



Aspen *Environmental Group*

PROJECT MEMORANDUM SCE – VIEJO SYSTEM PROJECT

To: Jensen Uchida, CPUC
From: Vida Strong, Aspen Project Manager
Date: January 4, 2004
Subject: Weekly Report #22: December 26, 2004 – January 1, 2004
CPUC Environmental Monitor (EM): Christopher Meyer

The CPUC EM conducted a site visit on December 30 and reviewed the substation and 220 kV construction activities, Best Management Practices (BMPs), and the upcoming 66 kV construction with SCE. No work was occurring on the 220 kV transmission line due to the recent rains and saturated condition of the right-of-way. Only limited work occurred on the substation site due to the muddy conditions.

SUBSTATION CONSTRUCTION

Summary of Activity:

The two A transformers have been delivered to the substation site and the first transformer has been set onto the pad (see Figure 1). Sandbags on sections of the access road were removed to provide room for the larger truck trailer used to move the transformers into the substation site and were not back in place for the recent rains. Several trenches were recently excavated and have filled with water from the rains (see Figure 2).

Environmental Compliance:

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

The site vegetation has been removed from the substation site and a LSA Environmental Inspector (EI) has not been on-site full-time. The LSA EI is periodically checking the excavations and foundation holes for sensitive and common animals. Several fossils have been discovered and collected for examination by the paleontologist during the course of the project. The majority of the excavation has been completed on the substation site and no fossil discoveries were reported during the subject week.

In general, the Best Management Practices (BMPs) installed on the substation site have been installed properly and maintained. However, the sandbags and straw waddles installed on the access road to the substation site were not placed properly, resulting in turbid water entering the storm drain system (see Figure 3). The contractor addressed the issue with the sandbags and straw waddles prior to any comments by the CPUC EM and was actively reviewing storm water issues throughout the site. No other off-site impacts were noted during the site visit and the maintenance of the BMPs appeared to be effective.

220 kV TRANSMISSION LINE SEGMENT

Summary of Activity:

No work occurred on the transmission line segment during the site visit due to the condition of the right-of-way after the recent rains.

The height of the lattice sections is limited by the clearances required between the structures and the live transmission lines and no additional work can occur prior to a power outage. The scheduled outage has been delayed until the first week of January due to the longer than expected outage at San Onofre Power Plant.

Environmental Compliance:

The straw wattles that had been moved to the side on the access roads to allow access during construction were back in place for the recent rains. Three erosion and sedimentation issues were noted on the right-of-way during the site visit. The culvert crossing near the substation back gate needs protection on the downstream side of the road (see Figure 4). Erosion down the west access road has placed sediment into the plated drainage, under the steel plates (see Figure 5). Minor erosion was noted under the southern lattice structure (see Figure 6). One vehicle did use the right-of-way after the roads were saturated from recent rains, leaving ruts for the sediment from the lattice tower erosion to follow back to the drainage. Many of the BMPs along the edge of the right-of-way have been maintained and improved in places. The contractor has moved the portable toilet away from the hillside to protect against chemicals spilling into the habitat.

SCE has moved the exclusion fencing near the southern tower location. The transmission line superintendent needs to move a crane to the north side of the tower to set the eastern lattice sections. The SCE biologist has examined the habitat and will monitor any vegetation clearing. SCE will place plating over the habitat and avoid the mature sage and cactus, using a sparsely vegetated corridor for access. The SCE requested minor expansion in the work area on the east side of this tower as well to place a mobile man-lift. The CPUC EM reviewed the area with the SCE biologist and the LSA Environmental Inspector (EI). One small cactus would be impacted and a section of a buckwheat plant would be covered by fill. The proposed activities would be temporary while the crew worked on the tower during the outage and was approved by the CPUC EM.

NOTICES TO PROCEED (NTP):

NTP #1 was approved for substation construction by the CPUC on July 15, 2004, and NTP #2 was approved for the 220 kV upgrade on September 29, 2004. SCE is expected to start submittal of pre-construction compliance materials for the 66 kV transmission line portion of the project soon.

VARIANCE REQUESTS:

No variance requests were submitted for review during the subject week.

UPCOMING ITEMS:

SCE is working to submit the pre-construction compliance documents for the 66 kV towers. The CPUC EM reviewed the proposed 66 kV tower locations and associated access and work pads. The CPUC EM requested that SCE look at alternative routes for the access roads that would minimize the disturbance of both the hillside and the native habitat. Previously disturbed areas exist that offer alternatives to the hill cuts and drainage crossing.

AGENCY PERSONNEL CONTACTS: None

Photographs



Figure 1 – Crews set the first A transformer onto the pad prior to the rain.



Figure 2 – Recently excavated trenches have filled with storm water.



Figure 3 – Loose spoils had been placed to direct water into the storm drain without proper sediment control devices in place.



Figure 4 – BMPs are required at the culvert crossing near the substation back gate.



Figure 5 – Erosion from 220 kV access road has bypassed BMPs and sediment has entered the drainage.



Figure 6 – Minor erosion from the lattice tower pad flowing into the recent vehicle ruts.