

## PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

505 VAN NESS AVENUE  
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94102-3298



February 18, 2015

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) #167

Dear Ms. Nelson,

On February 6, 2015, Southern Californian Edison (SCE) submitted a variance request for a temporary aboveground pipeline to supply water to stand tanks on the Segment 8 500 kV Underground Transmission Line (T/L), 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 a temporary aboveground pipeline to supply water to stand tanks on Segment 8 T/L Phase 1 of the TRTP, in the City of Chino Hills, San Bernardino County, California. Subsequent to the approval of the NTPR (NTP #41 dated August 14, 2014) by the CPUC, project site conditions have been further evaluated and a temporary aboveground pipeline is needed to supply water to stand tanks. The pipeline will begin at a fire hydrant on the south side of Eucalyptus Avenue and extend approximately 193 feet northeast within the storm gutter to the CPUC-approved work area. The temporary pipeline will continue within the CPUC-approved work area to stand tanks positioned along the Vault Cluster 1 access road. The pipeline will cross over a sidewalk and a horse trail to reach the stand tanks; ramps will be installed over the pipeline at these crossings.

- **Biological Resources:** SCE submitted a biological report from ICF International dated January 30, 2015 with the variance request for the Segment 8 T/L Phase 1 temporary pipeline along Eucalyptus Avenue (Variance Project Component) and the associated 500-foot buffer. The Variance Project Component plus the 500-foot buffer is referred to as the Biological Study Area (BSA). Biological resources within the BSA were evaluated during several focused surveys, including 2007, 2009, 2010, 2011, and 2013 special-status plant surveys (AMEC 2007a, 2009o; ICF 2010at, 2011hc; FRED 000027); and 2010, 2011, and 2013 tree inventory surveys (ICF 2010av, 2011hd; FRED 000032). The biological resources within the BSA were also evaluated during Segment 8 Phase 1 general preconstruction surveys, burrowing owl preconstruction surveys, and preconstruction bat habitat assessment surveys (ICF 2010ak, 2010as, 2010cd, 2010ce, 2010ez, 2010fq, 2010fr, 2011cd, 2011gy, 2011gz, 2011ia, 2011y; FRED 000020, 000050, 000053). A literature review was also performed as part of the Biological Review for Segment 8 Phase 1 (ICF 2010ar) and the Chino Hills Underground (ICF 2014e, 2014f). Additionally, clearance sweeps were performed prior to the start of construction. A clearance sweep will also be conducted prior to construction of the Variance Project Component. Construction monitoring has been ongoing regularly since the sites became active and species events and nest events are recorded in the SCE Field Reporting Environmental Database (FRED; SCE 2014a).

The vegetation community within the Variance Project Component includes disturbed/developed. Vegetation communities within the 500-foot buffer include bunchgrass grassland, disturbed/developed, mule fat scrub, ruderal grassland, California annual grassland, and nonnative woodland. Regulated tree species within the 500-foot buffer includes coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*). Special-status wildlife species observed within the 500-foot buffer includes Northern harrier (*Circus cyaneus*), least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*), sharp-shinned hawk (*Accipiter striatus*), Swainson's hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*), white tailed kite (*Elanus caeruleus*), and San Diego desert woodrat (*Neotoma lepida intermedia*). The Variance Project Component does not overlap suitable habitat for special-status species as included in the CDFW Incidental Take Permit (ITP) or the USFWS Biological Opinion (BO).

Jurisdictional resources within the Variance Project Component were evaluated during the 2010 jurisdictional delineation for Segments 7 and 8 (ICF 2010h) and reevaluated during the 2013 Chino Hills Underground Alternative supplemental jurisdictional delineation. Jurisdictional features 8-39-S-1, 8-39-S-2, 8-39-S-3, and 8-39-W-2 are located within the 500-foot buffer. Jurisdictional features mapped within the 500-foot buffer will be avoided. Any additional potential jurisdictional features will be staked as Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESAs) for avoidance.

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 16, 2015 with the Variance Request titled the *SCE TRTP Cultural and Paleontological Resource Guidelines for Segment 8 T/L Phase I Chino Hills Underground – Variance Request – Temporary Pipeline along Eucalyptus Avenue*. The memorandum states that no cultural or paleontological resources will be impacted by the proposed Variance request in support of the TRTP Segment 8 Phase 1 500kV Underground. The proposed area in support of this variance was included in the previous survey for the TRTP and no cultural resources were identified (Pacific Legacy 2013).

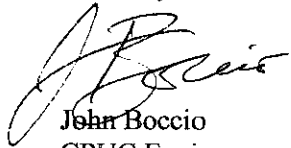
Previous paleontological assessments conducted for the TRTP indicate that the underlying geology for the proposed Variance request area is located within the Miocene Puente Formation, which has a high sensitivity for yielding paleontological resources (Gust and Scott 2009; Aron and Kelly 2010). However, the pipeline will be above ground and no ground disturbances or improvements to the area are required in support of this Variance request.

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:**

- Prior to the start of construction, the area requested in this Variance shall be staked and reviewed and approved by the CPUC Environmental Monitor.
- All conditions required by Notice to Proceed (NTP) #41 shall apply to the subject area and activities.
- Copies of all relevant permits, compliance plans, NTP #41, and this Variance shall be available on site for the duration of construction activities where applicable.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Boccio". The signature is stylized and cursive, written over the printed name.

John Boccio  
CPUC Environmental Project Manager

cc: V. Strong, Aspen