

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

505 VAN NESS AVENUE
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94102-3298



October 10, 2014

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) #164

Dear Ms. Nelson:

On September 1, 2014, Southern Californian Edison (SCE) submitted a variance request for a Helicopter Landing Zone near Structure M69-T2 on the Segment 8 Transmission Line (T/L), Phase 3, of the Tehachapi Renewable Transmission Project (TRTP) in the City of Ontario, San Bernardino County, California. SCE provided additional information to the CPUC on September 8 and October 6, 2014. **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 a Helicopter Landing Zone near Structure M69-T2 on Segment 8 T/L Phase 3 in the City of Ontario, San Bernardino County, California. Subsequent to the approval of the NTPR (NTP #13 dated August 24, 2010) by the CPUC, project site conditions have been further evaluated and a Helicopter Landing Zone (LZ) is needed for constructability purposes. The specifics for the LZ is described below:

Helicopter Landing Zone northeast of Structure M69-T2

- The LZ is situated northeast of Structure M69-T2. The proposed LZ, which measures approximately 0.1712 acre, will provide additional area to support wire stringing activities.
- Based upon existing site conditions, use of this area will be limited to drive and crush activities; no vegetation removal or grading is planned.
- **Biological Resources:** SCE submitted biological resource information with the variance request. The proposed Helicopter Landing Zone is within the SCE TRTP protocol and focused survey corridor. Vegetation communities within the Variance Project Component include disturbed/developed. Vegetation communities within the 500-foot buffer include agriculture, disturbed/developed, and open water. Based on an analysis of the proposed construction activities, one resource - inactive burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*) burrow - , is anticipated to be impacted by the helicopter landing zone. Special-status wildlife species observed within the 500-foot buffer include burrowing owl, Cooper's hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*), peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*), prairie falcon (*Falco mexicanus*), and Vaux's swift (*Chaetura vauxi*). Potential bat habitat also exists within the 500-foot buffer. A biological monitor will perform a clearance sweep of the proposed location prior to site occupation to ensure sensitive biological resources are identified and avoided during the proposed activities.

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 August 20, 2014 with the Variance Request titled the *TRTP Cultural and Paleontological Resource Guidelines for Segment 8 T/L Phase 3, Variance Request – Helicopter Landing Zones near Structures M69-T2*. The memorandum states that no cultural or paleontological resources will be impacted by this variance request for the proposed Helicopter Landing Zone near Structure M69-T2 in support of the TRTP Segment 8 Phase 3. The area for this request is located in the City of Ontario, San Bernardino County, California. The proposed area identified in this variance request was included in previous surveys for the TRTP and no cultural resources were identified (Belcourt 2013).

Previous paleontological assessments conducted for the TRTP indicate that the proposed area is located within Quaternary alluvium and has a low sensitivity for yielding paleontological resources (Gust and Scott 2009; Aron and Kelly 2010).

No ground disturbing activities to the area are required and the area is highly disturbed. No additional impacts to cultural or paleontological resources are anticipated with the implementation of this Variance and the conditions noted below.

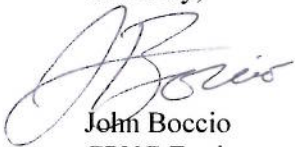
- **Sensitive Land Use:** The properties to the north and northwest of the proposed Helicopter Landing Zone have livestock. SCE states that the helicopter path to access the landing zone will be from the south and then to across the right-of-way. According to SCE, the properties are far enough to the north that this activity should not be disruptive to the livestock at that location. The contractor will also direct their pilots to use the flight path noted.

No additional impacts to sensitive land use receptors is 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) #13 shall apply to the subject area and activities.
- Copies of all relevant permits, compliance plans, NTP #13, and this Variance shall be available on site for the duration of construction activities where applicable.
- The contractor shall direct their pilots to use the flight path from the south to access the Helicopter Landing Zone and then the right-of-way in order to avoid disturbing livestock.

Sincerely,



John Boccio
CPUC Environmental Project Manager

cc: V. Strong, Aspen