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**PROJECT MEMORANDUM  
SCE EL CASCO SYSTEM PROJECT**

**To:** Lynne Mosley, CPUC  
**From:** Vida Strong, Aspen Project Manager  
**Date:** September 23, 2010  
**Subject:** Report 35: August 30 – September 12, 2010

**CPUC ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORS (EM):** Lynn Stafford, Allison Roth, Justin Wood

CPUC EM Allison Roth was on site September 1 and CPUC EM Justin Wood was on site September 8, 2010.

The SCE El Casco Project includes the following components:

- Construction of the new El Casco 220/115/12-kilovolt (kV) substation within the Norton Younglove Reserve, Riverside County, California;
- Replacement of approximately 15.4 miles of existing single-circuit 115 kV subtransmission lines with new, higher capacity single-circuit 115 kV subtransmission lines and replacement of support structures within existing SCE ROWs in the Cities of Banning and Beaumont and unincorporated Riverside County;
- Rebuilding 115 kV switchracks within Zanja and Banning Substations in the Cities of Yucaipa and Banning, San Bernardino and Riverside Counties, respectively;
- Installation of telecommunications equipment at the El Casco Substation; and
- Installation of fiber optic cables within public streets and on existing SCE structures between the Cities of Redlands and Banning in San Bernardino and Riverside Counties, respectively.

The following compliance and construction activities occurred during the subject period:

**EL CASCO SUBSTATION**

During the subject period, the contractor for the construction of the substation, Professional Construction, Inc., continued foundation work on the 115 kV switchrack and on the 220 kV transmission towers, including AA banks and the new transformer banks (see Figure 1). Additionally, crews continued construction of the 220/115 kV MEER and installation of the foundation for the 12 kV MEER during the subject period. Work began on spreading the spoils from the substation grading in a disturbance area adjacent to San Timoteo Creek (see Figure 2); crews also worked to repair a broken water pump.

Work was completed on the foundations of three towers on the lower pad; tower assembly and erection is delayed until after nesting season or until it is verified that there are no more active nests in the riparian/least Bell's vireo habitat along San Timoteo Creek adjacent to the tower work. Sound monitoring of the work continued in conjunction with the work.

Cattrac, the contractor that conducted the terracing and grading for the substation pad and relocation of the access road, has completed all work, except periodic erosion control activity. Most equipment and materials have been removed from the site, with the exception of those required for future erosion control work. Also, Cattrac has delayed removal of the water tower and tank near the entrance until the end of the bird nesting season.



## **BANNING SUBSTATION**

Work has been completed at the Banning substation.

## **ZANJA SUBSTATION**

A new lightweight steel pole was erected outside of the substation.

The staging area has been demobilized. It will be hydro-mulched for erosion control in a few weeks. Erosion control hydroseeding with a native plant mix will be applied on September 17<sup>th</sup>.

## **FIBER OPTIC CABLE (FOC) INSTALLATION**

No Fiber Optic Cable (FOC) work occurred during the subject period. The remaining FOC work is either within 500 feet of the riparian corridor along San Timoteo Canyon Road and is on-hold and scheduled to be done in conjunction with other SCE projects.

## **115-kV SUB-TRANSMISSION LINE REPLACEMENT**

The NTP request for the 115 kV sub-transmission work was submitted to CPUC by SCE on March 3, 2009. On January 5, 2010, NTP #7 was issued to begin construction of Segment 3 while pending submittals and analysis for the other segments are being processed. Segment 3 is a one to one pole replacement within the Sun Lakes Development in Banning between Highland Springs Road and Highland Home Road. Work has been completed on Segment 3.

Notice to Proceed #8 for construction of Segments 5 through 8 was issued by CPUC on July 19<sup>th</sup>. Initial work on Segment 8 is scheduled to begin in October.

NTPs for the remaining portions of the sub-transmission work are currently on hold pending review of the final design of Segments 1, 2 and 4. Maps of the new pole locations have been prepared by SCE and have been distributed to CPUC/Aspen personnel for review. A site visit was held July 8<sup>th</sup> and a follow up meeting was held on August 10<sup>th</sup>.

## **CONSTRUCTION YARDS & OTHER WORKSPACE NEEDS**

Variance Request #1 for a laydown yard immediately south of SCE's existing Maraschino Substation in the City of Beaumont, Riverside County, was requested on April 1 and approved by CPUC on April 16, 2009. Construction of the laydown yard began on May 28 and was completed by June 12, 2009. The yard is currently being used for the storage of materials, including transmission towers.

No requests for additional construction yards or other workspace needs have been submitted to date.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE**

- Biological and other mitigation monitoring continued to be provided by NRC and Chambers Group, respectively. During the subject period, neither cultural resource nor paleontology monitoring was required. NRC and Chambers monitors were continually present during mobilization/construction at the El Casco Substation and periodically at Zanja Substation. Two NRC Biological Monitors were present at El Substation because of the large area and the numbers of tasks involved; including, but not limited to, noise monitoring, nest monitoring, and checking of holes, trenches and V-ditches for animal entrapment. No environmental monitor was continually present at the Banning Substation site, because all work was contained within the substation and no environmental issues were involved.
- Equipment was continually checked for air pollution control compliance. The Chambers monitor continued to check equipment for leakage.
- Dust control, when necessary, was maintained by water trucks at the El Casco Substation.

- A concrete truck wash-out basin has been established and is in use at the El Casco Substation site.
- Security is on duty at the entrance gate to the El Casco Substation site twenty-four hours, seven days per week. Additionally, cones block entrance to the site, because visitors were not stopping at the guard station to identify themselves. Temporary security cameras have also been installed in the construction area, the trailers and storage yard.
- On September 8, Aspen Biologist, Justin Wood, conducted a field validation of the August 26-31 nest survey report conducted by NRC biologists. Wood's field validation concurred with the NRC report. No active nests or breeding activity was observed during his field validation survey.
- SCE has delayed the removal of the water tower and tank inside the entrance gate until after the current bird nesting season. The equipment is within 500 feet of riparian vegetation. Only normal traffic activity on the access road will be allowed during the season. The removal operation of the tower and tank would likely result in greater noise levels. Additional riparian bird nesting surveys are planned determine whether any birds are nesting within 500 feet of the water tower and tank; SCE plans to remove them if there are no bird's nests.
- NRC Biological Monitors continued noise monitoring adjacent to the San Timoteo Creek riparian area at El Casco Substation and access road sites during the subject period. This noise monitoring is being conducted in accordance with the Noise Analysis/Management Plan for the El Casco Substation and Access Road sites prepared by Chambers Group. This includes sound monitoring stations accompanying the tower construction on the lower pad. The results of the noise monitoring continued to be provided to CPUC on a weekly basis. The latest noise report was submitted on September 15 for the week of September 6th. The loudest noise levels recorded as a result of project activities were in the upper-70s decibel range from construction noise from the scraper spreading spoils. Elsewhere on the project site, noise levels ranged from 38 decibels to 53 decibels.
- Temporary trenches and holes continue to be dug on the pad at the El Casco Substation site. These have the potential to trap animals. NRC Biological Monitors are inspecting the trenches each morning, using flashlights when necessary, for trapped individuals. In addition, it has been noted that permanent V-ditches that have been constructed on the periphery of the substation site may have the potential for entrapment. The issue with the V-ditches is being investigated further by SCE. The majority of the animals that have been trapped are tree frogs and western toads during cold weather, and meadow mice and rattlesnakes at other times. No special status species have been affected. Some of the V-ditches have been covered with plywood at intervals to provide cover for trapped animals.

Table 1 provides a summary of the Non-Compliance Reports (NCRs) and Project Memorandum (PM), and other incidents (i.e., spills, etc.) for the SCE El Casco System Project.

**TABLE 1**  
**NCRs, PROJECT MEMORANDUM, & OTHER INCIDENTS**  
(Updated 09-23-10)

<b>Type</b>	<b>Date Issued</b>	<b>Description</b>
PM #1	03/16/09	Failure to comply with Mitigation Measure B-18 before, during and after vegetation clearing at the El Casco Substation site. Construction equipment went outside of approved Project boundaries.
	8/21/09	A SCE internal noncompliance at the Banning Substation was issued for mobilization of the site before environmental training and biological pre-construction sweep were conducted.
PM #2	8/27/09	The initiation of construction activity before CPUC authorization and validation of the biological survey at the site of the NTP #3, MOD #1 pole work in Banning.
PM #3	01/14/10	Use of an unapproved area for staging and parking at the Zanja Substation site.
PM #4	03/16/10	Riparian work during nesting bird season along El Casco Substation access road.
PM #5	04/16/10	Installation of a Section of Fiber Optic Cable without CPUC Notification of Route Change or Prior Biological Survey
Incident	06/21/10	SCE O&M grading on restricted access road.
PM #6	8/11/10	Construction activity without a Biological Monitor present within 500 ft. of the riparian corridor, and no noise monitoring.

**NOTICE TO PROCEED (NTP) SUMMARY**

Table 2 summarizes the NTPs submitted, reviewed, and issued to date for the SCE El Casco System Project.

**TABLE 2**  
**NOTICES TO PROCEED**  
(Updated 09-23-10)

<b>NTP #</b>	<b>Date Requested</b>	<b>Date Issued</b>	<b>Description</b>
#1	02/20/09	02/23/09	Vegetation clearing activities at the future El Casco Substation Site located in the Norton Younglove Reserve Area in Riverside County.
#2	05/15/09	05/22/09	Construction of the underground fiber optic elements of the El Casco System Project in the Cities of Banning and Beaumont.
#3	04/10/09	08/13/09	Banning Substation
#3 Mod #1	08/21/09	08/26/09	Modify work within Banning Substation and add work at 3 existing transmission poles located outside of the substation.
#4	03/05/09	8/27/09	Fiber optic cable installation, remaining (see NTP #2).
#4 Mod #1	09/30/09	10/02/09	Tree trimming.
#5	05/08/09	8/27/09	El Casco Substation construction.
#6	06/19/09	12-02-09	Zanja Substation
# 6 Mod #1	08/13/10	8/23/10	Replace old lattice tower with lightweight steel pole outside of Zanja Substation.
#7	12/17/09	1-05-10	Segment 3 of 115 kV subtrans element.
N/A	06/19/09	N/A	Mill Creek Communication Site – requested work suspended.
#8	02/26/09	07/19/10	Segments 5-8 of the 115 kV subtrans element.
	03/03/09	Under Review <sup>1</sup>	115 kV Sub-transmission lines replacement, Segments 1, 2 & 4.

1. CPUC assessing additional CEQA review requirements..

**VARIANCE & TEWS REQUEST SUMMARY**

Tables 3 and 4 summarize the Variance and Temporary Extra Workspace (TEWS) Requests submitted, reviewed, and issued to date for the SCE El Casco System Project, respectively.

**TABLE 3  
VARIANCE REQUESTS  
(Updated 09-23-10)**

<b>Variance #</b>	<b>Date Requested</b>	<b>Date Issued</b>	<b>Description</b>
#1	04/01/09	04/16/09	Usage of an empty fenced lot immediately south of SCE's existing Maraschino Substation, Beaumont, Riverside County, as a laydown yard to support Project construction.
#2	10/01/09	10/09/09	Placement of two water tanks and above ground pipe to feed water needs at the El Casco Substation site.
#3	09/30/09	10/15/09	FOC Temporary Circuitry: Banning and Calimesa Shoo Flies.
#4	09/30/09	10/15/09	Alternate Access to the Banning Substation from John Street.
#5	09/22/09	10/23/09	SCE has asserted within the variance request that several Geo & Hydro Mitigation Measures should not be required for the 115 kV Subtransmission Line Element.
#6	10/23/09	10/27/09	Installation of a Portable Fuel Tank at the El Casco Substation site.
#7	10/27/09	10/29/09	Project Description change from underground to overhead installation for fiber optics circuitry along Colton Avenue in the vicinity of the Mentone Substation.
#8	10/29/09	10/29/09	Removal of five Fremont cottonwood trees that are impacted by the construction of the access road to the El Casco Substation site.
#9	01/11/10	01/12/10	Sunday work on FOC shoo-fly segment during scheduled line outage.
#10	01/14/10	01/19/10	Use of the area east of the Zanja Substation fence line for parking and staging purposes.
#11	06/24/10	06/25/10	Sunday work on the FOC installation across Interstate 10 during minimum freeway traffic hours.
#12	07/22/10	07/23/10	Sunday work on the FOC installation across Highway 60 and Western Knolls Avenue during minimum freeway traffic hours.
#13	8/5/10	8/6/10	Nighttime deliveries of 220/115 kV transformer banks on August 13 <sup>th</sup> and August 17 <sup>th</sup> .
#14	9/8/10	9/13/10	Extended work hours to conduct the transfer of 50,000 gallons of oil into the two 220/115 kV transformer banks at ECSP

**TABLE 4  
TEMPORARY EXTRA WORK SPACE REQUESTS  
(Updated 09-23-10)**

<b>TEWS #</b>	<b>Date Requested</b>	<b>Date Issued</b>	<b>Description</b>
#1	04/17/09	04/23/09	Fiber Optic material storage at the pre-existing Zanja Substation, Yucaipa, San Bernardino County
#2	07/20/09		Staging area in a vacant lot north of First Street and west of Highland Springs Road.
#3	02/04/10	02/05/10	Distribution line crew access through an adjacent privately owned field to set equipment on existing poles.

## PROJECT PHOTOGRAPHS



**Figure 1:** At the El Casco Substation site, crews worked on the AA banks for the 220 kV switchracks (background) and on one of the two 220/115 kV transformers (foreground).



**Figure 2:** At the El Casco Substation site, a water truck sprays water on the spoil spreading area.



**Figure 3:** An overhead view of El Casco Substation taken from the southern slope that overlooks the project site.