



# In Brief

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FROM  
THE LEGAL ADVOCACY DIVISION OF  
CALIFORNIA FARM BUREAU

MAY 2025

## CAFB COMMENTS ON FEDERAL LISTING OF MONARCH BUTTERFLY UNDER ESA



On May 19, 2025, California Farm Bureau Federation (CAFB) submitted detailed comments to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) regarding the proposed federal listing of the monarch butterfly as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). CAFB emphasized that regulatory authority over pesticide use should remain with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), not FWS, and highlighted the importance of maintaining the Section 4(d) rule to support agricultural flexibility. CAFB further stressed that Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) lands should be treated as cropland and should not be subject to unnecessary restrictions.

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## PG&E FILES ITS GRC PHASE 1



On May 15, 2025, Pacific Gas & Electric Company (PG&E) filed its latest General Rate Case (GRC) Phase 1, for years 2027-2030. The filing asks for a revenue requirement increase of 8% in 2027 and a 6.1% increase in each year from 2028-2030. PG&E reports that this is the smallest percentage test year revenue requirement increase since the 2017 GRC and posits that this GRC results in a 3.6 percent bill increase for residential customers in 2027, but that bills will be flat compared to 2025 because additional items will come out of rates by 2027. (This also presupposes that additional items will not be added into rates before then.) The filing does not present bill impacts for non-residential customers, but the projected class average rate increase for bundled electric agricultural customers is 5.2% with 3.1% additional increases in each of the next 3 years. CAFB will begin reviewing the filing and prepare a protest to gain party status in the proceeding.

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## CAFB COMMENTS ON FEDERAL LISTING OF SUCKLEY'S CUCKOO BUMBLE BEE UNDER ESA



On May 19, 2025, California Farm Bureau Federation (CAFB) submitted comments to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service opposing the proposed federal listing of Suckley's cuckoo bumble bee (*Bombus suckleyi*) as an endangered species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). CAFB's comments highlighted the absence of recent sightings of the species in California and the lack of sufficient scientific data on its habitat or threats. CAFB argued that regulatory decisions must be based on clear, reliable, and verifiable data, which is currently lacking for this species.

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## TRANSMISSION PLANNING EFFORTS IMPACTS RATEPAYERS AND LANDOWNERS

Multiple avenues of transmission planning activities continued to move forward that will ultimately impact landowners who could be targeted for expansion to meet carbon neutral goals of California. The California Independent System Operator (CAISO) has been leading an effort to join other states in a market that would facilitate day ahead trading of generation. The program requires state legislative approval and Federal regulatory approval (FERC). The state approval would come through the pending SB 540 (Becker) to which CAFB is currently opposed and still holding out for inclusion of language requiring a study that demonstrates ratepayers would benefit from a structural change to the market. At the same time the Southwest Power Pool, that is a regional transmission organization like the CAISO, headquartered in Arkansas and governing 14 states, is competing with the California proposal and has attracted several states and transmission owners.

Although any changes would not be immediately felt, the additional layers of governance make it more challenging for input in transmission planning and buildout. These efforts highlight developers' push to place more decision-making authority with the CAISO, creating greater barriers to local input.

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# CAFB FILES TESTIMONY IN 2025 PACIFICORP ECAC

On April 24, 2025, CAFB filed intervenor testimony in PacifiCorp's 2025 Energy Cost Adjustment Clause (ECAC) and Greenhouse Gas-Related (GHG) costs application proceeding. The application requests an overall rate increase of \$8.7 million or 6% based on the combined ECAC and GHG Surcharge, for rates effective January 1, 2025. While less than the prior two ECAC proceeding requests, CAFB submitted testimony pushing back against the inclusion of Washington's Cap and Invest Program which now has also been challenged in Oregon, Idaho, Utah, and Wyoming. The primary argument is that PacifiCorp's customers in other states should not be paying for a Washington specific program. On May 7, 2025, the Energy Division at the Public Utilities Commission served Draft Resolution E-5398, independent of CAFB's analysis in its testimony, but largely including many of the same arguments against including Washington Cap and Invest costs in California. The outcome of the Draft Resolution would be to exclude the Washington Cap and Invest costs from the previous ECAC and to determine the amount already collected from California ratepayers and propose in its 2025 or 2026 Energy Cost Adjustment Clause (ECAC) Application how the funds or outstanding costs, including any interest if applicable, should be returned to or collected from its customers. CAFB will continue to monitor the outcome of the Draft Resolution and if it is successful, its bearing on the exclusion of the costs going forward. The next step in the 2025 ECAC proceeding will be PacifiCorp's rebuttal testimony.

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## CAFB COMMENTS ON REVISED WOTUS RULE



On March 24, 2025, EPA and the Army Corps of Engineers announced a [Federal Register notice](#) requesting feedback on the implementation of the definition of "waters of the United States" in light of the U.S. Supreme Court's 2023 decision in *Sackett v. Environmental Protection Agency*. CAFB provided written feedback and recommendations on the scope of waters of the U.S. on April 23, 2025. Additionally, CAFB provided oral feedback at EPA and Army Corps of Engineers' "Waters of the United States" Listening Sessions for Agricultural and Industry Stakeholders and Small Business Stakeholders. CAFB staff also commented on WOTUS in this week's [Voice of Agriculture podcast](#).

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