

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION505 VAN NESS AVENUE
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94102-3298

October 15, 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 #18)

Dear Ms. Nelson,

On October 13, 2010, Southern Californian Edison (SCE) submitted a Notice to Proceed Request (NTPR) seeking authorization from the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) to use the Potrero Grande Contractor Yard adjacent to the Mesa Substation for the Tehachapi Renewable Transmission Project (TRTP) located in the City of Monterey Park, Los Angeles County, California.

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 #18 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 use of the Potrero Grande Contractor Yard adjacent to the Mesa Substation located in the City of Monterey Park, Los Angeles County, California. The Potrero Grande Contractor Yard is owned by SCE and consists of approximately 1.3 acres located south of Potrero Grande Drive and west of Greenwood Avenue. Access to the Contractor Yard will occur along Greenwood Avenue on the east side of the yard through an existing gate.

Project Components

The Contractor Yard will serve as one of the daily operating locations for transmission line construction crews associated with Segment 7 and the western portion of Segment 8. Operating hours for the Contractor Yard are planned to be from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday. SCE has established a TRTP toll-free information line (877-795-8787) and website (www.sce.com/tehachapi). The information line is the designated public notification contact for the TRTP.

Site Facilities/Activities

The facilities that will possibly be present or active at the Contractor Yard throughout the duration of the project include: contractor equipment parking and repair areas; office trailers; tool storage trailers; shipping containers; trash containers; fire equipment and spill kit storage; potential helicopter landing areas; temporary sanitary facilities, which may include aboveground water and sanitary waste holding tanks; fueling areas; vehicle parking; steam cleaners with containment; welders; and lighting/security.

Activities that will possibly be present or active at the Contractor Yard throughout the duration of the project include: yard development, and operation and maintenance; contractor equipment and material receipt and storage; vehicle parking; concrete and concrete waste disposal; equipment repair

and steam cleaning; welding and cutting; potential helicopter operations; equipment, and vehicle fueling; and potential helicopter fueling.

Site Work

The site preparation for the Contractor Yard will require the clearing and removal of weeds and brush.

Underground Major Activities – No underground major activities are planned at the Contractor Yard.

Aboveground Major Activities – Fuel storage tanks will be installed at the Contractor Yard, as needed, and spill containment booms will be installed when mobile fuel trucks are parked onsite. Electrical power and communication services will be provided to the onsite office trailer from the nearby distribution source. New fence and fencing repairs will not be necessary at the Contractor Yard.

While helicopter use is not currently anticipated at the Contractor Yard, there is a potential that it may be performed in the future. In the event helicopter activity is needed, SCE will coordinate with CPUC, and provide supplemental information and appropriate survey reports.

- **Biological Resources:** SCE submitted a report titled *Potrero Grande Contractor Yard Biological Review*, prepared by ICF International dated August 2010. The report summarizes results of prior surveys conducted for Segment 7 of the TRTP, as well as a literature review and field surveys specific to the Project Component and a 500-foot buffer (biological survey area [BSA]). Results of the completed 2010 focused surveys conducted for TRTP, which included the Project Component, were also reviewed (ICF 2010m). Prior focused surveys conducted for rare plants (AMEC 2007a, 2009o; ICF 2010m) were positive for California walnut within the 500-foot buffer. Although no coastal sage scrub occurs within the BSA and no previous focused surveys have been conducted due to lack of suitable habitat, coastal California gnatcatchers were observed within the 500-foot buffer during a focused preconstruction survey associated with Mesa Yard (ICF 2010a). Coastal California gnatcatchers have been recorded approximately 300 feet (at the closest) to the southwest, foraging in atypical habitat (due to the lack of sage scrub species) (ICF 2010a). In 2010, one pair of coastal California gnatcatcher were determined to be nesting in a Brazilian pepper tree approximately 550 feet from the Project Component. No suitable nesting habitat for coastal California gnatcatcher occurs on the Project Component due to the absence of shrubby Brazilian pepper and coastal sage scrub. The 500-foot buffer does not contain typical nesting habitat (coastal sage scrub) for coastal California gnatcatcher, but does have some shrubby Brazilian pepper trees that could function as atypical nesting habitat, as was documented in 2010. The field review determined that the BSA supports ruderal grassland, barren/developed areas (a large portion of the Project Component is rocked/graveled), and small portions of nonnative woodland. A burrowing owl habitat assessment and burrow survey were also conducted for the BSA during the field survey. The habitat assessment determined that potential burrowing owl habitat was present within the 500-foot buffer based on the relatively open landscape, California ground squirrel burrows, and presence of habitat features that could be utilized. Also, potential burrowing owl burrows were identified. Completed 2010 focused burrowing owl surveys (Phase III) have confirmed the absence of burrowing owl from the BSA (ICF 2010o). The BSA provides potential nesting habitat for bird species that are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and California Fish and Game Code, including raptors. No other habitat for special-status plants or animals was identified during the field review of the BSA. One jurisdictional feature occurs south of and outside the Project Component within the 500-foot buffer.
- **Cultural Resources.** SCE has submitted the following Cultural Resources Survey Report for Potrero Grande Contractor yard (review status of each report is noted in parenthesis following the report name):

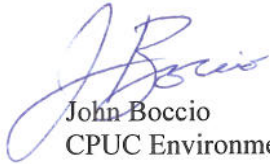
- *A Phase I Cultural Resources Inventory and Paleontological Assessment for the Potrero Grande Contractor Yard, City of Monterey Park, Los Angeles County, California.* (AE Memorandum concurs with the conclusions and recommendations of the report.)

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

- 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.
- All construction/yard areas identified in the NTPR submitted by SCE shall be flagged prior to site occupation/construction. Flagging shall be field verified by the CPUC EM prior to site use.
- The Contractor Yard ground disturbance areas where there is potential for special-status species (burrowing owl) 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 during construction, a report shall be submitted to the CPUC regarding potential impacts to nesting birds, and noise and dust on any adjacent sensitive land uses.
- 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 threatened or endangered species observations from the 2010 protocol level surveys shall be included on these project maps. Confirmation of agency notification of listed species observations in the project areas—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.
- If unanticipated biological, cultural or paleontological resources are detected, the CPUC EM shall be notified immediately.
- The City of jurisdiction's approval or applicable Municipal Code reference shall be provided to CPUC for all future Sunday work or for work outside of the hours 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM, Monday through Saturday, prior to the commencement of work.
- Refueling and fueling locations shall be a minimum of 100-feet away from existing drainages. If construction debris or spills enter into environmentally sensitive areas, the jurisdictional agencies and the CPUC EM shall be notified immediately.

- 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, appearing to read "J. Boccio".

John Boccio
CPUC Environmental Project Manager

cc: V. Strong, Aspen