

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

505 VAN NESS AVENUE
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June 25, 2012

Mr. Mark Cassady
TRC, Inc.
Senior Biologist
405 Clyde Avenue
Mountain View, CA 94043

Subject: Atascadero - San Luis Obispo 70kV Power Line Reconductoring Project Variance Request #11 for relocation of Pole 62/9 and associated trenching

Dear Mr. Cassady:

I have reviewed Pacific Gas and Electric Company's (PG&E) submission of Variance Request #11, which was submitted on June 20, 2012 for the Atascadero - San Luis Obispo 70kV Power Line Reconductoring Project (Project).

The CPUC has determined relocating Pole 62/9 approximately 70 feet to the northwest from its current location and associated distribution trenching (shown in Variance Request #11) would not have new significant impacts or greater environmental impacts than those analyzed in the approved Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) for the Project, pursuant to the description, analysis, and conditions presented in this letter.

Proposed Actions

PG&E proposes to relocate Pole 62/9 approximately 70 feet northwest from its current location in line with the project power line. The current wood pole scheduled for replacement with a new light duty steel (LDS) pole is located in close proximity to a house and the homeowner requested that PG&E relocate it closer to a private driveway previously approved in the IS/MND as a project access road.

In addition to the project power line, Pole 62/9 supports the distribution power line that provides power to the house. The distribution connection line will be placed underground in a 3 foot deep trench from the base of the new LDS pole to the house (shown in Variance Request #11).

As part of the proposed work, oak tree limbs will need to be trimmed to create space for the new LDS pole and installation process. These trees are located immediately adjacent to the private driveway and proposed work location (shown in Variance Request #11).

CPUC Analysis of Environmental Impacts

Biological Resources. The proposed work would not have greater impacts to sensitive biological resources than those analyzed in the IS/MND. Topsoil around the trenched area will be preserved and replaced, and the disturbed area will be seeded and stabilized in accordance with MM BO-28, the Revegetation and Monitoring Plan, and the Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan.

Raptors and nesting birds. Raptors and general nesting birds have the potential to be located within the proposed work areas. Impacts to raptors and nesting birds would not be greater than those analyzed in the IS/MND granted all applicable APMs and MMs are implemented. All nests identified during pre-work avian surveys must be monitored in accordance with requirements listed in MMs BO-1 and BO-3.

Cultural Resources. Applied Earthworks (Æ) conducted an archaeological and historical resources survey in November and December of 2008. Archaeological and historical resources were not identified at the proposed work site. The site is located within an area of high paleontological sensitivity, as identified in the IS/MND, and a qualified paleontological monitor is required during all excavation work in accordance with MM CR-5.

Air Quality. Dust may be generated by the proposed trenching activities. Air impacts would be similar to those assessed in the IS/MND and would not have significantly greater impacts provided all applicable mitigation measures are followed.

Noise and Traffic. Noise and traffic impacts would be similar to those assessed in the IS/MND and would not have greater impacts. All relevant mitigation measures from the IS/MND must be implemented.

Hydrology. Hydrology impacts would be the same as those assessed in the IS/MND. Disturbed ground from trenching will be secured with erosion controls as needed.

Hazards. Hazards associated with the proposed activities would be similar to those assessed in the IS/MND and would not have greater impacts. All relevant plans and mitigation measure must be implemented.

Approval

Relocation of Pole 62/9 and associated trenching for distribution connection will not have significantly greater or new significant impacts beyond those identified in the IS/MND prepared for the Project. Provided PG&E coordinates with the appropriate parties as necessary and implements all mitigation measures pertinent to the project and activities as identified in the Final IS/MND and this letter, Variance Request #11 is approved.

Sincerely,

MJ Orsaba

Lisa Orsaba

CPUC Project Manager

Cc: Aaron Lui, Panorama Environmental, Inc.
Tania Treis, Panorama Environmental, Inc.
Judi Mosley, PG&E attorney