A golden eagle soars above a PG&E transmission tower near San Juan Bautista. Innovative new products, such as the red transmission line covers pictured (at left), protect eagles and greatly increase service reliability.

“PG&E’s avian protection efforts give us hope for the California Condor’s recovery in Big Sur and elsewhere,” said Kelly Sorenson, executive director of the Ventana Wildlife Society.

- **California Condor:** Endangered California Condors have a risk of colliding with PG&E’s power lines in remote Big Sur locations. Inadequate scientific data on Condors makes it difficult to resolve this challenge. Yet, PG&E has taken a number of steps, including developing a cutting-edge long-lining helicopter technique to install special “bird flight diverters” along these area power lines. In 2007, PG&E partnered with Monterey County, the Ventana Wildlife Society, California State Parks, the U.S. Forest Service, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on one of the largest installations of these innovative devices.

- **Peregrine Falcon:** PG&E’s support of peregrine falcon conservation efforts reached new heights in 2005 by funding the UC Santa Cruz Predatory Bird Research Group (SCPBRG) “nest cam” to broadcast the daily routine of a pair of peregrines and their young perched high on the company’s headquarters building in San Francisco. In 2007, the famous peregrines laid new eggs on the central anchorage of the San Francisco-Bay Bridge, requiring a dramatic rescue by the SCPBRG scientists with financial support from PG&E. Our continued financial support also funds the group’s educational outreach to hundreds of high schools and middle schools throughout California.

“Voluntary industry cooperation has long been essential to our conservation efforts, and many electric power companies have already taken steps to protect migratory birds,” said former U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director Matt Hogan. “The new [industry] guidelines build on and strengthen that tradition.”



In 2007, PG&E crews rescued a barn owl, entangled in a kite string, in Anderson, California.

“Thank you PG&E for helping us save the owl. We definitely couldn’t have done it without your help.”

Karlene Stoker, PR Coordinator, Shasta Wildlife Rescue & Rehabilitation, Inc.