
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

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SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94102-3298



August 12, 2021

Michael Bass
Environmental Project Manager
Southern California Edison
2244 Walnut Grove Avenue
Rosemead, CA 91770

RE: Valley-Ivyglen 115kV Subtransmission Project (VIG) – Minor Project Refinement No. 16 Request: Notice to Proceed (NTP-) 1 and 2, Gabion Baskets and Supplemental Work Areas at multiple locations throughout Segments VIG1, VIG4, and VIG5

Dear Mr. Bass,

On July 20, 2021, Southern California Edison (SCE) submitted Minor Project Refinement (MPR) No. 16 Request to the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) for review. The proposed MPR would involve additional work areas and land disturbances that were not included in NTPR-1 and NTPR-2 but are necessary to construct the Project work described in Sections 2.3.1.1 and 2.3.1.2 of the FEIR. The proposed work areas are within the general disturbance area of the Valley-Ivyglen 115-kV Project, except as noted in Table 1, and are of the sizes described in Table 2-5 of the FEIR as being necessary to construct the Project components.

The primary activities to be conducted at the proposed work areas would include excavation of soil, and installation of gabion baskets and fiber optic cable and conduit. Construction of these components would be accomplished in a manner consistent with the descriptions contained in the VIG FEIR, including but not limited to Section 2.4.7.1, Fiber Optic Line Installation.

Site preparation activities would include vegetation clearing, improvement/ construction work areas, and installation Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) best management practices (BMPs).

Additional Work Areas within General Disturbance Areas:

The proposed refinements would result in a net increase of 1.56 acres of temporary disturbance and a net decrease of 0.031 acres of permanent disturbance. The locations, dimensions, and activities for each proposed refinement are provided in Table 1 and are visually shown in the biological resource maps (Attachment A.1, B.1).

Table 1: VIG1-VIG5 Additional Requested Work Areas

Segment	Pole / Feature Name	Nearest Structure	Latitude	Longitude	Description	Activity
VIG1	Gabion Basket	077E	N/A	N/A	South of 077E. Expansion of an erosion control gabion basket resulting in an additional 225 square feet of permanent disturbance and 100 square feet of temporary disturbance.	Expansion of an erosion control gabion basket.
VIG1	Gabion Basket	092E	N/A	N/A	75 feet northwest of 092E and partly outside of the general disturbance area. Expansion of an erosion control gabion basket resulting in an additional 270 square feet of permanent disturbance and 275 square feet of temporary disturbance.	Expansion of an erosion control gabion basket.
VIG1	Gabion Basket	144E	N/A	N/A	295 feet west of 144E. Elimination of 756 square feet of permanent disturbance for an erosion control gabion basket.	Elimination of a not-yet-installed erosion control gabion basket.
VIG1	Gabion Basket	145E	N/A	N/A	200 feet southeast of 145E. Elimination of 540 square feet of permanent disturbance for an erosion control gabion basket.	Elimination of a not-yet-installed erosion control gabion basket.
VIG1	Gabion Basket	145E	N/A	N/A	100 feet southeast of 145E. Elimination of 540 square feet of permanent disturbance for an erosion control gabion basket.	Elimination of a not-yet-installed erosion control gabion basket.
VIG4	Work Area	403E	N/A	N/A	2,214 square feet of temporary work area to accommodate the trenching and installation of underground conduit and fiber optic cable between 403E and 405E.	Installation of underground conduit and fiber optic cable.
VIG5	General Disturbance Area	455E–457E	N/A	N/A	Located west of 455E–457E and outside of the general disturbance area. 64,515 square feet of temporary work area to accommodate a greater area of soil excavation surrounding 455E and 456E.	Excavation of soil around 455E and 456E to install structures at the ground elevation of the future Lake Street and avoid ground clearance infractions.

The Valley-Ivyglen Subtransmission Line Project was evaluated in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was prepared by the CPUC. The CPUC issued a Permit to Construct the Project on April 2, 2013 (Decision 10-08-009). The mitigation measures (MMs) and project commitments (PCs) described in the EIR were adopted by the CPUC as conditions of Project approval. In May 2020 the CPUC adopted the Mitigation Monitoring, Compliance, and Reporting Plan (MMCRP) to ensure compliance with all PCs and MMs during project implementation.

This letter documents the CPUC’s evaluation of activities covered in the MPR No. 16 Request. The CPUC has reviewed this MPR request and has verified that the proposed activities adhere to applicable PCs and MM requirements. The evaluation process ensures that PCs and MMs applicable to the location, and activities covered in the MPR are implemented, as required in the CPUC’s decision. The evaluation process further ensures that the following criteria are met:

- The proposed change does not trigger additional discretionary permit requirements that are not defined in the EIR or MMCRP.

- The proposed change does not increase the severity of an impact or create a new impact, based on the thresholds used in the EIR.
- The proposed change is within the geographic scope of the study area utilized in the EIR.
- The proposed change does not conflict with any PC or MM, and the refinements would not result in a new conflict with any applicable guideline, ordinance, code, rule, regulation, order, decision, statute, or policy not already identified within the EIR.

The CPUC has determined that MPR No. 16 meets the above criteria. MPR No. 16 is approved by the CPUC for the proposed activities based on the factors described below.

CPUC Evaluation of MPR No. 16 Request

The CPUC evaluated SCE’s MPR Request No. 16 to verify that they fulfill the requirements of the MMCRP. In accordance with the MMCRP, the CPUC reviewed the request to confirm that no new impacts on sensitive resources, or increases in impact severity, would result from the requested MPR activities. The following discussion summarizes this analysis for biological, cultural, paleontological, aesthetics and visual resources, as well as other environmental resources.

Location of Ground Disturbance Areas

MPR No. 16 activities would occur at several locations, work areas, or portions of work areas, throughout Segments VIG1, VIG4, and VIG5. The temporary and permanent disturbance areas associated with MPR No. 16 are shown in Table 2. The quantity and dimensions of MPR No. 16 disturbance areas are consistent with what is described in Table 2-5 of the FEIR. Section 2.4.2.1 of the FEIR, which states that construction of VIG would disturb approximately 633.7 acres of land, including approximately 141.5 acres of permanent disturbance. Total impacts for all VIG NTPRs/MPRs are anticipated to be below the quantities given in the FEIR. If quantities in future NTPRs/MPRs exceed the FEIR, an explanation of significance will be provided.

Table 2: Requested Disturbances Associated with MPR No. 16

Feature	Number of Miles	Temporary Impact Total	Permanent Impact Total
Temporary Work Areas	--	1.55 ac (67,729 sq ft)	--
Erosion Control Gabion Basket	--	0.009 ac (375 sq ft)	-0.031 ac (-1,341 sq ft)
Total	--	1.56 ac (68,104 sq ft)	-0.031 ac (-1,341 sq ft)

Aesthetics/Visual Impacts

The proposed additional work areas and the work to be conducted are consistent with the descriptions of structures to be installed and disturbances to occur during construction provided in Sections 2.3.1.1, 2.3.1.2, 2.3.1.3, and Table 2-5 of the FEIR.

MPR No. 16 includes a request for an additional 1.5 acres of temporary work area at 455E – 4557E to accommodate a 1.25 acre increase in the area of excavation required for installing 115-kV structures at the evaluation of the future Lake Street. The increased area of excavation is necessary to comply with the City of Lake Elsinore grading permit plan for this work. The proposed excavation from 455E–457E would be visible to drivers on Lake Street. The visual impact of the excavated area would be mitigated through revegetation. The banks of the excavated areas would be sloped to facilitate restoration, and all excavated area would be

revegetated in accordance with the Project SWPPPs, Project Commitment D¹ and the VIG Habitat Restoration and Revegetation Plan. The realignment of Lake Street is expected to occur within the next two years, at which time the areas around the VIG line will be graded and landscaped by the developer.

Aesthetic impacts associated with these refinements would not create a new significant impact or a substantial increase in the severity of a previously identified impact identified in Section 4.1.4.2 of the FEIR. All applicable avoidance/minimization measures identified in FEIR Chapter 9 Mitigation Monitoring, Compliance, and Reporting Plan would be followed.

Biological, Cultural, Paleontological Resources, and other Environmental Resources

The proposed work areas were included in previous biological surveys for the FEIR, as described in the biological report (Attachment A1, B.1). The work areas do not overlap with wetlands or waterways; no amendments to the waters permits would be needed.

The southwestern edge of the proposed work area at 455E–457E overlaps a 1,400 square foot area mapped as disturbed Riversidean sage scrub. In accordance with MM BR-5, removal of Riversidean sage scrub habitat would not occur during the coastal California gnatcatcher breeding season.

Portions of the proposed refinements in Segment VIG1 (625 square feet of temporary and permanent disturbance) are outside of the VIG Western Riverside- Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (WR-MSHCP) Phase 1 certificate of inclusion (COI) coverage area. In VIG4 and VIG5, 65,313 square feet of proposed temporary disturbances are outside of the VIG WR-MSHCP Phase 2 COI coverage. Based on the guidance provided by the Regional Conservation Authority (RCA), construction of these features will not require notification and approval by the RCA prior to construction because the overall permanent disturbance to baseline vegetation of RCA concern does not exceed the acreage proposed in the MSHCP PSE applications. No permanent impacts to baseline vegetation of RCA concern are proposed for Phase 1 or Phase 2 (Table 3). All temporary impacts to vegetation will be restored in accordance with Project Commitment D and the VIG Habitat Restoration and Revegetation Plan.

The proposed refinement in VIG3 (6,670 square feet of temporary disturbance) is outside of the VIG Western Riverside- Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (WR-MSHCP) Phase 1 certificate of inclusion (COI) coverage area. In VIG5 and VIG7, 11,614 square feet of proposed temporary disturbances are outside of the VIG WR-MSHCP Phase 2 COI coverage. Based on the guidance provided by the Regional Conservation Authority (RCA), construction of these features will not require notification and approval by the RCA prior to construction because the overall permanent disturbance to baseline vegetation of RCA concern does not exceed the acreage proposed in the MSHCP Participating Special Entity (PSE) applications. No permanent impacts to baseline vegetation of RCA concern are proposed for Phase 1 or Phase 2 (see Table 3). All

¹ With input from the appropriate resource agencies, the applicant would develop and implement a Habitat Restoration and Revegetation Plan to restore temporarily impacted areas where construction of the projects would be unable to avoid impacts on native vegetation and sensitive resources, such as wetlands, wetland buffer areas, riparian habitat, and other sensitive natural communities. The applicant would restore all temporarily impacted areas disturbed during construction of the projects, including staging areas and pull, tension, and splicing sites, to as close to preconstruction conditions as possible, or to the conditions agreed upon between the applicant and landowner. Replanting and reseeding would be conducted under the direction the applicant or contract biologists. If revegetation would occur on private property, revegetation conditions would be part of the agreement between the applicant and the landowner.

temporary impacts to vegetation will be restored in accordance with Project Commitment D and the VIG Habitat Restoration and Revegetation Plan.

Table 3. Proposed Permanent Impacts to MSHCP Baseline Vegetation of RCA Concern

Proposed Impacts to Phase 1 Baseline Vegetation of Concern	0.00 acres
Proposed Impacts to Phase 2 Baseline Vegetation of Concern	0.00 acres
Total Proposed Impacts	0.00 acres

MPR No. 16 proposed work areas are covered under the Stephens' kangaroo rat (SKR) Habitat Conservation Plan. Although 1.5 acres of the proposed refinements are outside of the SKR buffer depicted in the Certificate of Inclusion, the Riverside County Habitat Conservation Agency has agreed that SCE may reconcile impacted acreage once the Project has reached final design. SCE will be responsible for identifying acreage not previously included in the COI (such as the acreage proposed here) as well as removing acreage that was included in the COI but not disturbed by construction activities.

Following the completion of all construction, the temporary work areas would be restored/reclaimed in accordance with the Project SWPPPs, Project Commitment D, and the VIG Habitat Restoration and Revegetation Plan. For excavations at 455E–457E, restoration would include grading the final slope to no steeper than 3:1 and installing straw wattles along the slopes as required by the SWPPP.

The activities described in MPR No. 16 would not create a new significant impact or a substantial increase in the severity of an identified impact listed in Section 4.4.4.2 of the FEIR. Indirect impacts that may occur to sensitive species in the vicinity of the proposed work areas would be mitigated in accordance with the PC's and MM's.

The proposed work areas were surveyed and analyzed in the cultural and paleontological resources addendum reports (Attachments A.2, B.2, A.3, B.3); no supplemental surveys were necessary. The survey results indicate that there are no new sensitive archaeological or paleontological resources located at the proposed work areas. Cultural and tribal monitoring would be conducted in accordance with the Cultural Resources Monitoring and Treatment Plan (CRMTP). One of the erosion control gabion baskets proposed for elimination is within the cultural resource area of P-33-00714/CA-RIV-714. The other two gabion baskets to be eliminated are within 100 feet of the cultural resource area. Elimination of the gabion baskets would reduce excavation and ground disturbance within and nearby this sensitive area.

Paleontological monitoring, spot checking, and fossil recovery would be implemented for excavations at the proposed work areas in accordance with the Project's Paleontological Resource Monitoring Plan (PRMP). The MPR No. 16 proposed refinements at 403E and 455E–457E occur in soil with low potential for paleontological resources and no monitoring is required. Proposed refinements at 077E and 092E are in soil with undetermined potential and spot checking by a paleontological monitor would occur during excavation. If a resource is found at the site, SCE would comply with the procedures for unanticipated discoveries provided in MMs CR-1b, CR-4, CR-5, CR-7, the CRMTP, and the PRMP impacts to cultural resources

associated with this refinement would not create a new significant impact or a substantial increase in the severity of a previously identified impact identified in Section 4.5.4.2 of the FEIR. All applicable avoidance/minimization measures identified in FEIR Chapter 9 Mitigation Monitoring, Compliance, and Reporting Plan would be followed.

Erosion would be controlled at locations of earth disturbance through the implementation and adherence to the Project linear SWPPP. The VIG LUP SWPPP would be amended to reflect the excavation activities and subsequent stabilization of soils from 454E to 460E. At the completion of construction, sites would be restored/reclaimed in accordance with the Project SWPPPs, Project Commitment D, and the VIG Habitat Restoration and Revegetation Plan. Restoration for excavated areas from 455E to 457E would include grading to a final slope of no steeper than 3:1 and installing straw wattles along the slopes in accordance with the SWPPP.

Impacts to geology, soils, and seismicity associated with this refinement would not create a new significant impact or substantial increase in the severity of a previously identified impact in Section 4.6.4.2 of the FEIR. All applicable avoidance/minimization measures identified in FEIR Chapter 9 Mitigation, Monitoring, Compliance, and Reporting Plan would be followed.

Activities occurring at the proposed MPR No. 16 work locations and the types of equipment used are consistent with the activities described in Sections 2.3.1.1, 2.3.1.2, and 2.3.1.3 of the FEIR. Implementation of the Project Noise Control Plan would ensure noise reduction measures are performed as required. Blasting would not occur at any of the proposed work areas. Impacts to noise and vibration associated with this refinement would not create a new significant impact or a substantial increase in the severity of a previously identified impact identified in Section 4.11.4.2 of the FEIR. All applicable avoidance/minimization measures identified in FEIR Chapter 9 Mitigation Monitoring, Compliance, and Reporting Plan would be followed.

The excavating work is not expected to significantly change impacts to air quality or greenhouse gas emissions. All other work activities occurring at the proposed locations and the types of equipment used are consistent with the activities described in Sections 2.3.1.1 and 2.3.1.3 of the FEIR. Other than the excavating equipment, the type and quantity of construction equipment would be the same as identified in NTPR-1 and NTPR-2. In compliance with MM AQ-1, nitrogen oxide (NO_x) and particulate matter (PM) emissions from off-road diesel-powered construction equipment would be minimized to the extent feasible by using Tier 4 interim or Tier 4 Standards for equipment with engines greater than 150 horsepower. The excavating equipment would have Tier 4 engines. In accordance with MM AQ-2, daily emissions of equipment would be tracked to ensure NO_x emissions stay within the NO_x Regional Clean Air Incentive Market Trading Credits (RTCs) purchased for the Project.

Impacts to air quality and greenhouse gas emissions associated with MPR No. 16 would not create a new significant impact or a substantial increase in the severity of a previously identified impact identified in Section 4.3.4.2 and 4.7.4.2 of the FEIR. All applicable avoidance/minimization measures identified in FEIR Chapter 9 Mitigation Monitoring, Compliance, and Reporting Plan would be followed.

All proposed locations are within the 1,000-foot corridor evaluated for solid waste disposal sites, Cease and Desist Orders, or Cleanup and Abatement orders per Section 4.8.1.1 of the FEIR. Planned ground-disturbing activities include excavating and grading, pole installation, and anchor installation. In the event of an inadvertent discovery, SCE would follow the procedures in

Project's Contaminated Soil and Groundwater Contingency Plan. Furthermore, the proposed work areas in MPR No. 16 are located within elevated and extreme fire threat areas. Fire danger mitigation would be implemented in accordance with the Project Emergency Action Plan and Fire Control and Emergency Response Plan. Impacts to hazards and hazardous materials associated with this refinement would not create a new significant impact or a substantial increase in the severity of a previously identified impact identified in Section 4.8.4.2 of the FEIR. In addition, all applicable avoidance/minimization measures identified in FEIR Chapter 9 Mitigation Monitoring, Compliance, and Reporting Plan would be followed.

The proposed refinements are located within the San Jacinto and Santa Ana Watersheds. Refinements in Segment VIG1 are in San Jacinto Groundwater Basin. The proposed work area in VIG4 is located within a flood zone, as shown in Figure 4.9-4 of the FEIR.

The proposed work areas are located away from surface water bodies. Erosion that could affect water quality would be controlled at locations of earth disturbance through the implementation and adherence to the Project linear SWPPP. If stained or odorous soil is found during excavating, SCE would follow the procedures in Project's Contaminated Soil and Groundwater Contingency Plan. Dewatering, if necessary, would be performed in accordance with the Project linear SWPPP. Therefore, impacts to hydrology and water quality associated with this refinement would not create a new significant impact or a substantial increase in the severity of a previously identified impact identified in Section 4.9.4.2 of the FEIR.

The quantity of construction equipment and personnel would be the same as identified in NTPR-1 and NTPR-2. Adherence to the Project Traffic Management and Control Plan would ensure compliance with traffic-related Project mitigation measures, TT-1, TT-2, and TT-7. There would be no change to the access routes identified in the Traffic Management and Control Plan.

Impacts to transportation and traffic associated with this refinement would not create a new significant impact or a substantial increase in the severity of a previously identified impact identified in Section 4.15.4.2 of the FEIR. In addition, applicable avoidance/minimization measures identified in FEIR Chapter 9 Mitigation Monitoring, Compliance, and Reporting Plan would be followed.

Permits

The general work area and grading quantities identified in the City of Lake Elsinore Grading Permit (submitted to CPUC on 8/5/2021) associated with MPR No. 15 includes the proposed excavation for MPR No. 16. No new grading permit for MPR No. 16 is anticipated.

MPR No. 16 Conditions of Approval

MPR No. 16 is approved by the CPUC with conditions. The conditions presented below shall be met by SCE and its contractors:

1. All applicable Project MMs, PCs, compliance plans, and permit conditions shall be implemented. Some measures have on-going/time-sensitive requirements and shall be implemented prior to and during construction, where applicable.
2. Copies of relevant permits, compliance plans, and this MPR, shall be available on site for the duration of construction activities.

3. SCE shall submit to the CPUC an amended VIG LUP SWPPP to reflect the excavation activities and subsequent stabilization of soils from 454E to 460E. In the field, SCE shall implement appropriate erosion and sediment control best management practices (BMPs) for the disturbance areas, in compliance with the SWPPP and as specified by the Qualified SWPPP Practitioner. Sediment and erosion control BMPs shall be properly maintained throughout the duration of construction activities.
4. All activities (e.g., stabilizing construction entrance/ ground surface, fence installation, etc.) shall be monitored by CPUC-approved monitors in accordance with the MMCRP, where appropriate.
5. In the event that blasting or fracturing is needed, a blasting plan would be submitted for CPUC review and approval in accordance with MMs WQ-1 and NV-2. Blasting would only be used in areas where subsurface obstructions reasonably preclude excavation using conventional construction equipment
6. SCE shall ensure that construction equipment at the proposed locations will have adequate and properly placed secondary containment to avoid and minimize potential spills.
7. The work associated with MPR No. 16 shall occur within approved project workdays and hours. In the event that MPR No. 16 scheduling necessitates work outside of the hours permitted under local noise ordinances, SCE shall meet and confer with the local jurisdictions as needed and notify the CPUC for concurrence.
8. SCE and its contractors shall adhere to the WR-MSHCP terms and conditions, including but not limited to adherence to the Project Habitat Restoration and Revegetation Plan, adherence to the SWPPP, performance of preconstruction surveys for burrowing owls, and the use of biological monitors to record compliance with work area boundaries and compliance with the avoidance of environmentally sensitive areas (ESAs).
9. All complaints related to MPR No. 16 activities received by SCE shall be logged and reported immediately to the CPUC. This includes complaints relevant to traffic, as well as lighting, noise, vibration, dust, etc. Where feasible, complaints shall be resolved, depending on the nature of the complaint, through construction site or activity modifications. Complaints or disputes that cannot be modified through construction site or activity modifications shall be resolved through the dispute resolution communications processes described in the MMCRP.
10. Once the Project has completed construction, SCE shall be responsible for identifying acreage not previously included in the COI (such as the acreage proposed in MPR No. 16) as well as removing acreage that was included in the COI but not disturbed by construction activities.
11. The excavated material from this activity (along Segment VIG5, near structures 455E and 465E) will be transferred to the adjacent property owner, Pacific Clay Products, LLC, as documented in MPR No.15. The conditions of approval identified in MPR No.15 in addition to the conditions listed herein are applicable for MPR No. 16. During excavation and transport, SCE will follow appropriate regulations, including the VIG SWPPP requirements to minimize track-out. Additionally, SCE shall implement fugitive dust control measures in accordance with MM AQ-3.
12. SCE shall notify CPUC after completing MPR No. 16 work activities including use of access roads and temporary work areas and provide photos of the restored additional work disturbance areas. In addition, in the event that new disturbance is foreseen, for maintenance or other activities, SCE shall notify CPUC for evaluation and approval.

Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns regarding this MPR approval.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Patricia Kelly". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "P" and "K".

Patricia Kelly
CPUC Project Manager

cc:

Chuck Cleeves, WSP Compliance Manager
Fernando Guzman, WSP Deputy Compliance Manager
Marcus Obregon, SCE Environmental Project Manager

**Attachment A.1 and B.1:
MPR No. 16 Biological Resources Report**

**Attachment A.2 and B.2:
MPR No. 16 Cultural Resources Report**

**Attachment A.3 and B.3:
MPR No. 16 Paleontological Resources Report**