



**Pacific Gas and Electric Company Securitization**

**A. 20-04-023**

**TURN HEARING EXHIBIT**

**TURN-10**

NBC Bay Area News Story Dated 11-19-20 Regarding Zogg Fire Investigation

INVESTIGATIVE

# PG&E Filing Says Zogg Fire Tree May Have Been Flagged for Removal in 2018

By [Jaxon Van Derbeken](#) • Published November 19, 2020 • Updated on November 19, 2020 at 4:16 pm





Firefighters work to prevent the fire from spreading during the Zogg fire near the town of Igo in Shasta County, California, U.S., on Sunday, Sept. 27, 2020.

PG&E acknowledged in a court filing Wednesday that it believes a Gray Pine tree targeted in Cal Fire's probe of the Zogg fire may have been earmarked for removal two years before the deadly blaze in Shasta County.

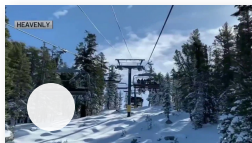
The admission to U.S. Judge William Alsup – the judge overseeing its criminal probation for federal safety law violations -- came on the same day the company announced it was bringing in a new CEO, Patricia Poppe – who had run a utility in Michigan -- to take over the corporation following its bankruptcy.

Since the Zogg fire, Cal Fire has seized parts of a Gray Pine tree that authorities believe was diseased and fell onto PG&E's 12,000 volt Girvan circuit distribution line in high winds along Zogg Mine Road. Investigators have also seized shattered insulators and a burned cross arm of the pole in the probe of the Sept. 27 fire that left four dead.

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“PG&E currently believes the Gray Pine of interest may have been identified for removal (but not removed) during restoration efforts following the Carr Fire in 2018, based on certain records recently reviewed by PG&E concerning that restoration work,” the company said in its filing.

The utility cites records from vegetation management contractor, Mountain G Enterprises Inc., showing the tree had been flagged for removal as an apparent risk that summer of 2018. The utility doesn’t specify the risk posed by that tree, however. But it does say contractor records confirm the at-risk tree was not, in fact, cut down. A fact confirmed by photos taken a year later.

PG&E offered some theories as to why, including apparent confusion at the time over how to use a new software app designed to track the Mountain G work. But it acknowledged an independent quality contractor had also flagged the tree – as well as a second one nearby -- for removal in August 2018.

PG&E also told the judge that in October 2018, tree work was halted near Zogg Mine Road after a resident carrying a firearm threatened crews about removing trees unnecessarily. The company told the judge that law enforcement were alerted about providing security.

“Among other things, PG&E is investigating what role, if any, that work interruption played in the two Gray Pines apparently not having been worked,” the company said.

Then, just a month later, the disastrous Camp fire struck in November 2018, killing 85 and destroying the town of Paradise. PG&E said the massive fire prompted them to shift resources away from the Zogg Mine Road work.

In its filing, PG&E stressed the findings as preliminary and not definitive.



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PG&E has been unable at this time to commit whether either of the two Gray Pines identified for removal were the Gray Pine from which Cal Fire appears to have collected portions after the Zogg Fire.”

PG&E also says its routine patrols leading up to the fire did not spot anything out of the ordinary.

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