

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

505 VAN NESS AVENUE
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94102-3298



March 29, 2013

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: Final Engineering Concurrence

Dear Ms. Nelson,

On February 20, 2013, Southern Californian Edison (SCE) submitted a request for Final Engineering Concurrence for the installation of seven gates along access roads on Segment 6A Transmission Line (T/L), outside of the Angeles National Forest (ANF), of the Tehachapi Renewable Transmission Project (TRTP), in unincorporated Los Angeles County, California. Additional information was submitted March 8 and 28, 2013. **This Final Engineering Concurrence is approved by CPUC for the proposed activities based on the following factors:**

- SCE submitted the following information:

SCE requests Final Engineering Concurrence for the installation of seven gates along access roads on Segment 6A Transmission Line (T/L) of the TRTP, in unincorporated Los Angeles County, California. Subsequent to approval of the NTPR (NTP #32 dated November 8, 2011) by the CPUC, project site conditions have been further evaluated. Seven gates along access roads on Segment 6A are included in the final engineering design. The gates will be installed to restrict general and recreational vehicle access to the right-of-way and enhance public safety.

The locations for the proposed gates are described below:

- Five replacement gates will be installed on the road between Construct 6 and 7
- A new gate will be installed on the access road to Construct 8, south of Forest Ridge Road
- A new gate will be installed on the access road northwest of Construct 12

At each gate location, an approximate 25-foot by 25-foot temporary disturbance area will be needed to accommodate installation activities. The total temporary disturbance area associated with the seven new gates is approximately 0.098 acre. Because the gate locations occur along CPUC-approved roads, the total new temporary disturbance is approximately 0.051 acre. The permanent disturbance areas are limited to the gate posts and, therefore, the acreage is negligible.

On March 8, SCE provided that the existing gates that are on the property do not meet the minimum width requirements of SCE's road design so wider gates are needed to allow larger vehicles to pass. The proposed gates will conform to SCE road specifications and be permanent.

SCE does not foresee any welding taking place on these gates. If hot work is required, the project will follow the ANF fire plan and project fire plan as applicable.

On March 28, 2013, SCE submitted a copy of the easement which affects all of the proposed gates (except the gate near Construct 12) in support of their FEC request. The easement, filed with the County of Los Angeles December 22, 1949, states the following on Page 112:

Grantee shall have the right to use existing roads and make such additions thereto, on the lands of the Grantor, as shall be convenient and necessary to the Grantee's use of said right of way strip.

Together with all necessary and convenient means of ingress and egress to and from said above described right of way strip, for the uses and purposes and the exercising of the rights herein granted. Said right of entry may be exercised by trucks, automobiles or other vehicles or by foot, as may suit the convenience of said Grantee, its successors or assigns.

Grantee shall have the right to install and to use gates in any fences which are now or may be hereafter constructed on said lands of the Grantor, for the purpose of permitting convenient entry to said right of way strip. Any gates which are installed by Grantee on said lands shall be locked with Grantee's locks, and also, if the Grantor so desires, may be locked with the Grantor's locks, in such a manner that either can lock or unlock the gates. Any gates which are installed and locked by the Grantor and used by the Grantee shall be locked also by the Grantee's locks so that either can lock or unlock the gates.

- **Biological Resources:** SCE submitted a biological report by ICF International dated February 13, 2013, titled *Installation of Severn Gates along Access Roads, Segment 6A, Tehachapi Renewable Transmission Project, Los Angeles County*. The report documents the biological conditions at the proposed installation sites of seven gates along access roads on Segment 6A (Variance Project Component). The Variance Project Component and the 500-foot buffer are referred to as the Biological Study Area (BSA).

Biological resources within the Variance Project Component and 500-foot buffer were evaluated during several focused surveys, including 2009, 2010, and 2011 special-status plant surveys (AMEC 2009w, ICF 2010au, 2011hk); 2010 and 2011 tree inventory surveys (ICF 2010dj, 2011hj); arroyo toad focused surveys (AMEC 2008c, 2009y; ICF and BonTerra 2010k); and burrowing owl focused surveys (AMEC 2009z; ICF 2010dk). Biological resources within the BSA were also evaluated during general preconstruction surveys (ICF and Bon Terra 2011i, 2011k), burrowing owl habitat assessments (ICF and BonTerra 2011h, 2011j), and special-status bat habitat assessment preconstruction surveys (ICF 2011ax, 2011bl; ICF and BonTerra 2011d). A literature review was also performed as part of the Biological Review for Segment 6A (ICF 2011gc). A general biological preconstruction survey was performed on November 4, 2011 (ICF and BonTerra 2011i). Additionally, a preconstruction survey sweep was performed on January 16, 2012, and again for just those inholdings applicable to Site 3 on March 15, 2012. Construction Monitoring has been ongoing regularly since the sites became active, and species events and nest events are recorded in the SCE Field Reporting Environmental Database (FRED).

Site 1 – Five replacement gates installed on the road between Construct 6 and 7: Vegetation communities within the Variance Project Component include disturbed/developed and Mojavean juniper woodland and scrub. Vegetation communities within the 500-foot buffer include disturbed/developed, Mojavean juniper woodland and scrub, and rabbitbrush scrub. Special-status wildlife species, prairie falcon (*Falco mexicanus*), has been seen within the 500-foot buffer. San Diego desert woodrat (*Neotoma lepida intermedia*) signs occur within the BSA. Bat habitat occurs within the 500-foot buffer. Jurisdictional features 6-2-S-1, 6-8-S-5, and 6-8-S-6 occur within the 500-foot buffer.

Site 2 – One new gate installed on the access road to Construct 8, south of Forest Ridge Road: Vegetation communities within the Variance Project Component and the 500-foot buffer include disturbed/developed and Mojavean juniper woodland and scrub. Special-status wildlife species, loggerhead shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*), has been seen within the 500-foot buffer. San Diego desert woodrat sign occurs within the 500-foot buffer. Jurisdictional features 6-8-S-5, 6-8-S-6, 6-9-S-1, and 6-9-S-2 occur within the 500-foot buffer.

Site 3 – One new gate installed on the access road northwest of Construct 12: Vegetation communities within the Variance Project Component include disturbed/developed and desert almond-saltbush scrub. Vegetation communities within the 500-foot buffer include desert almond-saltbush scrub, disturbed/developed, mixed chaparral, Mojave mixed woody scrub, Mojavean juniper woodland and scrub, and Riversidean alluvial fan sage scrub. Regulated tree species, blue elderberry (*Sambucus cerulea*) and Tucker's oak (*Quercus tuckeri*), occur within the 500-foot buffer. Special-status wildlife species, loggerhead shrike, has been seen within the 500-foot buffer. Potential burrowing owl features and San Diego desert woodrat signs occur within the 500-foot buffer. Jurisdictional features 6-8-S-2 and 6-11-S-9 occur within the 500-foot buffer.

Jurisdictional resources within the Variance Project Component were evaluated during the 2009-2010 jurisdictional delineation for Segments 6 and 11 (ICF 2010aj). Jurisdictional features mapped within the BSA will be avoided by the Variance Project Component. Any additional potential jurisdictional features will be staked and flagged as Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs) for avoidance.

The Variance Project Component does not overlap suitable habitat for special-status species as included in the CDFW Incidental Take Permit (ITP) or the USFWS Biological Opinion (BO).

Impacts associated with this Final Engineering Concurrence includes 0.051 acre of temporary impacts. Temporary impacts will be mitigated on-site per the Habitat Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) and APM BIO-1a, as well as SWPPP requirements, weed control (Mitigation Measure [MM] B-3a), dust control (MM AQ-1a), and visual resources (MM V-1 and APM AES-8 and APM AES-13).

No additional impacts to biological resources are anticipated.

- **Cultural and Paleontological Resources:** SCE submitted a memorandum titled SCE TRTP Cultural and Paleontological Resources Guidelines for Segment 6 T/L, Variance Request – Segment 6A Gate Installation near CT 6, 7, 8, and 11/12 dated January 29, 2013. The memorandum states that no previously recorded historical resources, historic properties or significant paleontological resources will be impacted by the proposed installation of seven gates along access roads on Segment 6 of the TRTP. All of the proposed changes fall entirely within the cultural resources records searches and field surveys for TRTP (Pacific Legacy 2007, 2010). The previous cultural resources inventory efforts show that no previously recorded cultural resources lie within the areas proposed in this variance request. Therefore, no additional cultural resources assessments or monitoring are required to support this variance request.

Previous paleontological assessments for TRTP define two different soil types at the proposed locations: Quaternary older alluvium and hornblend diorite (Gust and Scott 2009). Quaternary older alluvium is considered moderate sensitivity for harboring significant paleontological resources based on the Potential Fossil Yield Classification (PFYC) system (PFYC = 3), and hornblend diorite is considered low sensitivity for harboring significant paleontological resources (PFYC = 1). Considering the close proximity to Quaternary older alluvium to each proposed gate location, spot-check monitoring by a qualified paleontologist is required to support this request.

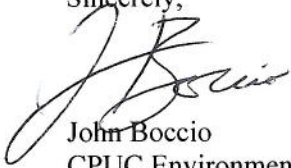
No additional impacts to cultural or paleontological resources are anticipated.

- **Wildfire Prevention and Suppression:** SCE does not foresee any welding taking place during installation of the subject gates. If hot work is required, the project will follow the ANF Fire Plan and TRTP Project Fire Plan as applicable.

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

- SCE shall notify all affected property owners of the schedule for gate installation work in writing, via certified mail, two weeks prior to the work taking place. If any changes to the schedule occur, property owners shall be provided with a seven day notice.
- Paleontological monitoring shall be conducted on a spot-check basis due to the close proximity to Quaternary older alluvium to each proposed gate location.
- If hot work is required, the project shall follow the ANF Fire Plan and TRTP Project Fire Plan as applicable.
- All conditions required by NTP #32 shall apply to the subject area and activities.
- Copies of all relevant permits, compliance plans, NTP #32, and this Final Engineering Concurrence to NTP #32 shall be available on site for the duration of construction activities where applicable.

Sincerely,



John Boccio
CPUC Environmental Project Manager

cc: V. Strong, Aspen