

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

May 26, 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), Variance Request (VR # 2)

Dear Ms. Nelson,

On May 25, 2010, Southern Californian Edison (SCE) submitted a variance requesting a revision to the original proposed helicopter landing location for Segment 7 Telecom work approved under Notice to Proceed (NTP) #5 for purposes of safety and ease of access during construction, within the City of Irwindale, in Los Angeles County, California. **This Variance Request is approved by CPUC for the proposed activities based on the following factors:**

- SCE submitted the following information:

Southern Californian Edison (SCE) submitted a variance on May 25, 2010, requesting revisions to the original proposed landing location for purposes of safety and ease of access during construction. The original proposed landing location was located approximately 150 feet north of existing T/L tower M59-T1B. SCE requests a variance to allow the helicopter landing location to be moved. The proposed new landing location will have a temporary disturbance area equal to the original proposed location. The proposed new landing location will be located just south of existing T/L tower M59-T2 and approximately 950 feet southwest of the original proposed landing location.

- **Biological Resources:** SCE submitted a memorandum from ICF dated April 30, 2010 regarding the new helicopter landing site location for Segment 7 Telecommunications. The memorandum provides a detailed habitat assessment of the new helicopter landing site location and its potential to affect coastal California gnatcatcher (*Polioptila californica californica*) and least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*). Concern for the coastal California gnatcatcher at the helicopter landing site is largely a result of past TRTP vegetation mapping, which shows potential coastal sage scrub habitat for California gnatcatcher present in the general vicinity. Concern for least Bell's vireo at the helicopter landing site is largely a result of past TRTP vegetation mapping, which shows mule fat scrub habitat present in the San Gabriel River channel to the south of the helicopter landing site. The helicopter landing site is located on barren/developed ground, mapped in the FEIR/DEIS as Developed/Disturbed/Barren. I-605 isolates the helicopter landing site from the quarry to the west. ICF comes to the conclusion that there will be no direct impacts to California gnatcatcher or least Bell's vireo as a result of the relocated helicopter landing site due to the following reasons: The only marginally suitable California gnatcatcher habitat in the helicopter landing site vicinity is off site, on steep slopes, across I-605; and focused protocol-level surveys in 2009 have shown that it is unoccupied by California gnatcatcher. The marginal condition of that offsite habitat makes it unlikely to be occupied in the future. California gnatcatcher occurrence in the helicopter landing site area would require a dispersing individual that is utilizing marginal habitat, and there is no currently known population nearby from which such dispersal would occur. The San Gabriel River channel, which occurs approximately 500 feet southeast of the helicopter landing site, is actively cleared of vegetation for flood control purposes and does not support suitable nesting habitat for least Bell's

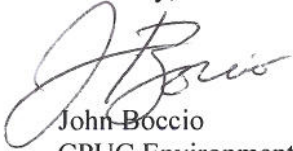
vireo. In the unlikely event that the habitat is used by a dispersing individual, the indirect impacts would be insignificant considering the existing background disturbance levels and the brief period of time that the habitat would be utilized. Also, as specified in NTP #5 for the Segment 7 telecommunications work "SCE received concurrence from CDFG (April 29, 2010) that the Segment 7 Telecom rebuild has no potential to impact state listed least Bell's vireo....."

- **Cultural Resources:** SCE submitted a Cultural Resources Survey Report dated April 30, 2010 by Pacific Legacy, Inc. for the helicopter landing zone. A records search was conducted for this survey which included Pacific Legacy Resources Inventory Report (2007) and Applied Earthworks Cultural Resources Specialists Report (2009). No previously recorded sites are located within one mile of the proposed project activities. On April 28, 2010, Pacific Legacy personnel conducted an intensive pedestrian survey of 100% of the designated survey area, which included the proposed 50x50 foot helicopter landing pad location as well as a 100-foot buffer. The entire area has been disturbed by past grading and fill episodes. There is no significant vegetation in the survey area. Much of the surface of the survey area consists of blacktop and rubble. Accordingly, surface visibility was moderate, approximately 50%. No cultural resources were found during the pedestrian survey.

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

- All conditions required by NTP #5 shall apply to the subject area and activities.
- Copies of all relevant permits, compliance plans, NTP #5, and this Variance shall be available on site for the duration of construction activities where applicable.

Sincerely,



John Boccio
CPUC Environmental Project Manager

cc: V. Strong, Aspen