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ORIGINAL

Decision No. 90145 APR 10 1979

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

In the Matter of the Application
of PACIFIC GAS AND ELECTRIC COMPANY
for a certificate of public
convenience and necessity under
General Order No. 131-A for a
230-kV Transmission Line from the
Tesla Substation to the Lawrence
Livermore Laboratory.

Application No. 58287
(Filed August 9, 1978)

(Electric)

O P I N I O N

Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) seeks an order of the Commission granting it a certificate that present and future public convenience and necessity will require the construction and operation by applicant of a 230-kV single circuit transmission line from the Tesla Substation to the Lawrence Livermore Laboratory (LLL).

Negative Declaration

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, PG&E filed as part of its application a request for issuance of a Negative Declaration. In support of its allegation, PG&E submitted with the application, as separate exhibits, information and studies for staff use in preparing an Initial Study.

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The exhibits were evaluated and analyzed by the Commission staff. An independent report entitled Initial Study was subsequently prepared by the staff. Copies of the Initial Study were submitted to other state and public agencies having expertise in various environmental areas involved in the project. No adverse comments were received in this early consultation procedure.

On the basis of the Initial Study the staff determined that no substantial environmental issues had been raised and that no public hearings need be held. Accordingly, on December 20, 1978, a Negative Declaration was issued.

The Negative Declaration, with attached Initial Study was submitted to required state and local agencies on December 20, 1978, and notice to the public of the completion of the Negative Declaration was published in the Pleasanton Times and Tri-Valley Herald on December 26 and 31, 1978.

No exceptions to the Negative Declaration were filed.

Project Description

The proposed project consists of a 230 kV alternating current transmission line located in eastern Alameda County, California. The proposed route would extend from the Tesla Substation located 7.0 miles east of LLL to LLL. The proposed load will be met by installing the proposed 230 kV single circuit overhead transmission line from Tesla Substation to LLL. Construction will include the following steps: within the Tesla Substation property a new 230-kV wood pole line for 0.5 mile to the Tesla Salado 115-kV tower line; a new 230-kV tower line for 0.2 mile to connect to the Tiger Creek-Newark 230-kV line; string new conductor on the vacant Tiger Creek-Newark 230-kV tower line for 6.8 miles from tower 80/555 to tower 87/596; a 230-kV single circuit wood pole line for 0.9 mile from Tiger Creek-Newark Tower 87/596 to LLL property line, and 0.3 mile of steel pole and wood

pole line from said property line to LLL Substation. LLL will reimburse PG&E its costs for the installation of the proposed transmission facilities to provide interruptible electric service in accordance with Rate Schedule No. A-18.

Need for Project

The proposed project is designed to supply the electrical energy to newly developed devices called "Sustaining Neutral Beam Source Modules" at LLL. These modules are part of a major fusion energy experiment being conducted by LLL for the Department of Energy under authority of an appropriation of the U.S. Congress. These experiments will require a total sustaining power of approximately two hundred fifty million watts. This load will be a large pulse; therefore, it must be closely connected to a major substation. U.S. Government funding for this experiment is expected to continue at least through the year 1986.

Environmental Matters

No major new environmental issue is involved in this project. The existing Tiger Creek-Newark (TC-N) towers which constitute about 80% of this project have been a visual part of the skyline for years. The additional line to reach the Tesla Substation can hardly be identified amidst the existing lines.

The possibility of tower foundation impact has been examined. There are no known landslides involved with the tower foundation locations. A geological survey of the route indicates that no unusual runoff with attendant sedimentation has occurred. The County Road which generally follows this route will provide adequate access so that new grading will be minimal, if any.

Careful archeological investigation did not uncover any historic locations or artifacts that needed preservation or avoidance.

Past history of the TC-N line also has shown that there are no adverse effects on air quality due to this line. No natural vegetation nor animal groups will be destroyed by this project. No endangered animal or plant species have been identified along the proposed route.

Mitigation Measures

Reasonable environmental protection is provided in proper design and construction methods. Erosion control will be effected by proper design of access roads and seeding of newly exposed surfaces in cut and fill. The restriction of right-of-way clearing to the bare minimum will protect animal populations. In addition, all archaeological or historically sensitive areas encountered will be protected by professional skill.

Findings

The Commission has carefully considered the evidence on environmental matters, especially the contents of the initial study and the Negative Declaration, and makes the following findings:

1. The proposed project is needed to serve the needs of Lawrence Livermore Laboratory in carrying out experiments for the United States Department of Energy.
2. The construction of the proposed project will not produce an unreasonable burden on natural resources, aesthetics of the area in which the proposed facilities are to be located, public health and safety, air and water quality in the vicinity, parks, recreational, and scenic areas, or historic sites and buildings or archaeological sites.
3. Land Resources - Minor alterations of surface features may result from the project. The disturbances associated with construction will be of short duration while those associated with operation will affect a negligible total area.

4. Biological Resources (vegetation and wildlife) - The major disturbance to these resources will be during construction. The construction contemplated in this project will cause no significant adverse impact on these resources.

5. Air, Water and Mineral Resources - The proposed transmission line will have no significant impact on these resources.

6. Cultural Resources - There will be no impact to archaeological, paleontological or historical resources as a result of this project.

7. Aesthetics - The project will only have a slight visual impact on the landscape of the area. The applicants use of wood poles connecting with the TC-N line minimizes even this effect by blending into the hillside.

8. The Negative Declaration, having been sent for all required governmental review and adopted by the Commission as described below, constitutes full compliance with CEQA requirements.

9. The Negative Declaration with attached initial study issued on December 20, 1978, is adopted by the Commission and its contents have been considered in making a decision on the project.

10. Public hearing is not necessary.

Conclusions

1. This project will have no significant effect on the environment.

2. Present and future public convenience and necessity require the construction and operation of this 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 cancelled 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 Negative Declaration has been completed in compliance with CEQA and the Guidelines and that it has reviewed and considered the information contained in the initial study and the Negative Declaration.

Based on the foregoing, the Commission concludes that the Tesla-Lawrence Livermore Laboratory 230-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 Pacific Gas and Electric Company to construct and operate the 230-kV transmission line and related appurtenances in Alameda County, California, as proposed by Pacific Gas and Electric Company in this proceeding.

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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 thirty days after the date hereof.

Dated at San Francisco, California, this 10th day of APRIL, 1979.

John E. Boyer
President
James L. Shannon
Richard D. Howell
Robert J. Smith
James M. Jones
Commissioners

APPENDIX A

NOTICE OF DETERMINATION

TO: Secretary for Resources
1416 Ninth Street, Room 1312
Sacramento, California 95814

FROM: California Public
Utilities Commission
350 McAllister Street
San Francisco, CA 94102

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

Project Title 230-kV Transmission Line from Tesla Substation to
Lawrence Livermore Laboratory, Pacific Gas and
Electric Company

State Clearinghouse Number (If submitted to State Clearinghouse)
79010139 (NOP received under SCH NO. 78103042)

Contact Person Telephone Number
Richard Tom, P.E. (415) 557-3241

Project Location
Alameda County, CA

Project Description: 8.7 miles of single circuit 230-kV
transmission line, 6.8 miles on existing towers of Tiger Creek-Newark
line and 0.5 and 0.9 miles new wood pole line and 0.3 miles new steel
pole line at Tesla and Lawrence Livermore Substations.

This is to advise that the California Public Utilities Commission as
lead agency has made the following determination 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
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

Frederick E. John
Executive Director

Date APR 10 1979
