

**PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**505 VAN NESS AVENUE  
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94102-3298

August 12, 2010

Susan J. Nelson, AIA  
Project Manager  
Southern California Edison  
2244 Walnut Grove Ave.  
Rosemead, CA 91770

RE: Tehachapi Renewable Transmission Project (Segments 4-11), Notice to Proceed (NTP #11)

Dear Ms. Nelson,

On May 10, 2010, Southern Californian Edison (SCE) submitted a Notice to Proceed Request (NTPR) seeking authorization from the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) to remove existing 220 kV transmission lines and to construct new 220 kV and 500 kV transmission lines along a portion of Segment 8, between Tower M55-T2 (east of the 57 Freeway within unincorporated Los Angeles County) and Tower M65-T2 (City of Chino within San Bernardino County) for the Tehachapi Renewable Transmission Project (TRTP). The lines traverse through unincorporated Los Angeles County and the Cities of Chino Hills and Chino. The upgrade and installation of these transmission lines are located in Los Angeles County and San Bernardino County, California, and are referred to as Segment 8 Chino Hills - Phase 1.

The SCE Tehachapi Renewable Transmission Project (Project) was evaluated in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act and a Certification of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN) was granted by CPUC Decision 09-12-044, (Application #07-06-031), SCH #2007081156 on December 17, 2009. **NTP #11 is granted by CPUC for the proposed activities based on the following factors:**

- SCE submitted the following information:

SCE is requesting a Notice to Proceed for the removal of existing 220 kV transmission lines and the construction of new 220 kV and 500 kV transmission lines along a portion of Segment 8, between Tower M55-T2 (east of the 57 Freeway within unincorporated Los Angeles County) and Tower M65-T2 (City of Chino within San Bernardino County). The lines traverse through unincorporated Los Angeles County and the Cities of Chino Hills and Chino. The upgrade and installation of these transmission lines are located in Los Angeles County and San Bernardino County.

The Segment 8 Chino Hills – Phase 1: Construction of the new Mira Loma-Vincent DC (Double-Circuit) 500 kV transmission line will replace the existing 220 kV transmission line along the existing Chino-Mesa right-of-way. The new Mira Loma-Vincent DC 500 kV will run adjacent to the Mira Loma-Olinda/Mira Loma-Walnut DC 220 kV transmission line, for approximately 2.25 miles from Tower M55-T2 to Tower M57-T3. At Tower M57-T3, the new Mira Loma-Vincent DC 500 kV transmission line will continue in a northeasterly direction to replace the existing single-circuit Chino-Mesa 220 kV transmission line (Idle) through the Cities of Chino Hills and Chino for approximately 6.5 miles, to Tower M65-T2. The Mira Loma-Olinda/Mira Loma-Walnut DC 220 kV transmission line will change to a southeasterly direction.

Construction equipment operating hours for the Segment 8 Phase 1 installation and upgrade of the transmission lines are planned to be from approximately 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. SCE has established a TRTP toll-free information line (877-795-8787) and website ([www.sce.com/tehachapi](http://www.sce.com/tehachapi)). The information line is the designated public notification contact for the TRTP.

## **Project Elements/Construction Activities**

Project elements that will possibly be present or active throughout the construction of the transmission line include: wire setup sites (i.e., pull sites, wire splice sites, tensioning sites); new or improved access roads; transmission foundations, structures and wires; temporary guard poles; construction equipment and vehicles; helicopters; permit requirements (e.g., BMPs), and shoo-fly (temporary). Construction activities that will possibly be present or active throughout the construction of the transmission line include: grading for access roads and site preparation; removal of existing foundations, structures, and wires; installation of foundations, tower/pole structures, and wires; operation of construction equipment and vehicles; operation of helicopters; installation, maintenance and removal of guard poles; installation, maintenance and removal of permit requirements, and material salvage and disposal.

## **Site Work**

Site work for the removal and installation of the transmission lines will include grading for access roads and site preparation; removal of existing transmission structures/foundations, wires and hardware assemblies; installation of new transmission structures/foundations, and wires and hardware assemblies.

**Access Roads** – Construction of the new DC 500 kV structures will involve clearing and grading approximately 9 new access roads. Improvements to existing access roads will include blading and vegetation clearing. In total, approximately 0.50 miles of new access roads will be graded during this phase of construction. All new roads have been designed to be 14-foot-wide roadway. Berms approximately 2 to 3 feet wide will be created on each side of the new roadway. Additionally, roadway width will be required to accommodate vehicle turning, vehicle turnouts, sidecast, and backslope.

**Site Preparation** – Construction activities associated with the removal and installation of the transmission lines will require grading and other site preparation activities. Some of these activities would be temporary (e.g., land disturbance associated with the construction staging areas and crane pads associated with tower assembly and erection). Other construction activities would be permanent in nature, where the land would remain in use after construction (e.g., tower footings and access roads). Typically the staging area for construction activities would require an area of approximately 200 by 200 feet. Typically, in locations of relatively level terrain, only vegetation removal would occur to prepare the site for construction. In more rugged terrain or sloping site conditions, both vegetation removal and grading will be necessary to prepare the staging area for construction. To support the equipment and vehicle traffic, the graded area will be compacted. Site preparation is necessary to accommodate new tower sites and perform crane operation during the assembly of tower structures. The construction of new lattice steel towers (LSTs) and tubular steel poles (TSPs) will occur on former tower sites, when possible.

**Below Grade Major Activities** – It is anticipated that below grade activities such as excavation, drilling and foundation construction will be necessary for the Phase 1 construction of the new transmission lines. Construction of the new LSTs and TSPs will require construction of drilled concrete pier foundations. Typically, LSTs will require four excavated holes of 3 to 6 feet in diameter and 15 to 30 feet deep and TSPs will require one hole up to 10 feet in diameter and 60 feet deep. For removal sites, the existing LST footing would be excavated and removed to a depth of 2 feet below grade. Any remaining footing foundation would remain in place and the excavation filled and compacted to match the surrounding grade.

**Above Grade Major Activities** – The Phase 1 construction consists of the removal of approximately 33 existing structures and the construction of approximately 41 new structures to upgrade existing transmission lines and install new transmission lines along this portion of Segment 8. Planned construction activities at these areas are summarized below:

- **Installation of temporary shoo-fly.** Three temporary structures will be installed to allow for construction of the nearby transmission line structures.
- **Removal of 32 existing SC 220 kV Chino-Mesa structures and 1 DC 220 kV Mira Loma-Walnut/Mira Loma-Olinda structure.** This activity will include removal of structures and their foundations (2 feet below grade), wires and hardware assemblies.
- **Construction of 38 new DC 500 kV Mira Loma-Vincent structures.** Of these 38 new DC 220 kV structures, 17 are TSP and 21 are LST. Construction at each site will include installation of foundations, structures, and wires.
- **Construction of 3 new DC 220 kV LST structures on the Mira Loma-Walnut/Mira Loma-Olinda Transmission Line.** Of these structures, one will replace an existing tower and the remaining two will be installed in new locations. Construction at these areas will include installation of foundations, structures, wires, and hardware assemblies.

The removal and construction activities for these transmission structures will require a work area measuring approximately 200 feet by 200 feet. These areas will be located within the existing ROW corridor or approved work areas. An area within the approved work area will be used for a crane pad. A crane will be used to construct each structure.

Approximately 7 wire setup sites will be used to support wire stringing, including pulling, splicing, and tensioning, along the Phase 1 route. Each wire setup site will occupy a work area of approximately 200 feet by 200 feet.

#### **Other Activities**

Helicopters will be used during the removal and installation of wires. The final location of helicopter landing zones and support areas will be provided upon approval of the contractor's Congested Area Flight Plan by the Federal Aviation Administration. Any additional surveys or analysis required once landing zones are identified will be conducted and the results provided to the CPUC.

**Biological Resources.** SCE submitted two Biological Reviews, prepared by ICF International dated May and August 2010 for Segment 8 Phase 1. Based on information from the FEIR/DEIS (Aspen 2009a) and additional vegetation mapping completed by ICF in May 2010, 15 vegetation communities were mapped in Segment 8 Phase 1 including: agriculture, disturbed/developed/barren, bunchgrass grassland, California annual grassland, California walnut woodland, coast live oak woodland, coastal sage scrub, mixed chaparral, southern arroyo willow riparian forest, and sycamore alluvial woodland. Focused surveys that have been completed in conjunction with Segment 8 of the TRTP, which include Segment 8 Phase 1, were reviewed. Focused survey reports that were reviewed for the report include: focused surveys for rare plants (Amec 2007a, 2009o), burrowing owl (Amec 2009a, 2009j), riparian birds (Amec 2009n), coastal California gnatcatcher (Amec 2008d, 2009m), southwestern pond turtle (Amec 2009q), California red-legged frog (Amec 2009k), two-striped garter snake and south coast garter snake (Amec 2009r) and coast range newt (Amec 2009l). The 2010 surveys for rare plants, burrowing owl, riparian birds, coast range newt, southwestern pond turtle, two-striped garter snake and south coast garter snake were integrated with the August 2010 report. Several special-status plant species were identified in focused rare plant surveys: California black walnut (*Juglans californica* var. *californica*) and intermediate mariposa lily (*Calochortus weedii* var. *intermedius*) as well as Catalina mariposa lily (*Calochortus catalinae*) and Coulter's matilja poppy (*Romneya coulteri*). Focused burrow surveys (Amec 2009j, ICF 2010o) identified suitable burrowing owl burrows within Phase 1, however surveys were negative. Focused surveys conducted in 2009 and 2010 for coastal California gnatcatcher were also negative, though suitable habitat for California gnatcatcher exists within Phase 1. Protocol-level, focused surveys for least Bell's vireo and southwestern willow flycatcher were conducted within the ROW and are currently ongoing. One adult and two juveniles were detected during 2009 surveys. During 2009 focused surveys, migrant willow flycatchers were identified on two occasions (seen "at the peak of spring migration" and then

not again on subsequent survey dates). During the 2010 surveys, there were several least Bell's vireo detections and one positive willow flycatcher detection. The 2009 and 2010 focused surveys for coast range newt, south coast garter snake and two-striped garter snake were negative, as were 2009 California red-legged frog surveys. Southwestern pond turtle, however, was confirmed during 2009 and 2010 surveys. Additionally, Segment 8 Phase 1 has the potential to support the following wildlife species: special-status bats, San Diego desert woodrat, American badger and ringtail cat. Also, several raptor nests were identified within the Segment Phase 1 ROW.

The USFWS Biological Opinion (BO) was issued on July 31, 2010. The CDFG 2081 Incidental Take Permit is expected to be issued in late-August 2010. The 2081 is required at tower locations M60-T1 and M26-T2 for the willow flycatcher, and both the 2081 and BO are required at tower locations M60-T2 and M62-T5 for the least Bell's vireo.

**Cultural Resources.** SCE has submitted the following Cultural Resources Survey Reports for Segment 8 Chino Hills – Phase 1 (review status of each report is noted in parenthesis following the report name):

- *TRTP Cultural Resources Survey Report with Negative Findings, Segment 8 Transmission Line Chino Hills (Phase I)* (Revised report submitted by SCE 7-14-10. Consolidated comments provided by agencies 7-23-10.)
- *TRTP Cultural Resources Survey Report with Negative Findings, Segment 8 Transmission Line Phase I (Chino Hills, Additional Access Roads)* (Consolidated comments provided by agencies 7-13-10.)
- *Paleontological Assessment Sensitivity Report for SCE's TRTP, Segment 8 Phase I (Chino Hills), Los Angeles and San Bernardino Counties, CA* (SCE submitted revised report 7-28-10. Under review.)
- *SCE TRTP, Segment 8: NRHP/CRHR Review of SCE Company Chino Substation, San Bernardino County, CA* (SCE submitted revised report 7-12-10. Under review.)
- *SCE TRTP, Segment 8: NRHP/CRHR Review of SCE Company Chino-Mesa 220 kV Transmission Line, Los Angeles and San Bernardino Counties, CA (Crosses lands under Corps jurisdiction)* (SCE submitted revised report 7-12-10. Under review.)
- *SCE TRTP, Segment 8: NRHP/CRHR Review of SCE Company Chino-Mira Loma No. 1 220 kV Transmission Line, San Bernardino County, CA* (SCE submitted report 7-12-10. Under review.)
- *TRTP Cultural Resources Survey Report with Negative Findings, Segment 8: Two Access Roads for Bore Holes for B38A and B38B, Los Angeles County, CA.* (SCE submitted report 7-20-10. Under review.)

**The conditions noted below shall be met by SCE and its contractors:**

- Prior to site occupation and/or construction, SCE shall have all cultural resources reports reviewed and approved by the participating agencies. Conditions noted within the subject reports shall be implemented.
- All sensitive resource buffers shall be flagged prior to site occupation/construction. Resource flagging shall be field verified by the CPUC Environmental Monitor (EM) prior to project area use.
- The Segment 8 Chino Hills – Phase 1 ground disturbance areas shall be included in the project Habitat Restoration and Revegetation Plan required by MM B-1a, subject to review and approval by CPUC.

- If helicopters will be utilized, a biological report shall be submitted to the CPUC regarding potential impacts to sensitive species.
- A biological pre-construction survey, including maps of identified resources, shall be submitted to and approved by the CPUC prior to site occupation/disturbance. All 2010 protocol level survey results and nesting activities shall be included within the biological pre-construction survey and sightings of listed threatened or endangered plants or animals shall be reported to the USFWS and CDFG prior to site occupation. Confirmation of listed species notifications with the resource agencies shall be submitted to the CPUC prior to site occupation.
- Biological survey sweeps are required to occur immediately preceding and during project area set up and occupation as part of required biological monitoring activities. Sweeps for nesting birds shall include a 500 foot buffer. If active nests are found, a biological monitor shall establish a required buffer around the nest and no activities will be allowed within the buffer until the young have fledged from the nest or the nest fails. For *listed riparian species*, no work will be authorized within 500 feet of an active nest and all activities will stop immediately within 500 feet of the nest (Mitigation Measure B-15). The biological monitor shall conduct regular monitoring of the nest to determine success/failure and to ensure that project activities are not conducted within the buffer until the nesting cycle is complete or the nest fails. The biological monitor shall be responsible for documenting the results of the surveys and the ongoing monitoring. The buffer may be adjusted with the approval of CDFG and USFWS, and with prior knowledge of the CPUC. If special-status plant or animal species or bird nests are observed within the project area, CDFG and the CPUC EM shall be notified immediately (within 24 hours). After complete sweeps have been submitted and approved by the CPUC EM, site occupation can occur; however, if occupation does not occur within seven calendar days of survey, biological clearance sweeps shall be re-conducted prior to site occupation, including nesting bird surveys during the breeding season.
- No construction shall occur at tower locations M60-T1, M26-T2, M60-T2 and M62-T5 until the CDFG 2081 Incidental Take Permit is issued and all applicable conditions for the willow flycatcher or least Bell's vireo are implemented.
- No construction shall occur at tower locations M60-T2 and M62-T5 until the applicable BO conditions for the least Bell's vireo are implemented.
- Per MM B-24, SCE shall erect exclusion fencing where Segment 8 Phase 1 work crosses occupied southwestern pond turtle habitat. If eggs or hatchlings are observed during preconstruction surveys, additional coordination with the CPUC and CDFG may be necessary.
- Per MM B-29, Implement CDFG Protocol for Burrowing Owls, SCE shall conduct protocol pre-construction surveys in potential burrowing owl habitat.
- Continuous monitoring of earth moving activities in areas characterized by high to very high paleontological sensitivity shall be conducted.
- If unanticipated biological, cultural or paleontological resources are detected, the CPUC EM shall be notified immediately.
- As recommended by Kleinfelder (2010), the excavation of the drilled pier tower foundations shall be observed by a qualified representative of the Geotechnical Engineer.
- SCE shall provide a letter to the CPUC from a California registered geotechnical engineer following the completion date of all of the foundation activities for each segment. The letter will confirm that

SCE followed the geotechnical report recommendations and the common engineering practice in southern California at the time of the project.

- For the TRTP project-wide Fire Management Plan (non-ANF), SCE requested that they be allowed to submit a separate Operations and Maintenance Fire Management Plan 60 days prior to energizing transmission lines rather than prior to construction. The CPUC agreed to this change in the timing of the submittal.
- Copies of all relevant permits, compliance plans, and this Notice to Proceed shall be available on site for the duration of construction activities.
- No movement or staging of construction vehicles or equipment shall be allowed outside of the approved areas. If additional temporary workspace areas or access routes, or changes to construction technique or mitigation implementation to a lesser level are required, a Variance Request shall be submitted for CPUC review and approval.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lawrence Chast for JWS". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

John Boccio  
CPUC Environmental Project Manager

cc: V. Strong, Aspen