Environmental Minor Project Refinement Form

Project Name: West of Devers Upgrade Project Request Prepared By: Sylvia Granados

Date Approval Required: 8/24/2018 Variance Request No.: 20

Date Submitted: 8/21/2018 Location: Old Banning Idyllwild Road west of Smith Creek Telecom Crossing, in the City of Banning.

Landowner: City of Banning

Current Vegetative Cover/Land Use: Developed/Disturbed Public Road

Existing Sensitive Resource? NO ■ YES Specify: LA Pocket Mouse, Smith Creek

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

Specify Source (e.g., Mitigation Measure B.5): Modification to NTP #3 Work Area Mapping.

Description of Change and Justification (Attach additional sheets if needed.)

Attachments:

■ CONSTRUCTION DRAWING ☐ ADDITIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS ☐ CORRESPONDENCE ☐ OTHER:

Public Roads Required for Devers-Valley Telecommunications Route Construction at Smith Creek

The use of approximately .5 mile of unpaved public road is required to provide construction access for truck travel to and from the Smith Creek Telecom Crossing work area. The approved east access route along Old Banning Idyllwild Road will not safely support heavy truck travel to the construction site, therefore the use of approximately 0.27 miles of unpaved public road to the west of the site along Old Banning Idyllwild Road and approximately 0.23 miles of unpaved public road to the south is required to facilitate construction. Along the public road, approximately 100-feet of the road west of the entrance gate will be used for off-loading of material and equipment to facilitate construction, as shown in Figure 1.

Biological Resources:

The new access route is located along public, developed, disturbed, and compacted portions of Old Banning Idyllwild Road. The adjacent habitats are classified as alluvial scrub, coastal sage scrub, and grassland/forbland for most of the alignment.

Special-status Plants – The new access route is formed of mostly paved roads, except the first .5-mile portion from the site that is a well-traveled unpaved public road. No impacts to special-status plant species are expected to occur. Therefore, no impacts are anticipated.

Regulated Trees – No trees have been identified for trimming or removal along the public access roads.

Jurisdictional Waters – A jurisdictional water intersects the public access road. The new access route crosses Smith Creek to the west of the current approved work area on a County-maintained route. No work or road modification is required to cross the wet crossing at Smith Creek. No grading, cut, or fill will occur along the new access route. Rubber tired work trucks to transport crew members and equipment along Old Idyllwild Road.

Nesting Birds – Suitable substrates for nesting birds, including trees, shrubs, man-made structures, and the ground surface, can be found throughout the work areas. A preconstruction nesting bird survey will be conducted within 10 days prior to construction initiation and daily clearance sweeps will be conducted during nesting bird season.

Golden Eagle – A known perennial golden eagle nest is located within 2 miles of the telecom alignment. The nearest pole to the nest is #256813S and the nest is within 0.74 miles of the Devers-Valley telecom route. The substrate is a cliff cavity approximately 60 feet above the ground surface. Aspect is approximately NNW. The nest location is well hidden

by ridgelines to the south and east, but overlooks a canyon which opens to the forage ground along Old Banning Idyllwild Road and Smith Creek below. This nest is no longer active – the nest successfully fledged one chick in 2018. The work activities at Smith Creek will not occur during the breeding season.

Special-status Small Mammals – Suitable habitat for LAPM is located south of Highway 243 off Old Idyllwild Road to approximately 180 feet south of existing pole 256842S. Suitable habitat for LAPM is also located from approximately 85 feet west of existing pole 256814S to the full extent of the HDD alignments and work areas at Smith Creek. However, within this larger area, there are pockets of habitat suitable for LAPM and pockets that are not suitable. Unsuitable areas include existing paved and unpaved roads and areas of compacted soils (e.g., O&M work areas at the transmission structures). In those areas, LAPM may cross the areas while foraging, but no burrow complexes are anticipated. Where habitat is suitable for LAPM along the telecom alignment, SCE assumes presence and will implement the *Los Angeles Pocket Mouse Avoidance and Minimization Plan*.

Stephen Myers and Debra De La Torre, Qualified Biologists, with SCP and MOU from CDFW and approved for the project, evaluated the site for impacts to LAPM. Based on their review of the proposed construction activities, areas of suitable habitat subject to ground-disturbing activities were fenced off and a qualified biologist conducted trapping within the fenced area. No LAPM were trapped within the fenced area. To further understand the species' present, traps were also placed in the surrounding areas. LAPM were captured within suitable habitat in the surrounding area. The new access route is mostly paved with a short segment of compacted dirt/sand, which is not considered habitat. In accordance with the LAPM Avoidance and Minimization Plan and small mammals mitigation plan, a Qualified Biologist will be present during construction activities to assist the contractor with locating equipment to avoid suitable habitat. Therefore, no impacts to LAPM are anticipated.

American Badger, Desert Kit Fox, Ringtail – No suitable habitat for American badger, desert kit fox, or ringtail is present; therefore, no impacts are anticipated.

Desert Tortoise – The work locations are outside the known range of the desert tortoise. Therefore, no impacts to this species will occur.

Special-status Terrestrial Herpetofauna – No suitable habitat for special-status terrestrial herpetofauna is present; therefore, no impacts are anticipated.

Stephens' Kangaroo Rat – No suitable habitat for Stephen's kangaroo rat is present; therefore, no impacts are anticipated.

Special-status Bats – No suitable habitat for special-status bats is present; therefore, no impacts are anticipated.

Burrowing Owl – Based on historic occurrences and project survey data, burrowing owls have a moderate potential to occur within 500 feet of the telecom work area. No burrowing owl or sign has been observed within the previous survey area or during preconstruction surveys and monitoring conducted at this site. No impacts to burrowing owls are anticipated.

Listed Riparian Birds – No suitable habitat for listed riparian birds is present within 500 feet of the telecom work area; therefore, no impacts are anticipated.

Coastal California Gnatcatcher – Suitable habitat for California coastal gnatcatcher is identified around the existing work area at Smith Creek. Surveys conducted in 2018 were negative (FRED 000061 and 000062). All work at Smith Creek including the use of the new access route will be conducted outside of the nesting season thus no impacts to CAGN are anticipated.

Cultural Resources:

The work area is located within the WOD APE and was covered within the record search data that was conducted during previous WOD surveys and studies. The record search and surveys were negative for cultural resources. *Cultural Resources Management Plan for Southern California Edison Company's West of Devers Transmission Line Upgrade Project, Riverside and San Bernardino Counties, California.* 2016. Rosemead, CA: Southern California Edison.

Resources:

Biological NO SENSITIVE RESOURCES PRESENT ■ SENSITIVE RESOURCES PRESENT

New Survey Report Attached: YES ■ NO

If No, Previous Biological Survey Reference:

https://www.sceprojects.com/modules/fileUploadForm/dis_fileUploadForm.cfm?featureID=429&moduleID=537&defID=2157962.

Cultural ■ NO RESOURCES PRESENT ☐ RESOURCES PRESENT WITH PROJECT APE: ☐ YES ■ NO
(PAVED/GRAVEL AREA AND NO GROUND DISTURBANCE)

If in APE, Previous Cultural Survey Reference: The Project specific Cultural Resources Management Plan:

The work area is located within the WOD APE and was covered within the record search data that was conducted during previous WOD surveys and studies. The record search and surveys were negative for cultural resources. *Cultural Resources Management Plan for Southern California Edison Company's West of Devers Transmission Line Upgrade Project, Riverside and San Bernardino Counties, California.* 2016. Rosemead, CA: Southern California Edison.

Other Potential Impacts: (Check any potential changes to permitted impacts and provide details below. Attach additional sheets if needed.)

☐ AIR QUALITY	☐ LAND USE	☐ TRAFFIC
☐ BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES	☐ NOISE	☐ VISUAL
☐ CONTAMINATED SOILS	☐ PALEO RESOURCES	☐ WATER RESOURCES
☐ CULTURAL RESOURCES	☐ SOCIOECONOMIC	☐ WETLANDS
☐ HAZARDOUS MATERIALS	☐ STORM WATER (SWPPP)	

NA

CEQA and Permitting: (Provide details for any "Yes" answer and attach additional information if needed.)

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: (Attach additional information if needed.)

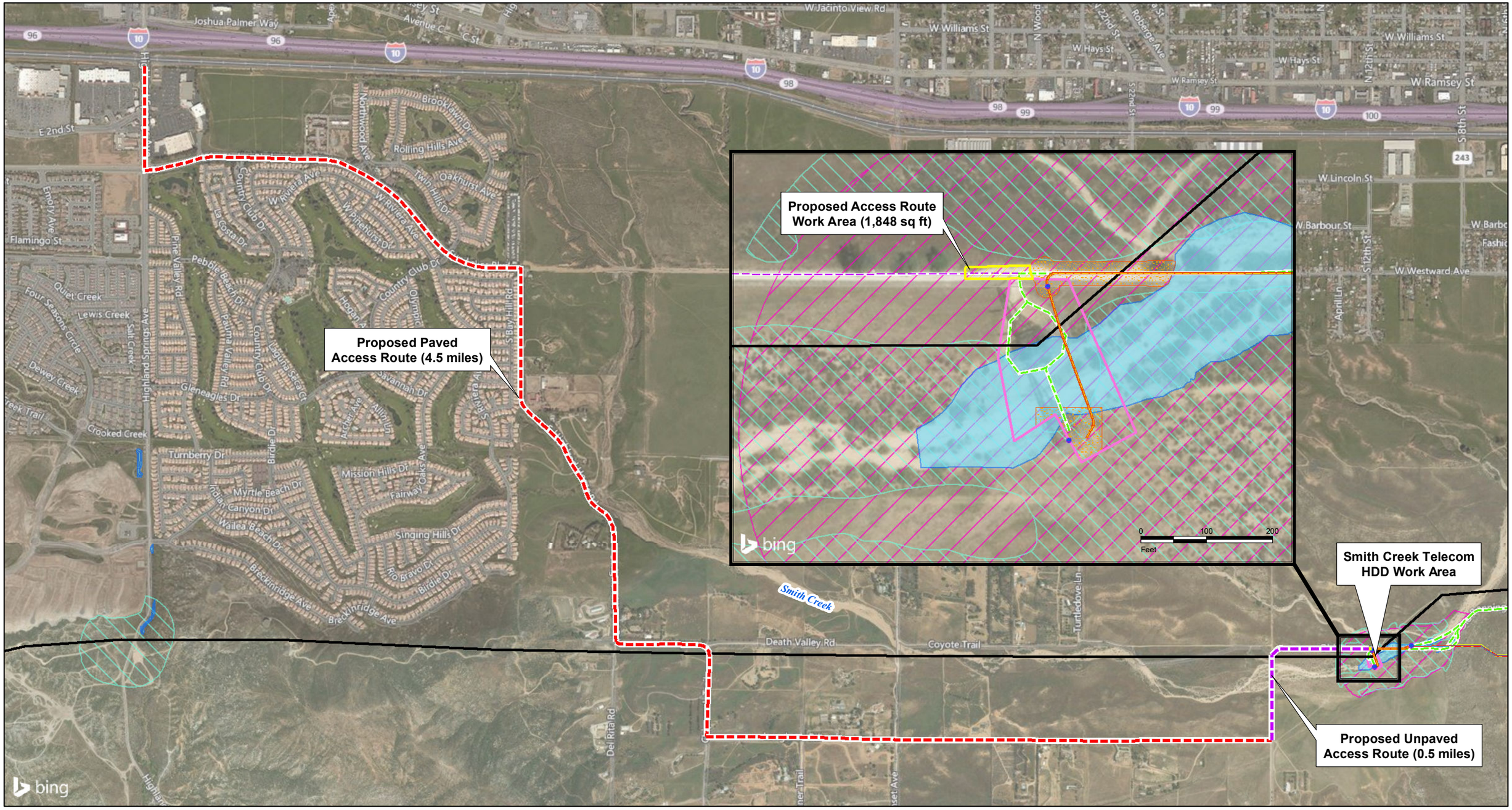
___ **Required Signatures:** (Attached email approvals may be used in lieu of signatures.)

__X__ Chief Construction Inspector or Foreman: ■ APPROVED FOR SAFE AND EFFICIENT CONSTRUCTION
Name: Conrad Frost Signature: Conrad L Frost Date: 8/21/2018

Environmental Inspector: ■ FIELD REVIEW COMPLETE
Name: Lisa Amador Signature: Lisa Amador Date: 8/21/2018

____ Land Agent: ■ CONSISTENT WITH EXISTING RIGHTS ☐ NEW RIGHTS OBTAINED
Name: Signature: Date: 8/21/2018

__X__ Environmental Compliance Lead: ■ APPROVED ☐ APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS (SEE CONDITIONS ABOVE) ☐ DENIED
Name: Sylvia Granados Signature: Sylvia Granados Date: 8/21/2018



SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA EDISON
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0 0.15 0.3
Miles

SCE, Bing Imagery

LEGEND

- Proposed Paved Access Route (4.5 miles)
- Proposed Unpaved Access Route (0.5 miles)
- Proposed Access Route Work Area (1,848 sq ft)
- Coastal California Gnatcatcher Suitable Habitat
- Los Angeles Pocket Mouse Occupied Habitat
- JD Waters

Telecom Point
- Proposed

Telecom Line
- Proposed, OH
- Proposed, UG

Major Trans Line Existing
- Existing 220kV

Civil Access Roads Lines
- New
- Existing

Construction Areas
- General Disturbance Area
- Wildlife Barrier Limits

FIGURE 1

Southern California Edison
West of Devers Upgrade Project
Smith Creek
West Access Route
MPR #20

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JACOBS