STATE OF CALIFORNIA ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER, Governor
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
505 VAN NESS AVENUE
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94102-3298

November 17, 2010

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

RE: Tehachapi Renewable Transmission Project (TRTP), Segments 4-11: Variance Request (VR) #13

Dear Ms. Nelson,

On November 9, 2010, Southern Californian Edison (SCE) submitted a variance requesting two additional wire setup sites for purposes of constructability of the Segment 5 transmission line near the Vincent Substation, for the Tehachapi Renewable Transmission Project (TRTP). **This Variance Request is approved by CPUC for the proposed activities based on the following factors:**

- SCE submitted the following information:

  Subsequent to the approval of NTP #15, dated August 16, 2010, by the CPUC, project site conditions have been further evaluated and two additional wire setup site disturbance areas have been proposed for purposes of constructability. The additional wire setup sites (WSS) proposed in this Variance will be used for construction of the Segment 5, 500 kV transmission line and associated removal work.

  The first proposed WSS is located south of existing towers M76-T4 (TSP 1), M0-T2 and M113-T4. The disturbance area at this site is approximately 0.981 acres. This WSS may require vegetation grubbing or clearing, and may require some grading. The second WSS is located between existing towers M76-T4 (TSP 1) and M32-T4. The disturbance area at this site is approximately 1.255 acres. This WSS may require vegetation grubbing or clearing, however, no grading will occur.

- **Biological Resources**: SCE submitted a report titled *Biological Survey Report for the Proposed Wire Setup Sites Variance for Tehachapi Renewable Transmission Project, Segment 5 Transmission Line, Los Angeles County, California* dated November 9, 2010 by ICF International. The biological survey report analyzes the biological resources within additional project elements that were added since the original Biological Review for Segment 5 (ICF 2010yy) was prepared. Four vegetation communities were mapped within the Variance project area and include Mojave mixed woody scrub, disturbed Mojave mixed woody scrub, big sagebrush scrub, ruderal grassland, and disturbed/developed at approximately 3200 feet above mean sea level (ICF 2010ee). Biological resources within the Variance project sites were evaluated during surveys within and adjacent to the sites. A literature review was also performed as part of the biological review. No special-status plants were observed on the project sites during the focused surveys (ICF 2010m) or the preconstruction surveys (Bloom Biological 2010a; ICF 2010mm; ICF 2010pp). No special-status wildlife species were observed on the project sites. Potential burrowing owl burrow features were identified on both project sites and areas to the south. No burrowing owl sign and no burrowing owl individuals were observed during focused and focused preconstruction surveys (ICF 2010ac; ICF 2010o). There will be no impacts to jurisdictional features within the vicinity of the project sites as a result of this Variance. No additional impacts to biological resources are anticipated.

- **Cultural Resources**: SCE submitted a report titled *TRTP Variance – Segment 5–1 WSS, Vincent Substation, Cultural Clearance for Wire Stringing Outside of Vincent Substation.* The report states that no cultural resources will be affected by the proposed wire stringing activities outside of the Vincent Substation as part of this Variance. A record search and both cultural and paleontological surveys of the proposed work areas have been conducted for this portion of the TRTP (Ahmet, et al 2006; Bust and Scott 2009; Pacific Legacy 2007, 2008, 2010). No cultural resources were identified in the subject sites. Work will not occur outside of previously surveyed areas. Because there is a possibility that paleontological resources exist in this area, paleontological monitoring is recommended when grading activities occur. All proposed WSS are situated within the previously surveyed TRTP right-of-way corridor, and no cultural resources were identified. No additional impacts to cultural or paleontological resources are anticipated.

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

- Due to the possibility that paleontological resources exist in this area, paleontological monitoring shall be conducted when grading activities occur.

- All conditions required by NTP #15 shall apply to the subject WSS and activities.

- Copies of all relevant permits, compliance plans, NTP #15, 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