



# **Aspen** *Environmental Group*

## **PROJECT MEMORANDUM**

### **PG&E – TRI-VALLEY 2002 CAPACITY INCREASE PROJECT**

**To:** Roosevelt Grant, CPUC

**From:** Vida Strong, Aspen Project Manager

**Date:** March 26, 2003

**Subject:** Weekly Report #27: March 17, 2003 – March 23, 2003

**CPUC Environmental Monitor (EM):** Anne Sweet

#### **Summary of Activity:**

Weather was mostly clear with two minor storm events during the subject week. Erosion control was inspected project wide and repairs were made where needed. The Essex Environmental Inspector (EI) conducted several environmental trainings of contractor and subcontractor personnel, as well as site visitors and inspectors during the subject week. Wildlife spring breeding seasons are occurring. The CPUC EM paid special attention to Raptor habitat and possible nests, as well as ground surveys for burrowing owl habitat along the right-of-way.

For the area north of the Arroyo del Valle extending to the Vineyard Substation, vault installation and tie-ins are complete and the area is being compacted and re-contoured. The large spoils pile located at the area approved in Variance Request #1 is being removed.

Trenching continued along New Vineyard Road from the Vault 14A and 14B location to the intersection with “Old” Vineyard Avenue. Crews also continued trenching within “Old” Vineyard Avenue from the Vault 16A and 16B location to the Vault 17A and 17B location, and from the Vault 17A and 17B location to south of the Arroyo del Valle (see Figures 1 and 2). Traffic Control Plans were implemented. Crews were pulling cable between the Vault 10A and 10B location and the Ruby hills entrance area.

The CPUC EM conducted a site visit of the Mueller Contractor Yard. The extra workspace area adjacent to the yard is approved for use per Variance #5 contingent on landowner approval. Landowner approval was submitted to the CPUC on March 19.

The CPUC EM toured New Vineyard Road. Directional drilling operations started on March 19 at the bridged unnamed tributary along New Vineyard Road. A Streambed Alteration Agreement Amendment, which outlines the drilling operation requirements, has been granted by the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) for work associated with the crossing. The CPUC EM inspected the installation of erosion controls required for the drilling operation. Two vacuum trucks were placed close to the tributary, as well as numerous hay bales and sandbags as part of frac-out contingency containment and clean-up equipment. The bore crew Forman was asked about site monitoring for potential frac-outs both in and around the resource. During drilling operations, a few small frac-outs have occurred in the road, which runs perpendicular to the tributary along the bore path. The bentonite was contained without resource impact. On March 20, a frac-out occurred in the tributary. The frac-out had been identified immediately and proper clean up had been executed (see Figure 3). On March 21, the CPUC EM called CDFG Environmental Scientist Greg Martinelli with some questions about the permit amendment and drilling conditions for the unnamed tributary along New Vineyard Road and mentioned that the frac-out clean up had occurred. Greg responded that he had not yet been informed of the frac-out. The CPUC EM asked about what the proper work hours for boring operations at the tributary should be and Greg Martinelli responded that operations should be confined to day light hours.

At Isabel Avenue all tie-ins are complete and the area backfilled. The roadway west of Isabel Avenue, which was re-routed during the boring operation, was repaved.

During pit excavation for the Highway 84 bore, groundwater has been encountered. PG&E has constructed a system to pump the groundwater to Baker tanks for settling, then to a pre-existing land depression for percolation and groundwater recharge (see Figure 4). The Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) gave verbal approval of the plan on Friday March 14, at which time the overland discharge began. The CPUC EM requested the RWQCB Highway 84 bore dewatering approval letter from numerous PG&E/Essex/contractor representatives, but the approval was not provided to the CPUC EM during the subject week. On the afternoon of March 19, the CPUC EM spoke with Martin Musonge of the RWQCB to confirm the agreement concerning the Highway 84 bore. The dewatering plan has been approved; however, the RWQCB is requiring water testing which had not been done at that time. The CPUC EM contacted Megan Bracker, Essex PM, and informed her that the RWQCB is requiring testing of the groundwater. Megan Bracker contacted RWQCB for requirements and water samples were collected for testing. The water test results came back clean and within discharge limits. Results are being sent to the RWQCB.

Within the area between Highway 84 and the Transition Station, restoration and grading work commenced between the Vaults 2A and 2B and the Vaults 3A and 3B locations. Grapevines row extensions are being installed up to the underground installation.

At the Transition Station, crews have finished the foundation work. Steel riser footings were placed in the foundation and conduit installed from the risers to the mainline. Structure poles are being erected from the footings. On March 14, boom trucks were placed in the approved TEWS locations on both sides of the Station along the existing Contra Costa-Newark transmission line, which overhangs the Station area. Extension wires grounded the overhead transmission lines, which were then connected to the pole supports at the Station during the subject week (see Figure 5). The CPUC EM checked erosion controls at the station, which appeared in good repair. Trucks and applicable equipment were being kept outside of exclusion boundaries at the Station site. On March 21, the CPUC EM identified concrete washout along the right-of-way near the Station. The Essex EI was notified and was already aware of the problem. The construction manager from Mueller was notified and the issue documented as a minor problem. On March 22, a spill occurred at the Station when a hydraulic hose broke on an excavator. A three by five foot area was impacted. The contaminated soil was removed and placed in a hazardous waste container at the Mueller yard. No resources were impacted.

#### **Environmental Compliance:**

On March 21, the CPUC EM identified concrete washout along the right-of-way near the Station. The Essex EI and Mueller construction manager were notified and the issue documented as a minor problem.

For all other operations, the CPUC EM observed that construction was in compliance with mitigation measures adopted in EIR and other permitting requirements.

#### **Notices to Proceed (NTP):**

NTP #3 was approved by the CPUC and distributed on December 12. This NTP completes the Phase One portion of the Tri-Valley Project. On February 13, the CPUC EM met with Essex to review the Phase Two mitigation requirements necessary for NTP #4 preparation. No pre-construction compliance submittals were provided during the subject week.

**Variance Requests:**

Variance Request #5 submitted for an approximate 2.6-acre expansion of the approved Mueller Contractor Yard was approved by the CPUC on February 25, 2003. Landowner approval was provided to the CPUC on March 19.

**Agency Personnel Contacts:**

RWQCB, Martin Musonge  
CDFG, Greg Martinelli, Environmental Scientist

**TABLE 1**  
**VARIANCE REQUEST STATUS TABLE**  
**(Updated 03-27-03)**

Variance Request #	Date Submitted	Description	Status	CPUC Approval Date
1	10/3/02	Temporary storage of bore pit spoils on the north side of the Arroyo del Valle bore crossing Stations 304+00 to 306+00.	Completed	10/17/02
2	12/19/02	40 feet of extra work space was requested on the south, east and west sides of the north bore pit associated with the Arroyo Del Valle jack and bore to install a sound barrier around boring operations, so that 24-hour construction could occur.	Completed	1/6/03
3	01/29/03	Approximate 200' by 300' extra workspace area east of the Isabel Ave jack & bore.	Completed	2/18/03
4	01/29/03	Approximate 120' by 320' extra workspace area north of the Hwy 84 jack & bore, and an 80' by 200' area south of the Hwy 84 bore.	Completed	2/18/03
5	02/12/03	Approximate 2.6-acre expansion of the approved Mueller Contractor Yard, City of Pleasanton.	Completed	2/25/03



Figure 1  
Street trench within Vineyard Avenue between Vault locations 16 and 17.



Figure 2  
Work at the Vault 17 location along Vineyard Avenue.





Figure 3

Frac-out location (post clean-up) within the unnamed tributary along New Vineyard Road. Note the darkened area where the thorough clean-up had occurred.



Figure 4  
RWQCB ground water discharge area for the Highway 84 Bore operation



Figure 5  
Transition Station, line-stringing operations to the erected pole structures. Note the lines were being grounded at the TEWS locations on both sides of the station.