

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

505 VAN NESS AVENUE
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94102-3298



February 8, 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: Variance Request (VR) #141

Dear Ms. Nelson,

On January 30, 2013, Southern Californian Edison (SCE) submitted a variance request to open taps and hang grounds at Pole No. 1723533 to achieve an outage, and following completion of the wire transfer, the taps will be closed and grounds will be removed, 66 kV relocation, Segments 7 and 8 Transmission Line (T/L) of the Tehachapi Renewable Transmission Project (TRTP) in unincorporated County of Los Angeles. **This Variance Request is approved by CPUC based on the following factors:**

- SCE submitted the following information:

SCE is requesting to open taps and hang grounds at Pole No. 1723533 to achieve an outage, and following completion of wire transfer, close taps and remove grounds on the 66 kV relocation on Segments 7 and 8 T/L of the TRTP in unincorporated County of Los Angeles. The Notice to Proceed Request (NTPR) for Segments 7 and 8 66 kV Relocation (NTP #10, dated August 3, 2010) did not include activity at Pole No. 1723533, located along Durfee Avenue. To complete wire transfer activities on the Mesa-Narrows and Walnut-Hilgen-Industry-Mesa line, an outage is required. To achieve the outage, Pole No. 1723533 will be accessed via bucket truck from Durfee Avenue to open taps and hang grounds. Following completion of the wire transfer, the taps will be closed and grounds will be removed.

- **Biological Resources:** SCE submitted biological information with the variance request stating that the Segment 7/8 66 kV Relocation Pole No. 1723533 (Project Component) is located within previously surveyed portions of the Segment 8 T/L work areas. The following surveys have been conducted in the area: preconstruction and sweep (September 15, 2011, August 19, 2012) and bat preconstruction survey (September 15, 2011).

The Project Component is comprised of an existing wood pole within the developed/disturbed road shoulder along Durfee Avenue. Vegetation communities located within 500 feet of the Project Component include developed/disturbed, agriculture, southern cottonwood willow riparian forest, open water, mulefat scrub, ruderal, and disturbed wetland (ICF 2012). These surrounding vegetation communities will not be impacted by the Project Component.

The Project Component is not located within critical habitat for coastal California gnatcatcher or occupied habitat for California gnatcatcher or least Bell's vireo. Special-status resources observed within 500 feet of the Project Component include least Bell's vireo, yellow-breasted chat, Cooper's hawk, yellow warbler, white-tailed kite, yellow-headed blackbird, and great blue heron. As of January 30, 2013, no active bird nests are located within 500 feet of the Project Component. Jurisdictional resources are not located within the Project Component, but do occur within the 500 foot survey area. No permit amendment is required.

Special-status biological resources are demarcated in the field by Environmentally Sensitive Area staking where applicable. Construction has been on-going in this area since September 2011 (i.e., 66 kV construction along Siphon Road).

Pole No. 1723533 will be accessed via bucket truck from Durfee Avenue to open taps and hang grounds. No additional impacts to biological resources are anticipated with the implementation of this Variance and the conditions noted below.

- **Cultural and Paleontological Resources:** SCE submitted a memorandum dated January 24, 2013 regarding the SCE TRTP Cultural and Paleontological Resources Guidelines for Segment 7/8 66kV Relocation Variance Request – Pole No. 1723533 Open and Close Taps and Hang and Remove Grounds. The memorandum states that no historic resources, historic properties or significant paleontological resources will be impacted by accessing Pole No. 1723533, in support of the TRTP. The area surrounding Pole No. 1723533 is addressed within several previous cultural resources records searches for TRTP (Pacific Legacy 2007, 2010a, 2010b). The previous cultural resources inventory efforts show that no cultural resources intersect this area. Although the area was not subject to a field survey, the activities proposed for the outage are to park on an existing paved street and to access the pole from a bucket truck. No ground disturbance is required. Therefore, there is no potential for impacts to cultural resources as a result of the described work.

Previous paleontological assessments for the TRTP define the underlying soil type at the proposed location as Quaternary Alluvium (Gust and Scott 2009). Quaternary Alluvium is considered as having low sensitivity for yielding significant paleontological resources.

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

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

- All conditions required by Notice to Proceed (NTP) #10 shall apply to the subject area and activities.
- Copies of all relevant permits, compliance plans, NTP #10, 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