

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

COMMISSION ADVISORY  
AND COMPLIANCE DIVISION  
Energy Branch

RESOLUTION E-3197  
July 6, 1990

R E S O L U T I O N

RESOLUTION E-3197. REQUEST BY KING VIDEOCABLE COMPANY  
OF DIAMOND SPRINGS TO DEVIATE FROM UNDERGROUNDING  
REQUIREMENTS IN THE VICINITY OF KYBURZ.

AUTHORITY REQUESTED BY LETTER DATED MARCH 15, 1990  
FROM MICHAEL J. COLLINS, OPERATIONS MANAGER, KING  
VIDEOCABLE COMPANY.

SUMMARY

1. King Videocable Company (KVC) proposes to remove the present videocable system and replace it with a new system. The ten existing highway crossings are attached to trees. These crossings are to be removed. The proposed system would use existing utility poles and reduce the number of crossings to five. Because no new poles will be required, visibility of the added lines within 1000 feet of Highway 50, a scenic highway, will be negligible.
2. This resolution approves the request.

BACKGROUND

1. KVC's system is located near Kyburz. The system includes ten overhead lines that cross Highway 50, a scenic highway. All ten crossings are attached to trees, not to utility poles. Except at the crossings, the cables are buried in shallow trenches (approximately 6 inches) or, in some cases, lay on the ground covered by foliage or pine needles.
2. KVC proposes to construct a new system and to remove the old system, including the ten highway crossings. The new system would use existing Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) poles for the highway crossings. This would reduce the number of crossings from ten to five. No new poles would be required. The bulk of the system would not be seen from the highway and, most of the time, would be over 1,000 feet from the highway.

3. The State of California Department of Transportation (DOT) has jurisdiction over the planning for highways. In a letter dated January 16, 1990, Mr. Bill Felts, Senior Transportation Planner for the State of California Division of Transportation Planning, wrote that DOT has no objection to the proposed reconstruction on the conditions that:

1. The crossings of the new five cable lines will only occur in conjunction with existing utility poles, and
2. the existing ten cable lines will be removed.

4. The California Public Utilities Code (Code), Section 320, designates this Commission as the agency responsible for administering the undergrounding of electric and communication distribution facilities.

5. The cost to underground the system would be several times more than the cost to install the system on existing utility poles. Compared to the \$71,000 estimate for the proposed overhead system, KVC estimates that an underground crossing system would cost \$405,000,

6. If the other utilities elect to underground the existing lines in the future, KVC avers that it will also underground the cable system.

#### PROTESTS

1. None.

#### DISCUSSION

1. The installation or removal of overhead cable lines and the substitution of underground lines will affect the visibility of KVC's system in the vicinity of Kyburz. The reduction in the number of crossings is a primary consideration for authorizing a deviation from Code Section 320.

2. The visibility of existing power and communication lines from Scenic Highway 50 should be a primary consideration for granting a deviation from undergrounding requirements. The electric and telephone joint pole system which KVC proposes to use is visible from the highway, primarily at the crossings. Adding the cable line would have only an insignificant visual effect. Moreover, existing cable, now attached to trees, would be eliminated.

3. Eventually, the overhead electric and communication systems will have to be replaced. Under Section 320 of the Code, such systems in the vicinity of scenic highways will probably be replaced with underground facilities. KVC has indicated that it will underground its cable system in concert with the other utilities. KVC's commitment should be included as part of this order, to eliminate any uncertainty in the future.

FINDINGS

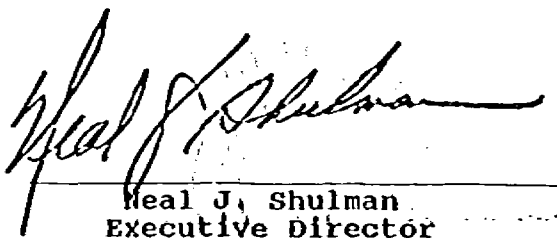
1. A deviation to allow overhead line extensions, as proposed, should be granted based on no significant effect on the environment adjacent to Highway 50 in the vicinity of Kyburz.
2. If other utilities elect to underground their systems, KVC's videocable system should also be undergrounded.

**THEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED that:**

1. A deviation from Code Section 320 is granted to King Videocable Company for the proposed extensions in the vicinity of Kyburz on U.S. Highway 50.
2. King Videocable Company shall underground its system when the other utilities do so.

I hereby certify that this Resolution was adopted by the Public Utilities Commission at its regular meeting on July 6, 1990. The following Commissioners approved it:

G. MITCHELL WILK  
President  
FREDERICK R. DUDA  
STANLEY W. HULETT  
JOHN B. OHANIAN  
PATRICIA M. ECKERT  
Commissioners

  
Neal J. Shulman  
Executive Director