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ORIGINAL

Decision No. \_\_\_\_\_

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

In the matter of the application of SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA EDISON COMPANY for a certificate that the present and future public convenience and necessity require or will require construction and operation by applicant of a double circuit 220 kv transmission line between Devers Substation and a location near Vista and San Bernardino Substations.

Application No. 55425  
(Filed December 16, 1974)

H. Clinton Tinker, Attorney at Law,  
for applicant.  
Walter H. Kessenick, Attorney at Law,  
and Robert E. Penny, for the  
Commission staff.

O P I N I O N

Southern California Edison Company (Edison) seeks an order of the Commission granting it a certificate that the present and future public convenience and necessity will require the construction and operation of a double circuit 220 kv transmission line between its Devers Substation and a location near its Vista and San Bernardino Substations.

EIR Process and Public Hearings

In compliance with the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and Rule 17.1 of the California Public Utilities Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure, Edison filed with the application as a separate exhibit not physically attached to the application an Environmental Data Statement (EDS).

Copies of the EDS were submitted to other public agencies having expertise in the various other areas of environmental concern involved in the project. Where necessary, the staff requested Edison to correct or amend the EDS.

The EDS and comments thereon were independently evaluated and analyzed by the Commission staff and were incorporated into the Draft EIR.

On December 12, 1975 the staff issued a notice of completion of the Draft EIR. The Office of Planning Research, State Clearinghouse, acknowledged receipt of the Draft EIR and assigned State Clearinghouse No. 75122265 to the project.

Notice to the public of completion of the Draft EIR was published in the Daily Enterprise and The Desert Sun on December 31, 1975 and on January 7, 1976.

On March 16 and 17, 1976 public hearings were held before Examiner Johnson in San Bernardino on all aspects of the application including the Draft EIR and the matter was submitted on March 17, 1976. Testimony and exhibits were presented on behalf of Edison by six witnesses and on behalf of the Commission staff by one of its engineers. The chief building inspector of the city of Banning read into the record the city of Banning's Resolution No. 1976-5 (included in Exhibit 9 appended to the EIR) opposing the project. In addition one of the area residents presented testimony recommending that the project not be approved until a study by an independent agency indicates the necessity of such construction.

The Final EIR of Examiner N. R. Johnson was issued on April 29, 1976. No exceptions to the Final EIR were filed.

### Project Description

The proposed project consists of two 220 kv transmission line circuits on double circuit lattice structural angle steel towers averaging 140 feet in height and spaced approximately 1200 feet apart. Each circuit will have a rated power capacity of 450 megavolt amperes (MVA) and will be conductored with aluminum stranded conductor, steel reinforced wires (ACSR) with a diameter of 1.244 inches. These conductors will be greased to protect them against corrosive attack of airborne contaminants. This greasing will also result in a nonspecular surface that will reduce shine and make the lines less visible. In addition the galvanization on the towers will be dulled to eliminate sheen.

The proposed route is approximately 39.4 miles long and extends in a generally easterly direction from Devers Substation through San Gorgonio Pass and Beaumont Valley and along San Timoteo Canyon to the Break Estates area approximately five miles east of the Vista Substation. Through a cutover program with existing transmission lines, a second Devers-Vista 220 kv transmission line and a second Devers-San Bernardino 220 kv transmission line will be formed.

### Alternative Routes

Two alternate routes (northern and southern) were considered in addition to the proposed route. Both of these alternate routes lie within the general corridor through San Gorgonio Pass.

Approximately 23 miles of the 41-mile northern route is separate from the existing transmission corridor and approximately follows the Banning Fault. The terrain of this route is generally

mountainous with dense vegetation in some areas. Consequently, negligible impact on present and future land use is expected from the northern alternative. This alternate route will be visible from the proposed Devil's Garden Recreation Area, where it crosses State Highway 62, and in the area north of the cities of Banning and Beaumont. The impact on vegetation and wildlife along this route is expected to be about the same as along the recommended route. This new route will require more mileage of new access roads than the proposed route and will not be partially shielded from view by existing towers. In addition, the potential for archaeological damage along the northern route is greater than along the recommended route.

Thirty-seven of the 43 miles of the southern alternative route are separate and distinct from the recommended route. The eastern portion of this alternate route traverses fairly flat terrain from Devers Substation through Cabazon and the western portion traverses some rugged mountainous area. Very little impact on present and future land use is expected from this route. It will be visible from the six major thoroughfares and the Southern Pacific line to Palm Springs, which it crosses, and from Interstate 10 and U. S. 60, which it parallels. In most cases the visual impact of this line will be screened by numerous man-made structures and natural terrain. As with the northern alternative relatively more access roads will be required and the impact on vegetation and wildlife and the possibility of archaeological damage are greater for the southern alternative than for the recommended route.

Because the proposed route will require less mileage of new access roads, utilize existing rights-of-way, have a lesser impact on vegetation and wildlife, and have less possibility of doing archaeological damage than either of the alternatives, its use is recommended.

#### Need For The Project

Devers Substation is presently served by three 220 kv transmission lines; Devers-Vista with a capacity of 420 MW, Devers-San Bernardino with a capacity of about 300 MW, and the Devers-Julian Hinds line which is an extension of the long distance system serving the MWD aqueduct pumping system from Hoover Dam.

Edison's studies indicate that the 1977 summer electrical peak demand for the Devers area will be about 295 MW and the Eagle Mountain load will be about 46 MW. With these demands a single line outage of the Devers-Vista 220 kv line or the loss of both the Devers-Vista and Devers-Julian Hinds lines will result in the Devers-San Bernardino line being loaded to its conductor rating with the result that the line voltage at Devers would be below an adequate level. System capacity will be extended by operating the existing 220 kv and 115 kv systems in parallel and will permit service to Devers Substation to be maintained through the summer of 1976 under one-line-out contingencies.

The proposed project is required to meet this projected load and to provide reliable power from San Bernardino and Vista Substations into the Devers Substation for the years 1979-1980. Edison presently plans to place a 500 kv line to transmit power from the Mohave Generating Station to Devers to the proposed Serrano Substation in operation in 1980. At that time the flow of power on the proposed 220 kv lines will be reversed and eastern generation energy will be transmitted from Devers Substation to the Vista and San Bernardino Substations.

Environmental Matters

A comprehensive record on environmental matters has been developed in this proceeding through public hearings, preparation of the Draft EIR, consultation with public agencies, and presentation of expert testimony and exhibits by various parties, all of which are elements in the EIR process culminating in the preparation and issuance of the Final EIR.

The next section of this decision includes, pursuant to Rule 17.1 of our rules, an extensive series of findings, based on the Final EIR's coverage of (a) the environmental impact of the proposed action; (b) any adverse environmental effects which cannot be avoided if the proposal is implemented; (c) mitigation measures proposed to minimize the impact; (d) alternatives to the proposed action; (e) the relationship between local short-term uses of man's environment and the maintenance and enhancement of long-term productivity; (f) any irreversible environmental changes which would be involved in the proposed action should it be implemented; and (g) the growth-inducing impact of the action.

The Commission has carefully considered the evidence on environmental matters, especially the contents of that Final EIR, and makes the following Findings pursuant to Rule 17.1(j)(3) of its Rules of Practice and Procedure.

Findings

1. The proposed project is required to meet the projected 1977 summer electrical peak demand for the Devers area and to provide reliable power from the San Bernardino and Vista Substations into the Devers Substation for the years 1979-1980.

2. The proposed project route will have a minimum land use impact as it mostly avoids areas that have existing or developing residential, commercial, or industrial districts; does not pass through any park sites; and would not inhibit land uses permitted within the San Geronio Pass General Plan 1990 designations.

3. The proposed project will have some negative impact on visual quality as seen from various thoroughfares and residences along the route but the screening effect of the existing towers on the bottom 100 feet of the proposed towers and the relatively narrow width of these new towers will tend to minimize this impact.

4. The proposed transmission line will have little effect on wildlife as the recent drought period (1946-1965) had a marked effect on the area vegetation and necessitated existing animal species to adapt to sparser vegetation to a relatively greater degree than the anticipated effect of the proposed project on vegetation.

5. The degree of impact resulting from removal and vegetation clearings is considered to be minimal since most access roads are already established for the existing transmission corridor.

6. There will be no adverse electrostatic effects or deterioration of radio reception due to the installation of the proposed line.

7. The proposed line will have minor temporary impacts on air quality (dust pollution) and noise levels during the construction phase.

8. Mitigation measures during the construction period of the line include limitation of vehicular traffic movement to approved access roads and construction sites, the location of stationary noise-producing equipment in optimal positions, the restriction of the operation of pneumatic tools or heavy machinery in the vicinity of residences to daylight hours, the installation of fully contained sanitation facilities to prevent any contamination of water tables or local streams, and the removal of all excess materials and debris from the right-of-way as each phase of the construction is completed.

9. Designated historical archaeological areas will be flagged prior to the start of construction. If any artifacts or historical features are uncovered, construction in the area will be suspended until the necessary clearance is obtained from Edison's staff archaeologist. In those instances where the possibility of a buried site is enhanced by environmental circumstances near a reported ethnographic location, a mechanized test excavation under archaeological supervision will be made. If a buried site is present, protective measures will be implemented.

10. The visual impact of the transmission line will be mitigated by the use of dulled galvanized angle steel for the towers which will be placed away from hill or mountaintop where possible.

11. The impact of not constructing this project would be continuing decreases in reliability as the loads on the existing Devers San Bernardino and Devers system lines are increased because of the growth of electric demand in the Palm Springs area.

12. The short-term uses of man's environment consist mainly of adverse visual effects and a slight reduction in land use available for wildlife. In this case, the extent of natural vegetation and animal life displaced by new tower sites and new access roads will be negligible.



13. Long-term productivity will be enhanced by supplying the need for electric service reliability to Edison's system especially in the district of Palm Springs.

14. The irretrievable loss consists of energy consumed in construction of the project and probable minor loss of wildlife due to the removal of habitat during construction. After the lines have served their useful lives, towers and lines could be removed and the right-of-way would eventually return to its natural state.

15. Future growth induced by an adequate supply of energy can only occur if other growth-inducing factors, such as local economic conditions, land use changes, transportation expenses, and the policy of local governing bodies are also present.

16. In summary, the project should not, on balance, have a significant effect on the environment because;

- a. The new 220 kv lines will be parallel and adjacent to existing transmission lines.
- b. Existing service roads will be used for most of the construction access.
- c. Alternative routes to the proposed project would cause more visual impacts and would result in greater construction problems.
- d. The new lines will be barely visible from points of scenic interest and will not interfere with existing use of land in proximity to the transmission lines.
- e. The steps to be taken to mitigate any deleterious consequences as described in the Final EIR are adequate.

17. In conformance with General Order No. 131, the construction and operation of Devers-Vista transmission lines Nos. 1 and 2 and Devers-San Bernardino transmission line No. 2:

- a. Is reasonably required to meet area demands for present and/or future reliable and economic electric service; and
- b. Will not produce an unreasonable burden on natural resources, aesthetics of the area in which the proposed facilities are to be located, community values, public health and safety, air and water quality in the vicinity, or parks, recreational and scenic areas, or historic sites and buildings, or archaeological sites.

18. The project will help maintain reliable electric service from an integrated system serving a substantial part of southern California; its benefits should thus outweigh any possible minor environmental impact; its planned construction and operation is an economic, efficient, and appropriate means of meeting projected loads and maintaining reliable service.

19. Present and future public convenience and necessity require the construction and operation of this transmission project.

Applicant is placed on notice that operative rights, as such, do not constitute a class of property which may be capitalized or used as an element of value in rate fixing for any amount of money in excess of that originally paid to the State as the consideration for the grant of such rights. Aside from their purely permissive aspect, such rights extend to the holder a full or partial monopoly of a class of business. This monopoly feature may be modified or canceled at any time by the State, which is not in any respect limited as to the number of rights which may be given.

The action taken herein is not to be considered as indicative of amounts to be included in future proceedings for the purpose of determining just and reasonable rates.

The Notice of Determination for the project is attached as Appendix A to this decision, and the Commission certifies that the Final EIR has been completed in compliance with CEQA and the Guidelines and that it has reviewed and considered the information contained in the EIR.

Based on the foregoing findings the Commission concludes that the Devers-Vista Nos. 1 and 2 and Devers-San Bernardino No. 2 transmission lines should be authorized in the manner set forth in the following order.

O R D E R

IT IS ORDERED that a certificate of public convenience and necessity is granted to Southern California Edison Company to construct and operate Devers-Vista transmission lines Nos. 1 and 2 and Devers-San Bernardino transmission line No. 2, together with related appurtenances, as proposed by Southern California Edison Company in this proceeding.

A.55425 IB

The Executive Director of the Commission is directed to file a Notice of Determination for the project, with contents as set forth in Appendix A to this decision, with the Secretary for Resources.

The effective date of this order shall be twenty days after the date hereof.

Dated at San Francisco, California, this 21<sup>st</sup>  
day of SEPTEMBER, 1976.

|                           |               |
|---------------------------|---------------|
|                           | President     |
| <u>William S. Johnson</u> |               |
| <u>James L. Helge</u>     |               |
| <u>Edward Ross</u>        |               |
| <u>Robert B. Stewart</u>  | Commissioners |

Commissioner D. W. Holmes, being necessarily absent, did not participate in the disposition of this proceeding.

NOTICE OF DETERMINATION

TO:  Secretary for Resources  
1415 Ninth Street, Room 1311  
Sacramento, California 95814

FROM: (Lead Agency)

California Public Utilities  
Commission  
350 McAllister St.

San Francisco, CA 94102

County Clerk  
County of \_\_\_\_\_

SUBJECT: Filing of Notice of Determination in compliance with Section 21108  
or 21152 of the Public Resources Code

Project Title Devers-Vista Nos. 1 and 2  
Devers-San Bernardino No. 2 220 kv Transmission Lines  
State Clearinghouse Number (if submitted to State Clearinghouse)  
75122265

Contact Person: William R. Johnson Telephone Number: 415-557-1487

Project Location: San Bernardino Generating Station and Vista Substation and the Palm Springs Area.  
Project Description: Application by Southern California Edison Company to the California Public Utilities Commission to construct 220 kv transmission lines which will be needed to transmit power from San Bernardino Generating Station and Vista Substation to the Palm Springs area at Devers Substation.

This is to advise that the California Public Utilities Commission (Lead Agency) has made the following determinations regarding the above described project:

- 1. The project has been  approved by the Lead Agency.  disapproved.
- 2. The project  will have a significant effect on the environment.  will not (See Decision No. \_\_\_\_\_ attached.)
- 3.  An Environmental Impact Report was prepared for this project pursuant to the provisions of CEQA. ✓
- A Negative Declaration was prepared for this project pursuant to the provisions of CEQA. A copy of the Negative Declaration is attached.

Date Received for Filing

Signature: WILLIAM R. JOHNSON  
Executive Director

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS SPACE