

Environmental Minor Project Refinement Form



Project Name: ELM Series Capacitor Project Request Prepared By: Rincon Consultants, Inc.
Date Approval Required: November 14, 2021 Variance Request No.: CPUC #3
Date Submitted: October 11, 2021 Location: 25632 Crucero Road, San Bernardino County, CA
Landowner: HH & J Knoll Enterprise, Inc. (Land Manager) Landowner Parcel Number: 055-128-115
Current Vegetative Cover/Land Use: Developed/Disturbed
Existing Sensitive Resource? NO YES Specify: _____

Modifying (check as many as apply): MITIGATION MEASURE PLAN/PROCEDURE SPECIFICATION
 DRAWING PERMIT CONDITION OTHER

Specify Source (e.g., Mitigation Measure B.5): Initial Study/ Mitigated Negative Declaration approved work areas

Description of Change and Justification

Attachments:

PHOTO CONSTRUCTION DRAWING ADDITIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS CORRESPONDENCE OTHER: Attachments

OVERVIEW AND DESCRIPTION

Southern California Edison (SCE) is proposing the use of an additional established water source for the Eldorado-Lugo-Mohave Series Capacitor Project. The water source is located on private property, at 25632 Crucero Road, Ludlow, San Bernardino County, California; approximately 0.25 mile west along the National Trails Highway, northwest of the intersection of Interstate 40 with Crucero Road (Attachment 1 - Figure 1). The site is accessible via existing paved and unpaved roads. Because the property is privately-owned, it falls under the CPUC's regulatory jurisdiction for the project.

The site is a well-graded developed/disturbed lot with a residence to the north. The water source consists of an existing well, pump, and above-ground storage tank (i.e., "Baker" tank or frac tank). A water truck will access the site via the aforementioned existing access roads, park adjacent to the storage tank, fill, and depart using the same roads (Figure 1). The water truck and monitor vehicles will be rubber-tired vehicles. No vegetation removal, grading, or excavation is required. Vehicles will remain within existing disturbed areas.

This location was subject to a Temporary Extra Work Space (TEWS) request that was approved by the CPUC on September 15, 2021 (Attachment 2). It was initially intended to support construction of the fiber optic repeater sites in the Mojave National Preserve for a short duration. To support additional construction activities, including Optical Ground Wire (OPGW) work, SCE wishes to add the water source for the duration of the project, extending beyond the November 14, 2021 expiration date of the TEWS.

The agreement for use of the water is included as Attachment 3.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

The following sections present the results of desktop analyses and a reconnaissance site visit/preconstruction survey conducted on September 15, 2021 to determine if any environmental constraints would preclude the use of the water source for the project.

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

A desktop analysis of publicly available data (e.g., California Natural Diversity Database) was conducted to determine the potential for special-status species to occur at the water source. In addition, on September 15, 2021 (10:15-11:15), Jose

Lopez, an agency-approved Authorized Biologist and Avian Biologist, conducted a pedestrian biological survey of the water source site plus a 300-foot buffer and the access route plus a 50-foot buffer (collectively, the survey area). Survey methods were based on current guidance from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Bureau of Land Management, and/or industry standards. The biologist conducted pedestrian surveys by walking line transects spaced approximately 10 meters apart to ensure 100 percent visual coverage of the survey area, focusing on observations of wildlife, wildlife sign (e.g., burrows, scat, tracks), and behavioral cues, and to assess the potential impacts to biological resources.

Site Description: The water source is positioned on the south side of a quasi-residential property. The land in the immediate vicinity of the water source is developed/disturbed. It is accessible via an approximately 600-foot existing unpaved access road from the National Trails Highway. Some trees and shrubs are present in the vicinity, but the site vicinity is otherwise sparsely vegetated desert scrub, including creosote bush (*Larrea tridentata*) scrub communities.

Nesting Birds: Suitable substrates for nesting birds protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and California Fish and Game Code, including trees, shrubs, man-made structures, and the ground surface, can be found throughout the survey area. However, no nesting birds were detected (survey was conducted outside breeding season).

A preconstruction survey for nesting birds will be conducted prior to the initiation/continuation of construction activities at the proposed work area during the avian breeding season (January 1 – August 31). If active nests are identified, avoidance buffers will be established in accordance with the project Nesting Bird Management Plan (NBMP).

Special-Status Riparian Birds: No suitable habitat for riparian birds (least Bell's vireo [*Vireo bellii pusillus*] or southwestern willow flycatchers [*Empidonax trailii extimus*]) occurs within 500 feet of the new work areas.

Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*): Based on a review of aerial imagery, data provided by the USFWS, and project data, no suitable GOEA nesting habitat is located within 1 mile of the water source.

Burrowing Owl (*Athene cunicularia*): Suitable habitat for burrowing owls was identified in the survey area. However, no burrowing owls, potential burrows, or sign was observed. If burrowing owl is found during the preconstruction survey or construction activities, potential impacts will be addressed according to the Burrowing Owl Management and Passive Relocation Plan.

Special-Status Bats: Use of the water source will not result in the grading of rocky outcrops or removal of trees potentially serving as bat roosts.

Special-Status Mammals: Special-status small mammals such as the American badger (*Taxidea taxus*), desert kit fox (*Vulpes macrotis*), and/or desert bighorn sheep (*Ovis canadensis*) can occur in many parts of the project area, as suitable habitat is widespread. Based on the existing data reviewed, project-specific survey records, and habitat conditions observed during the survey, the desert kit fox, desert bighorn sheep, and American badger are assumed to be potentially present regionally. Suitable habitat for the ringtail (*Bassariscus astutus*) is present in the region, but is limited in extent to riparian areas and some desert mountains. Habitat in the proposed work area is degraded and due to human presence at this location it is unlikely that these species will inhabit the proposed work area and surrounding vicinity.

If any special-status mammals are found during the preconstruction survey or construction activities, potential impacts will be addressed according to the appropriate mitigation measures.

Desert Tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*) and Other Special-Status Terrestrial Herpetofauna: The proposed water source is located on developed/disturbed land surrounded by suitable desert tortoise habitat. However, no desert tortoises or desert tortoise sign were observed. No special-status reptiles nor unique habitats (e.g., sand dunes for Mojave fringe-toed lizards) were identified at the water source.

If any special-status terrestrial herpetofauna are found during the preconstruction survey or construction activities, potential impacts will be addressed through implementation of the mitigation measures and biological monitoring.

Special-Status Plants: The water source is located on developed/disturbed private property with highly compacted soils. No suitable habitat for special-status plants is present.

Cacti, Yucca, and Trees: No impacts to cactus or yucca species are anticipated.

Attachment 4 includes representative photographs.

JURISDICTIONAL WATERS

A desktop analysis of publicly-available data (National Wetland Inventory and National Hydrography Dataset), was conducted and the September 15 survey served to identify features potentially subject to regulation under Sections 404 and 401 of the Clean Water Act, the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act, and Section 1600 et seq. of California Fish and Game Code in the vicinity of the water source.

A historic riverine feature was identified crossing the private property near, but not intersecting the water source work area. Based on the site visit, however, no features with defined bed and bank, Ordinary High Water Mark, or signs of ephemeral flow intersect the water source work area. Two watercourses were mapped around the property, which is slightly upland of the potentially jurisdictional features. No impacts to jurisdictional waters are anticipated.

CULTURAL AND PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

While the site is not located within the Area of Potential Effects (APE) for the project, desktop analysis of publicly-available resources was conducted to determine if any know sites of cultural significance or deposits of paleontological significance occur in the water source work area, and/or would be impacted by the use of the water source.

The proposed water source is located on a private, fully developed lot. Workers will access the site via an existing unpaved access road, park a water truck near the water source, fill, and exit through the same unpaved access road. The workers and vehicles will not stray outside of the private lot and unpaved access road. No grading, excavation, or ground disturbance will occur on the unpaved access road or within the private lot. Therefore, no impacts to cultural or paleontological resources are anticipated.

CONCLUSION

No environmental constraints that would preclude the use of the proposed water source were identified. Preconstruction biological surveys will be conducted prior to the start of the activities and regular sweeps will be conducted. With implementation of the project MMs, no impacts to sensitive resources, such as biological, cultural, and paleontological resources, and jurisdictional waters are anticipated.

Resources:

Biological NO SENSITIVE RESOURCES PRESENT SENSITIVE RESOURCES PRESENT N/A

New Survey Report Attached: YES NO

If No, Previous Biological Survey Reference: See preconstruction survey results presented herein and approved TEWS, attached.

Cultural NO RESOURCES PRESENT RESOURCES PRESENT WITH PROJECT APE: YES NO
 (PAVED, GRAVELED DEVELOPED/DISTURBED AREA AND NO GROUND DISTURBANCE)

If in APE, Previous Cultural Survey Reference: _____

If not in APE, attach new survey report: See "Cultural and Paleontological Resources" above, and approved TEWS, attached.

Other Potential Impacts:

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> AIR QUALITY | <input type="checkbox"/> LAND USE | <input type="checkbox"/> TRAFFIC |
| <input type="checkbox"/> BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES | <input type="checkbox"/> NOISE | <input type="checkbox"/> VISUAL |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CONTAMINATED SOILS | <input type="checkbox"/> PALEO RESOURCES | <input type="checkbox"/> WATER RESOURCES |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CULTURAL RESOURCES | <input type="checkbox"/> SOCIOECONOMIC | <input type="checkbox"/> WETLANDS |
| <input type="checkbox"/> HAZARDOUS MATERIALS | <input type="checkbox"/> STORM WATER (SWPPP) | |

NONE

CEQA and Permitting:

1. Will modification involve substantial changes that will require major changes to the CEQA document?
 YES NO
2. Will modification result in new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified impacts?
 YES NO
3. Additional agency notifications and/or permit modifications required? YES NO

Conditions of Approval or Reasons for Denial:

Required Signatures:

___ SCE Construction Project Manager : VARIANCE MODIFICATION IS NEEDED FOR SAFE AND EFFICIENT CONSTRUCTION

Name: Jeff Miller Signature:  Date: 10/4/21

Environmental Compliance Lead : FIELD REVIEW COMPLETE

Name: Matt Kelahan Signature:  Date: 9/23/2021

___ SCE Land Agent: CONSISTENT WITH EXISTING RIGHTS NEW RIGHTS OBTAINED

Name: Stephanie Tsai Signature:  Date: 10/04/2021

___ SCE Environmental Project Manager: APPROVED APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS (SEE CONDITIONS ABOVE) DENIED

Name: Sylvia Granados Signature: *Sylvia Granados* Date: 10/04/2021







SCE Project Manager: APPROVED APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS (SEE CONDITIONS ABOVE) DENIED

Name: Selya Arce Signature: *S Arce* Date: 10/11/2021

Attachment 1 – Figure 1

Eldorado-Lugo-Mohave Series Capacitors Project

Crucero Road Water Source

-  Water Source
-  Proposed MPR Site
-  Potentially Jurisdictional Feature
-  Stream/River
-  Non-Paved Access Road
-  Paved Access Road

NHD Feature

Stream/River

NWI Wetland Type

Riverine



1 in = 100 feet

Created Date: 9/23/2021

Created By:
Rincon Consultants

Features depicted herein are planning level accuracy, and intended for informational purposes only. Distances and locations may be distorted at this scale. Always consult with the proper legal documents or agencies regarding such features. Cental Field Services

Service Layer Credits: Source: Esri, Maxar, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, and the GIS User Community
Sources: Esri, Airbus DS, USGS, NGA, NASA, CGIAR, N Robinson, NCEAS, NLS, OS, NMA, Geodastatyslsen, Rijkswaterstaat, GSA, Geoland, FEMA, Intermap and the GIS user community




Attachment 2 – TEWS Approval


Standard Conditions of Approval

- The CPUC, via its designated Environmental Monitor, will review and approve/deny the Temporary Extra Workspace Request (TEWS) request within four business days of receiving this completed form.
- Use of TEWS is limited to 60 days. First proposed date of use: 09/15/2021 _____
- Use of TEWS shall be in compliance with local ordinances (including traffic/noise) and mitigation measures.
- If any signs of cultural resources are identified, work shall cease immediately and the site shall be reevaluated.
- The proposed site shall not be used for storage of fuel or hazardous materials.
- All drips, leaks, and/or spills from vehicles and/or equipment shall be cleaned-up immediately and disposed of in appropriate, labeled containers.
- Adjacent streets shall be swept or cleaned with water at the end of each workday if visible soil material is carried on them.
- No parking or storage of vehicles (including personnel vehicles), equipment, pipe, or any other project-related item shall be allowed on adjacent roadways.
- If a complaint is received, it shall be forwarded to the SCE Environmental Compliance Lead and the CPUC Environmental Monitor for review.

The following signatures indicate that the proposed site is approved for TEWS. On a random basis, a CPUC Environmental Monitor will verify that use of the proposed site is in accordance with the conditions noted. This approval may be revoked at any time by any one of the approval team. Failure to comply with all conditions will result in immediate revocation of this TEWS approval.

HH & J Knoll Enterprise , Inc	9/15/2021
Property Owner 	Date
SCE Construction Project Manager	9/15/2021
	Date
SCE Environmental Project Manager	9/15/2021
	Date

The above TEWS request and attached documentation have been reviewed and this request is approved or denied (*X one*).

	9/15/2021
CPUC Environmental Monitor	Date

Additional CPUC Conditions of Approval

(CPUC Monitor Initial NS)

REASON(S) FOR DENIAL:

Attachment 3 - Land Use Agreement

Dean Ritter

From: Miguel Duran <mduran@halhays.com>
Sent: Friday, August 27, 2021 4:58 PM
To: Preston Morton
Subject: FW: Ludlow Water Purchase

Preston,

Below is the contact info for the water source in Ludlow, CA.

Thank you,



MIGUEL DURAN

Lead Estimator

MDuran@HalHays.com

Office: 951-788-0703 X 160 | Mobile: (909) 520-5833

4181 Latham Street, Riverside, CA 92501

www.halhays.com

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From: HH & J Knoll Ent. <knoll4239@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 15, 2020 4:59 PM
To: Miguel Duran <mduran@halhays.com>
Subject: Ludlow Water Purchase

Hello Miguel

Thank you for talking to me today. As discussed, we will sell you 500 gallons of water, once a week at a rate of .15/gal. equal to \$75.00.

Please make check payable to: [HH & J Knoll Enterprise , Inc](#)

Mailing Address: HC1 Box 6
Ludlow CA 92338

Please note, from time to time we can have well issues, and if we're struggling to support Ludlow water use, you would have to forgo getting water for at least that day, but it most likely could be rescheduled for another day.

Thank you and thank you for your patience!

--

Kristie Livingston
HHJ Knoll Enterprise
760)733-4239 office
760)957-5546 cell

Attachment 4 – Representative Photographs



☀ 137°SE (T) ● 34.726894°, -116.167617° ±3m ▲ 512m



Ludlow water site
Jose Lopez

Kelbaker repeater
14 Sep 2021, 16:39:07

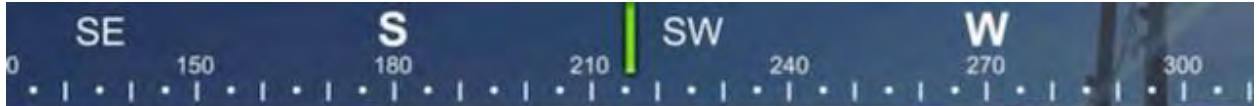


☉ 236°SW (T) ● 34.726845°, -116.167432° ±4m ▲ 513m



Ludlow water site
Jose Lopez

Kelbaker repeater
14 Sep 2021, 16:39:42



☉ 216°SW (T) ● 34.726922°, -116.167357° ±4m ▲ 519m

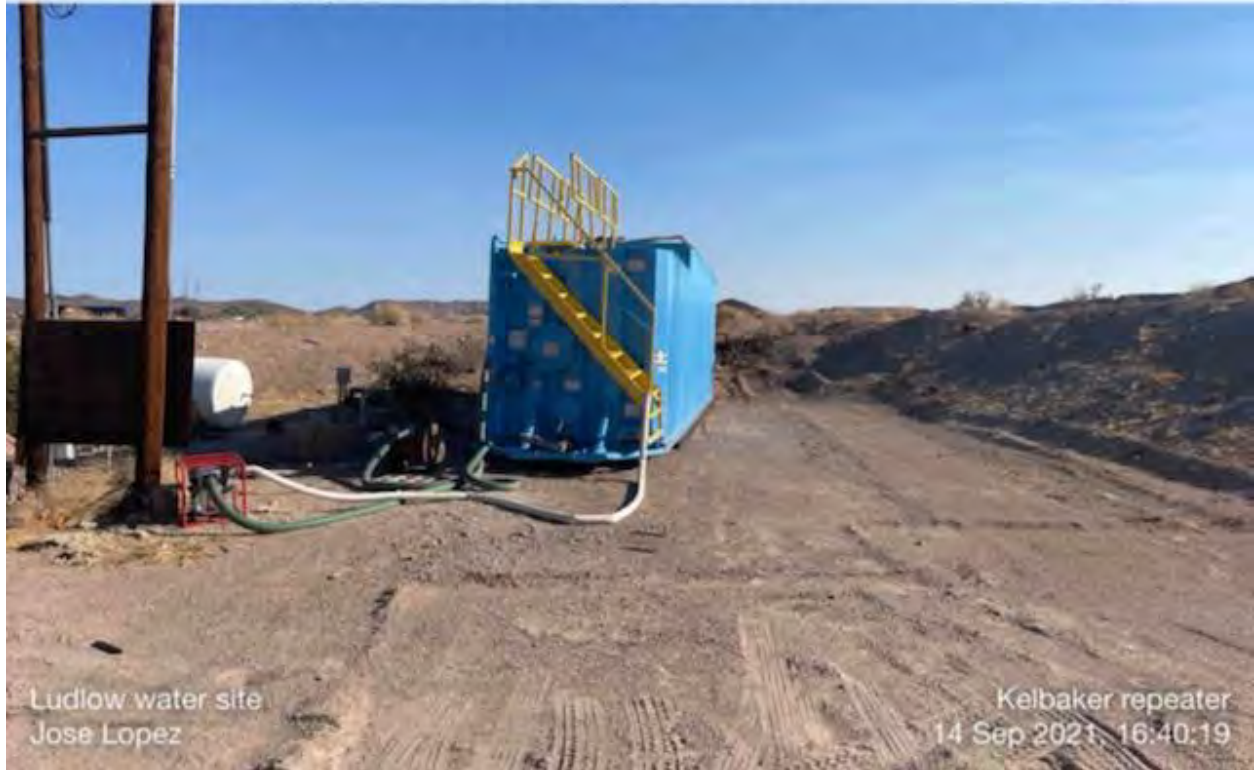


Ludlow water site
Jose Lopez

Kelbaker repeater
14 Sep 2021, 16:39:57



☉ 165°S (T) ● 34.726932°, -116.167564° ±4m ▲ 518m



Ludlow water site
Jose Lopez

Kelbaker repeater
14 Sep 2021, 16:40:19