

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

505 VAN NESS AVENUE
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94102-3298



To: State Clearinghouse, Responsible and Trustee Agencies, Property Owners, and Interested Parties

From: Connie Chen, Environmental Project Manager

Subject: NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT: San Diego Gas & Electric Company's Salt Creek Substation Project (A-13-09-014)

Date: August 15, 2014

Introduction

San Diego Gas & Electric Company (SDG&E) filed an application A. 13-09-014 with the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) on September 25, 2013, for a Permit to Construct (PTC) the Salt Creek Substation Project (Proposed Project). The CPUC has determined that an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) should be prepared in accordance with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because the Proposed Project could result in potentially significant environmental impacts. The CPUC is serving as the lead agency for preparation of the EIR. This Notice of Preparation (NOP) is being sent to interested agencies and members of the public to inform the recipients that the CPUC is beginning preparation of the EIR and to request comments from the public on the scope of the EIR.

SDG&E's application (Application No. 13-09-014), Proponent's Environmental Assessment (PEA), and additional information on the CEQA process are available for public review at the CPUC Energy Division CEQA Unit and at the following website:
http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/Environment/info/panoramaenv/Salt_Creek/index.html

Project Description

The primary objectives of the Proposed Project are (i) to provide additional capacity to serve existing load and future load growth in the southeast Chula Vista area, and (ii) to enhance the distribution and power network to improve electrical service reliability and minimize the potential for long-term outages or service disruptions.

To meet these objectives, the Proposed Project includes the following components, shown in Figure 1:

- **Salt Creek Substation:** Construction and operation of a new 120-megavolt-ampere (MVA), 69/12- kilovolt (kV) electric distribution substation in southeast Chula Vista. The proposed substation would include three distribution circuits to tie into the existing distribution network at Hunte Parkway. The substation also would include an underground loop-in of the existing 69-kV transmission line (TL 6910) and fiber optic line located in the SDG&E transmission corridor adjacent to the proposed substation site.
- **TL 6965:** Construction of approximately 5 miles of aboveground 69-kV power line and approximately 1,000 feet of underground power line between Miguel Substation and the proposed Salt Creek Substation. The aboveground power line would be installed on 41 new steel poles and eight existing steel poles.
- **Miguel Substation Modifications:** Addition of a new rack at Miguel Substation for TL 6965.

Project Location

The Proposed Project is located in southwest San Diego County within the City of Chula Vista, California, and in unincorporated San Diego County (Figure 1). The proposed Salt Creek Substation would be located south of Hunte Parkway, east of Eastlake Parkway, in Chula Vista, on an 11-acre parcel of land that is currently undeveloped. The proposed 69-kV power line would be located within SDG&E's existing Right-of-way (ROW) between the Miguel Substation and the proposed Salt Creek Substation.

Analysis of Potential Environmental Effects

The CPUC is preparing an EIR to evaluate potential environmental effects of the Proposed Project in accordance with CEQA. The EIR will address impacts of the construction, operation, and maintenance of the Proposed Project.

Specific areas of analysis to be addressed in the EIR include:

- Aesthetics
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse Gases
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Noise
- Recreation
- Transportation and Traffic
- Utilities and Service Systems

Where feasible, mitigation measures will be recommended to avoid or reduce potentially significant impacts. Potential cumulative impacts of the Proposed Project, when considered in context with other past, present, or reasonably foreseeable future projects in the area, will also be addressed in the EIR.

The EIR will include an evaluation of a reasonable range of alternatives to the Proposed Project that could potentially reduce, eliminate, or avoid impacts of the Proposed Project, in compliance with CEQA.

Mitigation Measures.

SDG&E has proposed measures (Applicant Proposed Measures) that could reduce or eliminate potential impacts of the Proposed Project. The EIR will contain an evaluation of the effectiveness of these measures. The CPUC will develop mitigation measures to reduce impacts, if required. The CPUC would define measures to be implemented as a condition of project approval (if the project is approved) when the CPUC makes its final decision on the Proposed Project. The CPUC would require implementation of a mitigation monitoring program if the project or some alternative is approved

Alternatives

SDG&E analyzed eight alternative locations for the Salt Creek Substation and five alternative alignments and configurations for the 69-kV powerline that could potentially meet the objectives and reduce impacts. These alternatives were presented in the PEA. The CPUC will evaluate the feasibility of the PEA alternatives and determine if they meet CEQA requirements to be an alternative to the Proposed Project. The CPUC will likely develop other alternatives for evaluation in the EIR, which could include minor reroutes and different structure designs within the ROW and different substation locations or configurations that could meet the Proposed Project objectives. Input received during the scoping period will be considered in the EIR. Other alternatives may also be proposed based on the impacts of the Proposed Project.

Scoping Comments

The CPUC is soliciting information regarding the environmental topics and project alternatives that the EIR should address. **Due to the time limits mandated by State law, please send your response at the earliest possible date, but no later than by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, September 15, 2014.** Please include a name, address, and telephone number of a contact person for all future correspondence on this subject.

Public comments will become part of the public record and will be published in a Scoping Report. You can submit comments in several ways: (1) U.S. mail, (2) e-mail, and (3) fax. Send comments on the scope and content of the EIR to:

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Issuance of NOP

The California Public Utilities Commission hereby issues this Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report.



Date: _____ August 15, 2014 _____

Connie Chen, Project Manager
Energy Division
California Public Utilities Commission

Figure 1: Project Area

