

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

505 VAN NESS AVENUE
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94102-3298



July 28, 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) #74

Dear Ms. Nelson,

On July 22, 2011, Southern Californian Edison (SCE) submitted a variance request for the modification and addition of several guard structure disturbance areas for Segment 11A Transmission Line (T/L) of the Tehachapi Renewable Transmission Project (TRTP), in the Cities of Pasadena, Rosemead, Monterey Park, Los Angeles County, and areas of unincorporated Los Angeles County, California. Additional information was submitted on July 24, 2011. **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 modification and addition of several guard structure disturbance areas for Segment 11A T/L of the TRTP, in the Cities of Pasadena, Rosemead, Monterey Park, Los Angeles County, and areas of unincorporated Los Angeles County, California. Subsequent to approval of the NTPR (NTP #31 dated June 30, 2011) by the CPUC, project site conditions have been further evaluated and PAR Electric (SCE's contractor) is requesting the following modifications and additions:

1. Add project disturbance areas to protect and trim an oak tree that is within the vertical sag clearance of the Segment 11A transmission line. The oak tree is between existing Towers M9-T4 and M9-T5. The additional areas are approximately 50 feet wide (north-south) and 100 feet long (east-west). The location is at the north and south edges of the existing tree canopy and from the west edge of the ROW to the east side of the road that runs down the center of the ROW. The purpose is to have access to the north and south sides of the oak tree for trimming (to clearance for stringing and sagging) and to add guards to the north and south sides of the oak tree to protect the oak tree while stringing and sagging wire. This area is in unincorporated Los Angeles County.
2. The second disturbance area included in this variance is just north of Structure M12-T4. One additional work area is immediately north of the structure work area. This is to make the guard structure area the width of the structure work area (a rectangular area of approximately 40 feet by 80 feet). The other associated guard structure area is to the north of the road next to Structure M12-T4 (a polygon of approximately 120 feet by 80 feet by 150 feet by 50 feet has been added). These guard structure areas are to protect the public. The road access to the guard structure area has also been modified to reflect the field conditions. These areas are in the City of Rosemead, Los Angeles County and unincorporated Los Angeles County.
3. The third disturbance area variance is to modify the existing guard structure area north-east of M17-T1, north of Saturn Street. Additional guard structure area (a triangle of approximately 125 feet by 125 feet by 125 feet) has been added north of Saturn Street to protect the public on the street. In addition, the northeast corner of the guard structure area (a polygon approximately 30 feet by 50 feet by 60 feet by

50 feet) has been removed. This guard structure area is in the City of Monterey Park, Los Angeles County.

- **Biological Resources:** SCE submitted a letter by ICF International dated July 19, 2011, titled *Guard Structures for Tehachapi Renewable Transmission Project, Segment 11A Variance*, which documents the biological conditions at the guard structure sites on Segment 11A (Variance Project Component) and a 500-foot buffer (Biological Study Area [BSA]). Biological resources within the BSA were evaluated during rare plant surveys (AMEC 2007a; ICF 2010au), tree inventory surveys (ICF 2010dj; survey May 17, 2011), preconstruction bat habitat assessments (ICF 2011bl), and a nesting bird preconstruction survey (June 28, 2011).

Vegetation communities mapped within the Variance Project Component include disturbed/developed, coast live oak woodland (disturbed), and California annual grassland. The vegetation communities observed within the 500-foot buffer include disturbed/developed, coast live oak woodland, California annual grassland, and nonnative woodland (ICF 2010au). Although no special-status plant species are present within the BSA, coast live oaks (*Quercus agrifolia*), a Los Angeles county regulated tree, are located within the Area 1 500-foot buffer (AMEC 2007a; ICF 2010au, 2010dj).

Potential colonial and solitary bat roosts were within the 500-foot buffer of all three sites (ICF 2011bl). Nesting birds were identified within the BSA (FRED). Inactive raptor nests include two unknown raptor nests in the Area 1 500-foot buffer (FRED Nest ID 001853) and a red-tailed hawk nest in the Area 3 500-foot buffer (FRED Nest ID 001762).

The BSA was partially surveyed during the original jurisdictional delineation (ICF 2010aj). The Variance Project Component was fully surveyed and the 500-foot buffer was partially surveyed during the subsequent delineation conducted from May 5 to May 10, 2011 (ICF 2011ec). One jurisdictional feature is within the 500-foot buffer of Area 2 (11-135-S-104), but will not be impacted. Four jurisdictional features are within the 500-foot buffer of Area 3 (11-94-S-1, 11-124-R-100, 11-136-R-100, 11-136-S-100), but will not be impacted. No jurisdictional features will be impacted by the Variance Project Component, and the features located within the 500-foot buffer will be flagged as ESAs and avoided. If potential jurisdictional features are identified during a preconstruction survey or sweeps or during construction monitoring, they will be flagged as ESAs and avoided. If avoidance is not possible, and permit amendments will be required for the features that cannot be avoided; these features will be avoided until the permit amendment has been issued.

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

Cultural and Paleontological Resources: SCE submitted *Cultural and Paleontological Resource Guidelines for Segment 11A* information and state that no cultural resources or historic properties will be impacted by the proposed guard structure area modifications for the TRTP Segment 11A. All three areas were included in the previous surveys and records searches for the TRTP (Pacific Legacy 2007; 2010). Two historic-era industrial buildings have been documented adjacent to the newly proposed access road identified in Area 2, but both buildings have been determined ineligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and in the California Register of Historical Resources (Edwards and Smith 2009). Furthermore, these buildings will not be affected by use of the proposed paved access road.

Previous paleontological assessments (Gust and Scott 2009) prepared for the TRTP project area indicate that no paleontological resources have been previously discovered at any of the areas covered by this variance. However, soils in the vicinity of M9-T4 and M9-T5 consist of Quaternary Older Alluvium and/or Gravels, and the medium level of paleontological sensitivity of these soils requires spot-check monitoring by a qualified paleontologist during the course of ground disturbance associated with grading or excavating extending deeper than two (2) feet below surface (Gust and Scott 2009). Furthermore, soils in the vicinity of M17-T1 consist of the highly sensitive Fernando Formation, and ground disturbance associated with

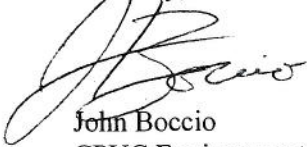
grading or excavating in native soils in this area will require full-time monitoring by a qualified paleontologist. Drilling and augering activities do not require paleontological monitoring, due to the fact that these activities pulverize the rocky sediments, rendering detection of significant paleontological resources impossible.

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:

- Spot-check monitoring by a qualified paleontologist during the course of ground disturbance associated with grading or excavating deeper than two (2) feet below the surface shall occur in the vicinity of M9-T4 and M9-T5, which consist of the medium sensitive Quaternary Older Alluvium and/or Gravels.
- Full-time monitoring by a qualified paleontologist shall occur during ground disturbance associated with grading or excavating in native soils in the vicinity of M17-T1, which consist of the highly sensitive Fernando Formation.
- All conditions required by Notice to Proceed (NTP) #31 shall apply to the subject area and activities.
- Copies of all relevant permits, compliance plans, NTP #31, 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