

ORIGINAL

Decision No. 87167

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 appli-
cant of a double circuit 220-kv
transmission line between San Onofre
Nuclear Generating Station and
Santiago Tap.

Application No. 55395
(Filed December 16, 1974)
(Amended May 30, 1975)

Rollin E. Woodbury, Attorney at Law, for applicant.
Janice E. Kerr, Attorney at Law and Robert 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 require or will require the construction and operation by Applicant of a double circuit 220-kv transmission line between San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station and Santiago Tap, together with related appurtenances.

EIR Process and Public Hearings

In compliance with the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the Guidelines 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 an Environmental Data Statement (EDS). Copies of the EDS were submitted to other state and public agencies having expertise in various environmental areas 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 October 6, 1976 the staff mailed the Draft EIR along with the Notice of Completion to various state and local agencies. The Office of Planning and Research, State of California Clearinghouse, acknowledged receipt of the Draft EIR and assigned State Clearinghouse No. 76101352 to the project.

Notice to the public of completion of the Draft EIR was published in the Santa Ana Register on October 14 and 21, 1976.

No adverse comments were received from any agencies during the review process of the Draft EIR. Accordingly, the presiding officer determined that no substantial environmental issues were raised and that no public hearings need be held.

The Final EIR of Examiner R. C. Moeck was issued on January 19, 1977. No exceptions to the Final EIR were filed.

Project Description

Edison's initial filing in this application was to construct 28.4 miles of double-circuit 220-kv transmission line between the generating station and Santiago Substation, to handle the increased power output. Other transmission facilities would be constructed by San Diego Gas & Electric Company (SDG&E) for its share of the additional output. Since the final Environmental Impact Statement for Generating Units 2 and 3 was completed, more recent technical studies determined that Edison will only need to construct 15.3 miles of new double-circuit 220-kv transmission line and towers between the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station switchyard and Santiago Tap, and can obtain the necessary safety and reliability by reconductoring the existing transmission line to the Black Star Canyon Junction and to Santiago Substation. This change in scope was proposed in the amendment to the filing and is discussed in Amendment No. 1 of the EDS.

The major portion of the proposed project is comprised of the construction and operation of a new double-circuit 220-kv transmission line in Orange and San Diego Counties. The transmission line will extend from the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station switchyard northwesterly to Santiago Tap. The new line will occupy part of an existing 15.3 mile right-of-way, which is 200 feet in width for most of its length and is now partially occupied by one other Edison transmission line. A separate transmission line right-of-way owned by SDG&E is adjacent to Edison's right-of-way in this area.

The initial 0.4 mile segment of the line leaving San Onofre will use structures of an aesthetic horizontal design at two conductor support locations. The remaining 14.9 miles of line to the Santiago Tap will use approximately 73 double-circuit self-supporting, lattice steel, square based towers.

The other portion of the project in the amended application consists of reconductoring the existing line and constructing four new transmission towers on that part of the San Onofre double-circuit 220-kv transmission line between the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station switchyard and Black Star Canyon. These towers are required to provide adequate ground clearances in line sections where it is necessary to reduce wire tensions when the existing San Onofre Transmission System is reconductored.

Need for the Project

The addition of San Onofre Generating Units 2 and 3 will increase the amount of Edison's portion of the output to a level greater than the capacity of the existing lines. Although each of the two existing 220-kv circuits from San Onofre to the Santiago Substation will be reconductored to increase their thermal capacity, the proposed new lines are required to increase the reliability of

all of the lines in case of electrical fault or failure of any two and thus prevent serious overloads or instability. This will provide a reliable and adequate transmission system to handle Edison's portion of the output of San Onofre Generating Units Nos. 2 and 3.

Completion of the proposed double-circuit 220-kv transmission line is required by December 1, 1978 so that Edison can transmit the output of Generating Unit No. 1 to the Edison System and Pacific Intertie power to San Diego Gas & Electric Company, while the existing San Onofre to Edison system circuits are out of service to be reconnected.

Completion of the entire transmission line project by January 1, 1980 is required to provide for transmission of the outputs of San Onofre Generating Units 1, 2 and 3 and will contribute to the future safety, health, comfort and convenience of the public.

Alternatives to the Project

In the selection of the preferred route for the proposed transmission line, several alternatives were studied. Alternatives were considered for the alignment of the proposed route, and for the design of project facilities. In addition, the no action alternative with regard to the overall project was addressed.

A. Alternative Routes

The proposed San Onofre to Santiago Tap transmission line has been addressed throughout the application and the Environmental Data Statement as being sited in an existing right-of-way. The selection of an established right-of-way for location of additions to existing transmission facilities is recommended when considering the potential environmental effects of transmission systems.

An alternative route segment for the proposed line was considered for evaluation, between San Onofre and the Santiago Tap, independent of the existing rights-of-way that would involve the acquisition of new easements and have greater overall environmental effects. Easements for a new transmission corridor in the area in question would be difficult to secure.

An analysis of the alternative route segment was made in comparison with the preferred proposed route. Because of the expense, expected difficulty in obtaining a right-of-way over the Camp Pendleton Marine Base and the indication of substantially greater environmental impacts in establishing an alternative route Edison chose the preferred route along the existing right-of-way.

B. Alternative Design

Several alternative tower designs were considered, such as traditional lattice towers and contemporary or portal design towers. The proposed line will use a combination of lattice towers over most of the route, and contemporary design towers at the San Onofre crossing of Interstate 5. This alternative was chosen to minimize impacts on both the physical and aesthetic resources of the project area. The horizontal configuration of conductors over the highway will minimize the obstruction of the view down the coast.

C. Alternative Conductor Designs, Overhead Versus Underground

The estimated construction costs for the proposed San Onofre to Santiago Tap transmission line total \$4,819,000. To provide a basis for comparison of alternative transmission designs, the cost was developed for undergrounding the proposed system, and is estimated at about \$66,000,000. This represents a thirteenfold increase over the cost of the proposed line. In addition, the overall environmental impacts of undergrounding the proposed line would be significantly greater than those associated with the proposed project.

Environmental Matters

A comprehensive record on environmental matters has been developed in this proceeding through preparation of the Draft EIR, consultation with public agencies, and investigation by the staff of the project site, 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, our 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; and (c) mitigation measures proposed to minimize the impact.

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

Findings

1. Land Resources - The proposed transmission line will be located in an existing right-of-way. Impacts on topography associated with the project will result from construction activities at the tower sites and storage of materials at each end of the proposed line. The total land area permanently affected will be about five acres for new stub roads and under the tower bases.

2. Biological Resources (vegetation and wildlife) - The major disturbance to vegetation and wildlife will be during construction. The construction contemplated in this project will cause no significant permanent adverse impacts on the biological resources of the area.

3. Air and Water Resources - The proposed transmission line is expected to have negligible impact on the air and no significant impact on the water resources of the area.

4. Land Use, Local - Land use of the surrounding property is not expected to change as a result of the proposed project. Future local land-use development designs will be affected by the existence of the transmission lines. The orientation of future buildings may be away from the power line right-of-way.

5. Land Use, Regional - The proposed project provides transmission facilities for a generation project already approved and under construction. The transmission lines themselves will have no direct impact on regional land use in that they only serve as a means of conveyance for power and energy from the plant site to the load center.

6. Land Use, General Plans - The proposed project conforms with the regional and local general plans which designate land use along the proposed alignment.

7. Air Traffic - The proposed transmission line will not interfere with air traffic since the tower will not extend into the designated clear air space.

8. Sociological Resources - There will be no population increases in the SCE area resulting from the construction and operation of the proposed project. SCE anticipates a maximum of 70 construction workers during peak construction periods. Construction workers already in service with SCE will be used, and no new permanent employees will be needed to service and maintain the lines. Daytime use of construction equipment to construct the project will create a temporary noise impact upon any neighborhoods that are traversed or are close to the right-of-way.

9. Cultural Resources - There will be no impact to archaeological, paleontological or historical resources as a result of the project. No historical or paleontological resources occur in the areas to be physically affected by the project, and the only archaeological site in the area will not be affected by construction, operation or maintenance of the project.

10. Aesthetics - The proposed transmission line transects areas of identified scenic, aesthetic, and open space value, and visually, it will have an immediate, but secondary, negative impact on the aesthetics of Southeastern Orange County. The proposed line parallels existing transmission lines which have already produced a primarily negative visual impact on the landscape.

11. Mitigation Measures-- Adverse impacts associated with the project are mostly short-term, and the tradeoffs involved do not involve significant commitments of resources. The principal adverse impact of the proposed project is on the aesthetic environment through partial disruption of the scenic characteristics of the area.

In this case, the extent of natural vegetation and animal life displaced by new tower sites and new access roads will be negligible.

Other mitigation measures will include, proper design of tower footings to provide erosion control, and allowing the use of right-of-way for secondary uses such as agriculture, grazing and similar activities by others.

No mitigation is necessary for construction vehicle noises since that is controlled by the California Vehicle Code, and the use of construction vehicles will be temporary.

Conclusions

1. Completion of the entire transmission line project will provide for transmission of the outputs of San Onofre Units 1, 2 and 3 and will contribute to the present and future safety, health, comfort and convenience of the public.

2. The need for providing reliable and continuous electricity has been demonstrated and made evident by the previous approvals for expansion of the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station with Units 2 and 3.

3. The consequences of not implementing the proposed transmission line would be great in both the short and long-term effects on the Edison service territory, and would deprive the customers in the Edison service territory of the benefits of the power which could be generated at the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station.

4. Adverse environmental impacts associated with the project are mostly short-term and the tradeoffs do not involve significant commitment of resources. The principal adverse impact of the proposed project is on the aesthetic environment through partial disruption of the scenic characteristics of the study area.

5. Undergrounding of the proposed transmission line is not a viable alternative.

6. In conformance with General Order No. 131-A, the construction and operation of the San Onofre to Santiago Tap 220-kv transmission line:

- 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.

7. The project will help maintain reliable electric service in an integrated system serving a substantial part of southern California; its benefits will 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.

8. 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 the Commission concludes that the San Onofre to Santiago Tap 220-kv transmission line 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 the San Onofre to Santiago Tap 220-kv transmission line together with related appurtenances, as proposed by Southern California Edison Company in this proceeding.

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.

Date at Sacramento, California, this 5th day of APRIL, 1977.

Robert Babcock
 President

William S. ...

...

...

Richard D. ...
 Commissioners

NOTICE OF DETERMINATION

TO: Secretary for Resources
1416 Ninth Street, Room 1311
Sacramento, CA 95814

FROM: (Lead Agency)
California Public Utilities Commission
350 McAllister Street
San Francisco, California 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 San Onofre to Santiago Tap 220-kv Transmission Line	
State Clearinghouse Number (If submitted to State Clearinghouse) 76101352	
Contact Person R. E. Penny	Telephone Number (415) 557-1249
Project Location Portions of Orange and San Diego Counties	
Project Description In the matter of the Application of Southern California Edison Company for a certificate, under General Order No. 131-A, that the present and future public convenience and necessity require or will require construction and operation of a 220-kv transmission line from San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station to Santiago Tap.	

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

- The project has been approved disapproved by the Lead Agency.
- The project will will not have a significant effect on the environment.
- 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

H. L. Egner
Signature
H. L. Egner
Title
Acting Executive Director
Date