

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

ENERGY DIVISION

**RESOLUTION E-3634
OCTOBER 21, 1999**

RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION E-3634. PACIFIC GAS AND ELECTRIC COMPANY (PG&E) SEEKS AUTHORITY TO DEVIATE FROM THE PROVISIONS OF PUBLIC UTILITIES CODE SECTION 320. PG&E SEEKS AUTHORITY TO INSTALL A RECLOSER ON AN ELECTRICAL POLE IN LOS GATOS-SARATOGA ROAD (HIGHWAY 9), EAST OF ALOHA AVENUE IN SARATOGA. REQUEST APPROVED.

BY LETTER DATED AUGUST 5, 1999.

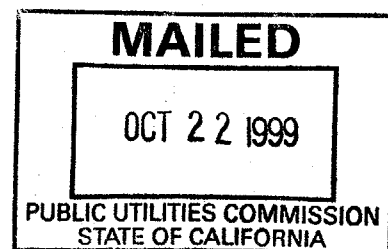
SUMMARY

Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) requests authority to upgrade an existing 12 kilovolt (kV) distribution pole circuit (pole mile 7.8) in the Los Gatos-Saratoga Road (Highway 9), East of Aloha Avenue in Saratoga.

Monitoring indicates that outages occur frequently on this circuit. As part of the project to upgrade the circuit, it is necessary to install a recloser on an existing pole. A recloser is designed to detect and clear momentary faults and to isolate line sections on which persistent faults have developed.

The existing pole is within a portion of California State Highway 09, pole mile 7.8, a designated State Scenic Highway. The installation of the recloser falls under Public Utilities (P.U.) Code Section 320, which requires that all future electric facilities within 1,000 feet of a scenic highway be undergrounded. Commission Decision 80864 dated December 16, 1972, implemented P.U. Code Section 320.

We agree with PG&E that one recloser on one existing pole will not significantly impact the scenic corridor in its visibility. Therefore, PG&E is granted authority to place the recloser on the 12 kV pole within the scenic corridor.



BACKGROUND AND FACTS

The California Department of Transportation is applying for an encroachment permit to allow PG&E to modify an existing pole line to meet the need of the general public. All work to be performed will be closely inspected by PG&E personnel to meet Commission requirements.

PG&E filed this letter because Public Utilities Code Section 320 prohibits what appears to be the best practice, which is to install a recloser above ground on an existing 12 kV distribution pole in the Los Gatos-Saratoga Road, East of Aloha Avenue in Saratoga. The recloser would be relocated from its present location near Carnelian Glen in Saratoga.

The estimated cost of the project is \$16,000.

The recloser is approximately two feet by three feet in size.

PG&E stated that installing a recloser on the existing pole will not significantly impact the scenic corridor. In Resolution E-3553, dated July 23, 1998, the Commission adopted PG&E's request to install a recloser on a distribution line pole in the Monte Rio area of Sonoma County adjacent to Scenic Highway 116. This recloser installation request is similar in impact on visibility within the scenic corridor of Highway 09.

NOTICE

Notice of this letter was made by publication in the Commission's Calendar on August 17, 1999.

PROTEST

No protest was filed for this letter.

DISCUSSION

The recloser would be placed on an existing PG&E electrical pole. There would be no need for further installation of an overhead span.

PG&E representatives assert that the chosen site for the recloser is the best possible site.

PG&E representatives assert that, after examining the site of the pole and the surrounding area, the location for the recloser is optimum and would not adversely affect the scenic qualities nor produce significantly negative visibility in the scenic corridor because it is relatively small in size.

Due to the minimal visual impact above ground, staff recommends that the requested location above ground be approved. This deviation request for Highway 09 in Saratoga

is similar to a request approved in Sonoma County, is reasonable, and should likewise be approved.

COMMENTS

According to California Public Utilities Code Section 311 (g)(2), this is an expanded 311 decision, but the 30-day period shall be reduced or waived because this is an uncontested matter in which the Resolution grants the relief requested.

FINDINGS

The California Department of Transportation finds it necessary to relocate a recloser in the scenic corridor of Highway 09 in Saratoga. After discussions with PG&E, staff agrees that this is the best site available.

The recloser will have little impact on the aesthetics of the area; changes in visibility will be minimal.

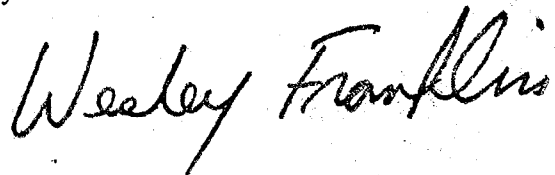
The deviation request from the undergrounding requirements of P.U. Code Sec. 320 is reasonable and should be approved.

THEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED that:

Pacific Gas and Electric Company's letter, filed August 5, 1999, requesting Commission authority to install a recloser on a distribution line pole in Saratoga within the scenic highway corridor of Highway 09 is reasonable and is herein adopted.

This Resolution is effective today.

I certify that the foregoing Resolution was duly introduced, passed, and adopted at a conference of the Public Utilities Commission of the State of California held on October 21, 1999, the following Commissioners voted favorably thereon:



WESLEY M. FRANKLIN
Executive Director

RICHARD A. BILAS
President
JOSIAH L. NEEPER
JOEL Z. HYATT
CARL W. WOOD
Commissioners