

October 19, 2007

Mr. Michael Rosauer
California Public Utilities Commission
Director, Energy Division
505 Van Ness Avenue, 4th Floor
San Francisco, California 94102

Reference: Biological Reconnaissance Survey for the Kimball Substation Project site, located in the City of Chino, San Bernardino County, California.

Dear Mr. Rosauer:

This letter report summarizes the findings of a biological reconnaissance survey conducted on the Kimball Substation project site for the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC). The project site is located in the City of Chino approximately 3.5 miles west of Interstate 15 and is roughly bounded to the west by Magnolia Avenue, to the east by Hellman Avenue, to the north by Edison Avenue, and to the south by Chino Corona Road (Figure 1).

The proposed project consists of two components: an upgrade of the existing seven mile 66 kilovolt (kV) subtransmission line and the construction of a new 66/12kV substation. The subtransmission line is to be upgraded along the following segments: Chino substation to Magnolia at Kimball Avenue (10,500 feet); Magnolia Avenue at Kimball Avenue to Euclid Avenue (6,500 feet); Brickmore Avenue to Rincon Meadows (6,400 feet); Rincon Meadows to Walker Street (4,300 feet); Walker Street to Hellman Avenue (2,450 feet); Hellman Avenue to Hereford Drive (6,100 feet); and Hereford Drive to Chino Corona Road (1.0 mile) (Figure 1).

The second component of the project is a proposed substation, which has three alternative sites. Substation Alternative A is located approximately 325 feet north of Kimball Avenue and immediately east of Walker Avenue. Substation Alternative B is located approximately 515 feet north of Kimball Avenue and immediately west of Hellman Avenue. Substation Alternative C is located approximately 200 feet east of Hellman Avenue and at the eastern terminus of Kimball Avenue.

Methods

The biological reconnaissance survey was conducted on September 14, 2007. The survey was conducted between 1330 and 1500 hours with ideal survey conditions under clear skies and a temperature of 88 degrees Fahrenheit. The purpose of the survey was to verify that site conditions have not changed significantly since previous biological surveys were conducted by Faulkner (2005), Southern

California Edison (2005, 2006, and 2007). The project site was surveyed on foot and by personal vehicle to assess current environmental conditions. In addition, 10X binoculars were used to identify any species using the site.

Survey Results

The majority of the subtransmission project site occurs within unimproved/paved roadways and is surrounded by residential and agricultural land uses. Unrecorded in the previous biological surveys, two storm water conveyance/irrigation features were observed during the biological reconnaissance survey; one within the project site and one adjacent to the project site.

On the western side of the project line a drainage feature is located between a series of exiting transmission lines south of Edison Road across from the existing Chino Substation. The feature is an unlined dirt and gravel ditch, dominated by Russian thistle (*Salsola pestifer*) and other non-native species. During the survey no signs of hydrophytic vegetation or hydric soils were observed. Although cracked soils were observed, no signs of bed or bank were present. In addition, the drainage feature is not identified as a blue line stream on a United States Geological Survey topographic map. Per *Rapanos v. United States & Carabell v. United States*, this drainage would not fall under United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) jurisdiction because the feature appears to be excavated wholly in and draining only uplands and does not carry a relatively permanent flow of water. Therefore, the drainage feature located along Edison Avenue and within the Southern California Edison utilities easement, would not qualify as a USACE jurisdictional area.

At the intersection of Edison Road and Magnolia Avenue the project line turns south, where an irrigation ditch is located adjacent to the line. The ditch is unlined and is regularly maintained. This is used for the surrounding dairy and farm practices located within the project vicinity. The irrigation ditch is located approximately 15 feet west of the subtransmission line and runs parallel to the line and Magnolia Avenue. The northern end of the ditch is ponded and is approximately 15 feet wide by 6 feet deep. Dominant species in the ponded portion of the irrigation ditch consists of duckweed (*Lemna sp.*), sedges (*Cyperus sp.*), and filamentous algae. The remaining areas of the ditch have sporadic signs of hydrophytes and bed and bank. With the exception of the storm water drainage and irrigation ditches, habitats and features along the subtransmission line are consistent with previous biological surveys (i.e., agriculture, disturbed, and developed).

The proposed Substation Alternative A is located on disturbed habitat with debris and weedy species, such as Russian thistle and common horsetweed (*Conyza canadensis*). A few individuals of planted California walnut trees (*Juglans californica*) were observed within an old grove. Australian pine (*Casuarina equisetifolia*) windrows occur along the northern and western boundaries of the Substation Alternative A site. A large inactive avian nest was observed in an Australian pine located in the northeastern corner of the site. The nest appears to be an American crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*) nest.

The proposed Substation Alternative B is located on agricultural land that has been used as a settling pond for a dairy. Surveying was limited to a distance of approximately 200 feet from the proposed site. This was due to private access restrictions and an accurate assessment of sensitive habitat and species that may potentially occur onsite was not possible. An offsite tamarisk (*Tamarix sp.*) windrow, which may provide nesting opportunities for raptors, is located approximately 80 feet southeast of the site.

The proposed Substation Alternative C is located on disturbed land that has been graded and is surrounded by agricultural land uses and disturbed habitat. Sensitive and/or nesting bird habitat was not observed at the Substation Alternative C site.

The Kimball Project area supports agricultural, developed, and residential land uses within and adjacent to the project site. Habitats existing within the project area are agricultural, developed, and disturbed. No sensitive biological species were identified within the project area during the biological reconnaissance survey. Biological resources have been heavily impacted by current land uses (i.e., grading and development) and therefore, the potential for sensitive biological species to exist on the project site is low.

Conclusion/Recommendations

The biological reconnaissance survey recommendations are consistent with those identified in previous biological reports by Faulkner 2005 and SCE (2005, 2006, and 2007). No significant changes to existing biological resources have occurred since the previous biological surveys were conducted. HDR recommends that a more thorough biological survey at Substation Alternative B be conducted to ensure that no sensitive species or riparian habitat/wetland indicator species are present. Furthermore, it is recommended that a pre-construction survey for migratory birds be conducted and precautions taken to avoid negative impacts to potential active nests throughout the project site. It is also recommended that impacts to the irrigation ditch, particularly the northern ponded area, be avoided to prevent

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any conflict with regulating agencies such as, the California Department of Fish and Game and the United States Army Corps of Engineers.

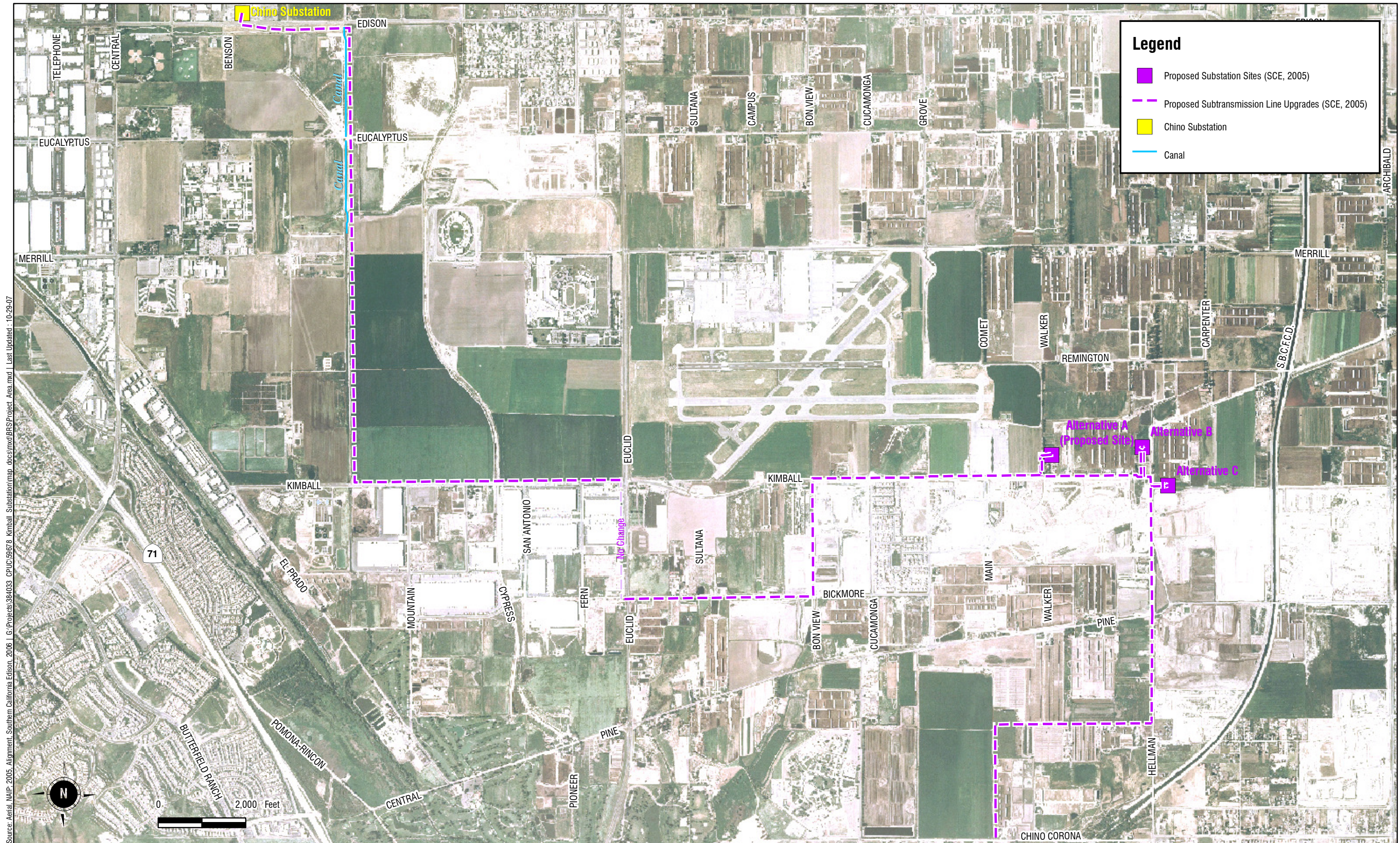
If HDR can be of further assistance to you, please contact us at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Shannon M. Allen".

Shannon M. Allen
Senior Biologist
HDR Engineering Inc.

Attachments: Figure 1-Project Vicinity



Legend

- Proposed Substation Sites (SCE, 2005)
- Proposed Subtransmission Line Upgrades (SCE, 2005)
- Chino Substation
- Canal

Source: Aerial, NAIP, 2005, Alignment, Southern California Edison, 2006 | G:\Projects\384033 CPUC\59678 Kimball Substation\map_docs\mxd\BRS\Project Area.mxd | Last Updated: 10-29-07

Project Area

