

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

COMMISSION ADVISORY AND COMPLIANCE DIVISION
Service and Safety Branch

RESOLUTION NO. E-3104
September 14, 1988

R E S O L U T I O N

ORDER AUTHORIZING MR. AND MRS. EDWIN S. HODGES TO
DEVIATE FROM SECTION 320 OF THE PUBLIC UTILITIES CODE
OF THE CALIFORNIA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION,
UNDERGROUNDING OF ELECTRICAL AND COMMUNICATIONS
FACILITIES ALONG STATE SCENIC HIGHWAYS.

SUMMARY

1. By letter request dated May 6, 1988 Mr. Edwin S. Hodges applied to the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) for a deviation from Section 320 of the Public Utilities Code. Section 320 requires utilities to be installed underground, if they are within 1000 feet of a scenic highway. U.S. Highway 50 has been declared a scenic corridor by the State of California. The Service and Safety Branch staff recommends the approval of the resolution which will allow Mr. Edwin S. Hodges to extend the existing overhead electric line required for single family residence without installing it underground. The new poles and lines will be within 1,000 feet of U.S. Highway 50, which has been declared a scenic corridor by the State of California. However, the poles and lines will not be visible from Highway 50.

DISCUSSION

1. Mr. and Mrs. Edwin S. Hodges, owner of the property identified as Assessor's Parcel No. 37-380-29, located approximately one half mile east of Sierra Ski Ranch Road on the south side of U.S. Highway 50, requested a deviation from the requirements of Section 320 of the Public Utilities Code.
2. The Hodges first applied for the deviation in May 1986. At that time the proposed overhead transmission site was briefly visible from the Highway 50. Also, the Hodges' neighbors had denied PG&E an easement through their property to construct the line. In view of the above reasons, CPUC staff informed El Dorado County in October 1986 that the staff could not recommend the proposed deviation requested for Hodges' property.
3. In February 1987, Mr. Hodges requested another meeting with the staff to discuss alternate routes. The Service and Safety staff met with Hodges in July 1987 and recommended two alternate routes. Since that time the staff dropped the matter to allow the Hodges time to obtain the required easements.

4. By their letter dated May 6, 1988, the Hodges again applied to the CPUC for a deviation from Section 320 of the Public Utilities Code. This time they proposed an alternate route recommended by the Service and Safety staff. The planned construction includes a minor rerouting of an overhead section of line that presently passes over the deck of a neighboring resident. The new section of line serving Hodges' residence would then approach from the west rather than from the north as it was originally proposed, thus avoiding the problems Mr. Hodges was having with easements. Even with this alternate route the line will still fall within the scenic corridor. However, it will not be visible from Highway 50.

5. PG&E has obtained the necessary easements to provide electric service.

6. The electric power line will cross the South Fork of the American River. PG&E estimates that undergrounding 300 feet including the river crossing would cost Hodges about \$28,320, whereas the overhead construction will cost only \$6,675.

7. In addition, a short stretch of 12,000 volts underground line is considered by the staff to be piecemeal underground construction that is wasteful and does not provide significant benefits to the public.

8. Accordingly, the staff of Service and Safety Branch recommends that Mr. and Mrs. Edwin S. Hodges be granted a deviation from Section 320 of the Public Utilities Code.

FINDINGS

1. We find that the proposed construction of the PG&E 12kV overhead line extension does not have significant visual impact on the US Highway 50 scenic corridor. Overall public safety is not affected.

2. Extreme costs prohibit undergrounding the line beneath the river. Piece meal undergrounding of the remaining line would not provide significant public benefit.

3. Undergrounding of the 12kV power line in accordance with Section 320 of the Public Utilities Code in this instance is not necessary. Therefore,

IT IS ORDERED THAT:

1. A deviation of Section 320 of the Public Utilities Code be granted to Mr. and Mrs. Edwin S. Hodges for construction of the 12kV power line extension, located at the property identified as Assessor's Parcel No. 37-380-29, in El Dorado County, California.

2. Mr. and Mrs. Hodges will pay PG&E the necessary costs to provide the overhead line extension.

This order is effective today.

I certify that this resolution was adopted by the Public Utilities Commission at its regular meeting on September 14, 1988. The following Commissioner(s) approved it.

Executive Director

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