

## PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

505 VAN NESS AVENUE  
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94102-3298



May 6, 2011

Susan J. Nelson, AIA  
Regulatory Affairs  
Southern California Edison  
2244 Walnut Grove Avenue, Quad 3D, GO1  
Rosemead, CA 91770

RE: Tehachapi Renewable Transmission Project (TRTP), Segments 4-11: Modification to Notice to Proceed (NTP #20)

Dear Ms. Nelson,

On April 19, 2011, Southern Californian Edison (SCE) submitted a request to allow for various modifications to the Segment 10 Telecom route and 12 kV distribution line on Segment 10 Telecom of the Tehachapi Renewable Transmission Project (TRTP) in Kern County, California. SCE submitted additional revised information to the CPUC on April 29<sup>th</sup>. **This Modification to NTP #20 is approved by CPUC based on the following factors:**

- SCE submitted the following information:

SCE requests a Modification to Notice to Proceed (NTP #20) for various modifications to the Segment 10 Telecom route and 12 kV distribution line on Segment 10 Telecom of the TRTP in Kern County, California. Subsequent to the approval of the NTPR (NTP #20 dated November 30, 2010) by the CPUC, project site conditions have been further evaluated and various modifications to the telecom route are needed. A summary of the proposed modifications is provided below.

**Rosamond-Windhub Portion of Segment 10 Telecom:**

- North side of Windhub Substation along Oak Creek Road. The telecom route along Oak Creek Road would be realigned to turn southward into the substation at a point approximately 1,300 feet west from the originally-proposed route. Seven (7) proposed telecom poles and approximately 1,400 proposed linear feet of overhead telecom line along Oak Creek Road would not be installed. The length of the realigned new underground utility duct bank conduit would be approximately 123 linear feet, an increase of approximately 26 linear feet from the length shown in the NTPR. A new anchor pole would be installed adjacent to the easternmost pole as the telecom line dips into the duct bank, and a new manhole would be installed at the terminus of the new duct bank where the telecom route will connect to an existing duct bank within the substation.
- Favorito Avenue west of 65<sup>th</sup> Street West. Approximately 490 linear feet of the telecom line along Favorito Road was incorrectly shown as underground duct bank in the NTPR. This portion of the telecom line would be installed as overhead facilities.
- West side of Rosamond Substation along 60<sup>th</sup> Street. The underground duct bank leading into the substation would be realigned to the east. The total duct bank length would increase from approximately 95 to 160 linear feet. However, the portion of the duct bank in undisturbed area would decrease from approximately 95 to 35 linear feet with the revised alignment. Also, the proposed anchor pole would be moved approximately 35 feet to the south.

### **Rosamond-Whirlwind Portion of Segment 10 Telecom:**

- 150<sup>th</sup> Street West north of Gaskell Road. A new pole anchor would be installed on the south side of an existing wood pole along 150<sup>th</sup> Street West.
- Gaskell Road east of 170<sup>th</sup> Street West. The existing alignment of wood poles along the south side of Gaskell Road was incorrectly shown in the NTPR. The existing wood pole at the intersection of Gaskell Road and 170<sup>th</sup> Street West is located approximately 20 feet further north. From this pole, the existing alignment extends approximately 600 feet to the east, transitions approximately 25 feet southeasterly, and then continues to the east. As a result of this change, the pull sites at the transition area described above would be repositioned and two pole anchors added within these pull sites. In addition, the pull sites at the intersection of Gaskell Road and 170<sup>th</sup> Street West would be repositioned. Also note that a new wood pole would be added approximately 85 feet north of the intersection of Gaskell Road and 170<sup>th</sup> Street West (the pole was inadvertently omitted from the NTPR figure).
- 170<sup>th</sup> Street West south of Whirlwind Substation. Two (2) anchors would be added, one (1) at each end of the new underground duct bank described in the NTPR.
- 170<sup>th</sup> Street West at Whirlwind Substation. The telecom and 12 kV crossing of 170<sup>th</sup> Street West at the Whirlwind Substation (approximately 50 linear feet) would be changed from new underground duct bank described in the NTPR to overhead facilities. As a result of this change, one (1) wood pole and an associated anchor would be installed on the west side of 170<sup>th</sup> Street West. A pulling site would also be added at the transition from overhead to underground facilities.

In addition, to properly align with the location of the engineered vault location inside the Whirlwind Substation, the telecom and 12 kV facilities from 170<sup>th</sup> Street West into the substation would need to be relocated slightly to south of the alignment depicted in the NTPR. Thus, the northernmost wood pole (and associated anchor and pulling site locations) along the east side of 170<sup>th</sup> Street East, and the overhead and underground telecom and 12 kV facilities to the west would be shifted approximately 11 feet to the south.

**Biological Resources:** SCE submitted a biological report by ICF International dated April 5, 2011, titled *Biological Survey Report for the Rosamond-Windhub Variance and Rosamond-Whirlwind Variance for Tehachapi Renewable Transmission Project, Segment 10 Telecom, Kern County, California*. The report documents the biological conditions at the proposed NTP Modification Sites along Segment 10 Telecom (Modification Project Component) and the 500-foot buffer (Biological Study Area [BSA]). The Modification Project Component includes seven sites. The biological resources within the Modification Project Component Sites and BSAs were evaluated during general preconstruction surveys associated with the Segment 10 Telecom (ICF 2010cm, 2010da, 2010fa, 1011ba), burrowing owl preconstruction surveys (ICF 2010ac, 2010cn, 2010db, 2011l, 2011bb), and preconstruction special-status bat habitat assessment (ICF 2010bx, 2011ac). Biological resources in the area also were evaluated during several focused surveys, including plant (ICF 2010ag), tree inventory (ICF 2010bf), desert tortoise (ICF and ECORP 2010b), Swainson's hawk (ICF and Bloom 2010a, 2010b), focused burrowing owl (ICF 2010cq), and the relocation efforts for burrowing owl and desert kit fox (ICF 2010dn, 2010ds). Additional clearance sweeps of the Modification Project Component have been conducted in the months of January and February 2011. A literature review was also performed as part of the Biological Review for Segment 10 Telecom (ICF 2010bm).

- Variance Project Component Site 1 (Windhub Substation)  
The vegetation communities mapped within the Modification Project Component include desert bunchgrass and disturbed/developed. The vegetation communities mapped within the BSA also include desert bunchgrass and disturbed/developed. No special-status species were detected with the BSA for Site 1.

- Variance Project Component Site 2 (Favorito Avenue)

The vegetation communities mapped within the Modification Project Component include: Mojave desert wash, mixed Mojave scrub, and disturbed/developed. The vegetation communities mapped within the BSA include: California annual grassland, Mojave mixed woody scrub, Mojave creosote bush scrub, Mojave desert wash scrub. Alkali mariposa lily (*Calochortus striatus*) (CNPS 1B.2), a special-status species, occurs at several locations within the BSA of Site 2, but outside of the Modification Project Component (ICF 2010ag). All individuals or populations of this species will be marked and avoided to the extent possible, in accordance with Mitigation Measure B-23 of the FEIR (Aspen 2009a, 2010). One special-status wildlife species was detected on Modification Project Component Site 2. A loggerhead shrike was observed at the western end of the Modification Project Component (ICF 2011). Occupied burrowing owl burrows and several burrowing owl features (with no bird) were observed within the BSA during the 2010 preconstruction surveys of the area (ICF 2010cn, 2010db). However, during the most recent preconstruction sweeps performed in January 2011, no burrowing owls were detected on this Modification Project Component site or the associated BSA (ICF 2011j).
- Variance Project Component Site 3 (Rosamond Substation)

The vegetation communities mapped within the Modification Project Component footprint include disturbed/developed. The vegetation communities mapped within the BSA include disturbed/developed and desert saltbrush scrub. Alkali mariposa lily (*Calochortus striatus*) (CNPS 1B.2), a special-status species, occurs at several locations within the BSA of Site 3, but outside of the Modification Project Component (ICF 2010ag). All individuals or populations of this species will be marked and avoided to the extent possible, in accordance with Mitigation Measure B-23 of the FEIR (Aspen 2009a, 2010). No special-status wildlife species were detected on Modification Project Component Site 3; however, an active common raven nest was observed during construction monitoring at the Rosamond Substation, and the associated nest buffer includes a portion of the Modification Project Component. One California horned lark was observed within the BSA in 2009 (ICF 2010bm). One ferruginous hawk was detected within the BSA during 2010 preconstruction surveys (ICF 2010db), and a prairie falcon was observed in the BSA during 2011 preconstruction clearance surveys (ICF 2011j).
- Variance Project Component Site 4 (150<sup>th</sup> Street West north of Gaskell Road)

The vegetation communities mapped within the Modification Project Component include ruderal grassland. The vegetation communities mapped within the BSA include disturbed/developed and ruderal grassland. No special-status species were detected on the Modification Project Component Site 4. Two loggerhead shrikes were observed within the BSA during 2010 desert tortoise surveys (ICF and ECORP 2010b), but were identified outside of the proposed Modification Project Component.
- Variance Project Component Site 5 (Gaskell Road east of 170<sup>th</sup> Street West)

The vegetation communities mapped within the Modification Project Component include disturbed/developed and ruderal grassland. The vegetation communities mapped within the BSA include: disturbed/developed, ruderal grassland, and agriculture. No special-status species were detected on the Modification Project Component Site 5. Species observed outside of the Modification Project Component, but within the BSA, include Cooper's hawk, loggerhead shrike, LeConte's thrasher (ICF 2011ba), a potential colonial bat roost (ICF 2011ac), and a potential solitary bat roost (ICF 2010bx). In addition, an individual Swainson's hawk was observed soaring north over the BSA during recent construction monitoring.
- Variance Project Component Site 6 (170<sup>th</sup> Street West south of the Whirlwind Substation)

The vegetation communities mapped within the Modification Project Component include disturbed/developed. The vegetation communities mapped within the BSA include: disturbed/developed, agriculture, ruderal grassland, and desert saltbrush scrub. No special-status species were detected within the BSA for Site 6.

- Variance Project Component Site 7 (170<sup>th</sup> Street West at the Whirlwind Substation)

The vegetation communities mapped within the Modification Project Component include disturbed/developed and rabbitbrush scrub. The vegetation communities mapped within the BSA include: disturbed/developed, rabbitbrush scrub, Mojave mixed woody scrub, and Mojave creosote bush scrub. No special-status species were detected on the Modification Project Component Site 7. However, numerous sensitive biological resources were detected within the 500-foot buffer. One loggerhead shrike was detected within the BSA during 2010 preconstruction surveys (ICF 2010db). Along the northern edge of the BSA, numerous biological resources had been identified during focused and preconstruction surveys conducted in 2010. These include occupied burrowing owl burrows, potential burrowing owl features and desert kit fox dens, known desert kit fox dens, and desert kit fox sign (ICF 2010ac, 2010am, 2010aq, 2010by, 2010cy, 2011r, 2011s, 2011ba). Recent preconstruction surveys determined the presence of known desert kit fox dens (ICF 2011l, 2011ba). No burrowing owls were detected within the BSA for Site 7 during 2011 preconstruction surveys.

Modification Project Component Sites 1 through 7 were added to Segment 10 Telecom after the completion of the jurisdictional delineation for Segments 4, 5 and 10. The Jurisdictional Delineation Report for the TRTP: Segments 4, 5, and 10 identifies for all three segments: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) regulated Waters of the U.S., California State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) regulated Waters of the State, and California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) regulated streambed and riparian areas (ICF 2010l). The area surveyed for the Segment 4, 5, and 10 delineation report partially covers the BSA for the Modification Project Component (Sites 5 and 6; ICF 2010l). The remaining sites have not been formally delineated at this time. However, a general biological survey as well as clearance sweeps of the Segment 10 Telecom Rosamond and Windhub Substations determined that several drainages exist within the Project Component (ICF 2010ag, 2011j). These areas were mapped as Mojave desert wash scrub and have been staked as environmentally sensitive areas (ESAs); no impacts to these areas are anticipated. In addition, prior to construction, a biological preconstruction survey will be conducted within the entire BSA. Any additional jurisdictional features not identified on the biological resources and vegetation communities maps will be flagged and avoided as ESAs.

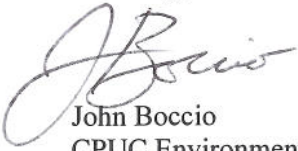
No additional impacts to biological resources are anticipated with the implementation of the subject NTP Modification request.

**Cultural and Paleontological Resources:** SCE submitted a memorandum dated April 14, 2011 from SCE with the NTP Modification Request stating that no cultural resources will be impacted by use of the proposed seven Modifications to the Segment 10 Telecom Route. A cultural resources survey letter report from Pacific Legacy to SCE dated April 15, 2011 regarding the request for the subject Modifications to Segment 10 Telecom was also submitted. Most of the various modifications along the Segment 10 Telecom Route are within previously surveyed portions of the Tehachapi Renewable Transmission Project (TRTP), where a record search and both cultural and paleontological surveys showed that no cultural resources exist (Gust and Scott 2009; Pacific Legacy 2010). Four modifications, three (3) pull-sites and one (1) new pole, are proposed outside of previously surveyed areas. These four areas were surveyed as part of this request (Pacific Legacy 2011) and no cultural resources were found. As such, it is anticipated that no impacts to cultural resources will occur because of construction work proposed as part of the subject Modifications. However, previously conducted paleontological assessments indicate that the area of the proposed Modification area is located within sediment that has the potential for yielding paleontological resources (Gust and Scott 2009). Since there is a possibility that paleontological resources exist, paleontological monitoring is recommended if ground disturbing construction activities exceed a depth of two feet. No additional impacts to cultural or paleontological resources are anticipated with the implementation of the subject NTP Modification request.

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

- Prior to construction, SCE shall submit the revised maps for the site located at Gaskell Road east of 170<sup>th</sup> Street West.
- Since there is a possibility that paleontological resources exist, paleontological monitoring shall be conducted if ground disturbing construction activities exceed a depth of two feet.
- All conditions required by Notice to Proceed (NTP) #20 shall apply to the subject area and activities.
- Copies of all relevant permits, compliance plans, NTP #20, and this Modification to NTP #20 shall be available on site for the duration of construction activities where applicable.

Sincerely,



John Boccio  
CPUC Environmental Project Manager

cc: V. Strong, Aspen