

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

505 VAN NESS AVENUE
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94102-3298



May 23, 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: Variance Request (VR) #63

Dear Ms. Nelson,

On May 19, 2011, Southern Californian Edison (SCE) submitted a variance request for the 200 foot extension of a previously approved access road, and associated grading and contractor work limits, to Structure M61-T1 on the Segment 8 Transmission Line (T/L) Chino Hills (Phase 1) of the Tehachapi Renewable Transmission Project (TRTP), in the City of Chino Hills, San Bernardino County, California. **This Variance Request is approved by CPUC based on the following factors:**

- SCE submitted the following information:

SCE submitted a request for a Variance for the installation of a new access road, and associated grading and contractor work limits, to Structure M61-T1 on the Segment 8 T/L Chino Hills (Phase 1) of the TRTP, in the City of Chino Hills, San Bernardino County, California.

Subsequent to the approval of the NTPR (NTP #11 dated August 12, 2010) by the CPUC, final design was completed and a new access road to Structure M61-T1 was identified for the project. In addition, grading limits and contractor work limits have been proposed to support construction of this access road. The proposed contractor work limit generally extends 20 feet from the outer edge of the proposed grading limit and will be used for movement of construction equipment and installation of BMPs during construction.

- **Biological Resources:** SCE submitted a biological report by ICF International dated May 18, 2011, titled *Biological Survey Report for the Access Road, Grading Limits, and Contractor Work Limit Near M61-T1 Variance for TRTP, Segment 8 Chino Hills (Phase 1), San Bernardino County, California*. The report documents the biological conditions at the proposed Access Road, Grading Limits, and Contractor Work Limit Variance for M61-T1 (Variance Project Component) and a 500-foot buffer (Biological Study Area [BSA]). Biological resources within the Variance Project Component site and BSA were evaluated during general preconstruction surveys associated with the Segment 8 Chino Hills (Phase 1) (ICF 2010as, 2011cd, 2011ce). Biological resources in the area also were evaluated during several focused surveys, including plant (AMEC 2009o, ICF 2010at), tree inventory (ICF 2010av), coastal California gnatcatcher (AMEC 2008d, 2009m; ICF 2010ww), and a preconstruction special-status bat habitat assessment (ICF 2010ak, 2011y). A literature review was also performed as part of the Biological Review for Segment 8 Chino Hills (Phase 1) (ICF 2010ar).

Vegetation communities mapped within the Variance Project Component include ruderal grassland and disturbed/developed. The vegetation communities observed within the BSA include: coastal sage scrub, coast live oak woodland, non-native woodland, ruderal grassland, and disturbed/developed. No special-

status plant species are located within the BSA. Two coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*), a regulated tree, are located within the southwestern portion of the BSA.

No special-status wildlife species were observed within the Variance Project Component. Potential bat roost habitat overlaps the Variance Project Component and also exists within the northern portion of the BSA. One white-tailed kite (*Elanus leucurus*) was observed within the eastern portion of the BSA on February 7, 2011. An active Anna's hummingbird nest (*Calypte anna*) is currently located within the BSA.

United States 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 were identified in the Jurisdictional Delineation Report for the TRTP: Segments 7 and 8 (ICF 2010h). The Variance Project Component and BSA were evaluated during previous delineation surveys (ICF 2010h). A portion of one jurisdictional feature (8-40-S-5) overlaps the Variance Project Component. This feature will be flagged as an Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) and avoided.

No additional impacts to biological resources are anticipated with the implementation of this Variance.

- **Cultural and Paleontological Resources:** SCE submitted a memorandum dated May 17, 2011 from Matthew Wetherbee, MSc, RPA, SCE Archaeologist, regarding the Cultural and Paleontological Resources for Segment 8 (Phase 1) Variance Request for M61-T1 Road, Grading and Contractor Work Limits. The memorandum states that no cultural or paleontological resources will be impacted by the proposed access road and grading, and contractor work limits at Structure M61-T1. These areas were included in the previous survey for the TRTP survey corridor and no cultural resources were identified (Pacific Legacy 2007).

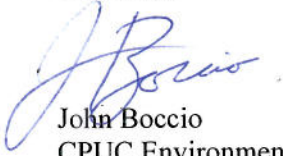
Previous paleontological assessments conducted for the TRTP indicate that the proposed access road and grading, and contractor work limits are located within the Miocene Puente Formation, which has a high sensitivity for yielding paleontological resources (Gust and Scott 2009; Aron 2010). In accordance with the Paleontological Resource Management Plan (Gust and Scott 2009), paleontological resources monitoring is required during any ground disturbing activities for the proposed access road and grading contractor work limits at Structure M61-T1 on Segment 8 (Phase 1).

No additional impacts to cultural or paleontological resources are anticipated with the implementation of this Variance.

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

- Due to the high sensitivity for yielding paleontological resources at the Variance site, and in accordance with the Paleontological Resource Management Plan (PRMP), paleontological resources monitoring is required during any ground disturbing activities for the proposed access road and grading contractor work limits at Structure M61-T1 on Segment 8 (Phase 1).
- The portion of jurisdictional feature 8-40-S-5 that overlaps the Variance Project Component shall be flagged as an ESA and avoided.
- All conditions required by Notice to Proceed (NTP) #11 shall apply to the subject area and activities.
- Copies of all relevant permits, compliance plans, NTP #11, and this Variance shall be available on site for the duration of construction activities where applicable.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "J. Boccio".

John Boccio
CPUC Environmental Project Manager

cc: V. Strong, Aspen