



# **Aspen** Environmental Group

## **PROJECT MEMORANDUM PG&E ATLANTIC-DEL MAR REINFORCEMENT PROJECT**

**To:** Jensen Uchida, CPUC  
**From:** Vida Strong, Aspen Project Manager  
**Date:** April 21, 2006  
**Subject:** Weekly Report #52: April 9, 2006 – April 15, 2006  
**CPUC Environmental Monitor (EM):** Heather Stiles

CPUC Environmental Monitor (EM) Heather Stiles toured the Atlantic-Del Mar Project location on Friday, April 14th. The PG&E Environmental Inspector (EI) Kevin Kilpatrick was on-site and met with the CPUC EM. Due to decreased levels of construction and lessened risks to sensitive resources, mitigation monitoring has been reduced to an as-needed basis. While on-site, the PG&E EI is conducting environmental trainings for all new crewmembers as well as installation of resource flagging and managing the installation and maintenance of sediment controls.

### **OVERHEAD:**

#### **Summary of Activity:**

All overhead construction including pole, foundation, and line stringing work is being done by PG&E. The overhead crews did not work during the subject week. However, the crew will be on the project next week to install a riser tower near Americana Way in Rocklin, and to string conductor wire between Tower 9 at Midas Avenue and the Del Mar Substation.

#### **Environmental Compliance Activities:**

The CPUC EM observed the current overhead construction activities to be in compliance with mitigation measures adopted in the MND and other permit requirements. Erosion controls are routinely inspected and remain in place around sensitive resource areas adjacent to the construction areas.

The PG&E EI conducted a survey for nesting birds between Midas Avenue and the Del Mar Substation. Kevin Kilpatrick identified a pair of red-shouldered hawks occupying a stick nest, approximately 100 feet high in the top of a leafless cottonwood tree near the end of Yankee Hill Road. This nest is located approximately 200-300 feet north of the right-of-way, near the outer edge of the 250-foot construction buffer. This stick nest and a pair of red-shouldered hawks were observed last year at this location; however, the birds did not remain at the nest site beyond April. Despite continued observation, it has not been determined if the nest is active. Additional surveys are scheduled for next week, when the overhead crew is scheduled to be on site. Jeff Finn, with the CDFG, has been contacted by Kevin Kilpatrick regarding work within the 250-foot buffer area for nesting raptors. The proposed procedure to have a biologist monitor the nest and observe the bird (or birds) for signs of disturbance or agitation was explained to Mr. Finn. If the birds appear disturbed, or their behavior poses a risk to chicks or eggs (e.g., leaving the nest), operations would temporarily stop within the 250-foot buffer. After a suitable period (approximately 15 to 60 minutes) construction would resume and monitoring for disturbance would continue. If the birds continue to be disturbed by construction, activity would be suspended within the 250-foot buffer for one or more days as is determined appropriate. Mr. Finn stated that he thought that this was a reasonable approach for monitoring and protecting the birds and their nest. He also stated that consultation with CDFG does not change or lessen PG&E's responsibility for compliance with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act or other federal and state laws prohibiting take of species. No additional stick nests or indications of nesting birds were observed between Midas Avenue and the Del Mar Substation.

In addition, the PG&E EI conducted a survey for nesting birds from the Atlantic Substation to Vault 1 and found a nest of great horned owls, with two juveniles occupying a stick nest in a leafless cottonwood tree approximately 100 feet from Tower 17 (near Antelope Creek and the archery range). The PG&E EI and the CPUC EM toured the area to check on the nest on April 6<sup>th</sup> and again on April 14; however, the owls were not located and it was determined that they are no longer occupying the tree on a full time basis. Numerous other potential stick nests were observed in oak trees along the project right-of-way, but no indication of other nesting raptors was observed. These nests will continue to be monitored. Depending on the pair's status, the timing of the overhead work that needs to be conducted along this section of the project, and the need to work within the 250-foot construction buffer, PG&E will coordinate with the California Department of Fish and Game as necessary.

## **UNDERGROUND:**

### **Summary of Activity:**

The underground work has been contracted to Wilson Construction. Wilson has subcontracted the ground construction work to Zayas Construction. The horizontal bore work was subcontracted to Cherrington. Interstate Safety has been subcontracted by Wilson to complete conduit installation.

During the subject week, Wilson and their subcontractors continued cable work at Vaults 1 through 4, as well as work at Transition Structures # 9 and #10.

Horizontal directional drilling (HDD) operations, which commenced on November 18<sup>th</sup>, were completed in early December. The HDD contractor completed clean up at the entrance and exit sites of the bore pits and demobilized on December 14<sup>th</sup>. The area will be reclaimed and reseeded at the end of the project upon completion of the wire pull and energization of the line.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE SUMMARY**

Wilson Construction has hired a third party company to provide on-call erosion control maintenance and installation of additional BMPs throughout the remainder of the construction process.

Wilson Construction continued to dewater from Vaults 1, 2, 3, and 4. As noted in previous reports, crews have left dewatering devices in place at each of the vaults to help ensure that the correct dewatering procedures are followed. At each site, hoses extend from the dewatering pumps at the vaults to a suitable area of flat, stable ground, devoid of sensitive resources. A sediment bag is attached to the outlet of the hoses.

Superintendent Bert Austin and his crews worked on two containment basins located near the construction yard on Pacific Street. Previously, it was evident that stormwater runoff was carrying sediment from the project into the municipal storm gutters along Pacific. Although there were containment basins to trap the runoff, the basins had (for a variety of reasons) become ineffective. To remedy the problems, the crews had removed the accumulated sediments from the old basins, and rebuilt the containment basins using a combination of straw bales, sandbags, and filter fabric (see Figure 1). The structures were evaluated during the CPUC EM visit. The structures had trapped new sediments and the municipal storm gutter along Pacific Avenue appeared clean, indicating that the barriers were effective. Also, the erosion control measures installed last week near vault 1 and 4 (described in last week's report) appeared to be continuing to function effectively.

Far Western has been conducting cultural monitoring on the project. All of the excavation work has been completed. As such, a cultural monitor no longer needs to be present. PG&E understands that a cultural monitor will be required if any additional ground disturbance occurs in these culturally sensitive areas. The workers have been trained to notify the PG&E EI and follow proper procedure if any potentially cultural material is discovered during work anywhere on the project.

As presented in Table 1, one NCR and two Project Memoranda have been issued for the project to date.

**TABLE 1**  
**ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE STATUS**  
 (Updated 04-21-06)

Project Memo or NCR	Date Issued	Description	Follow-Up Activities
NCR (Level 2)	6-23-05	PG&E contractors removed 22 large trees without notifying the project EI and without conducting avian nest surveys prior to removal, which is a violation of Mitigation Measure B-3 and APM 7-6. Additionally, the trees were removed outside of the allowable window of November 1 through February 15 as established in Mitigation Measure B-3 and overland travel was used instead of existing access roads.	PG&E has conducted post removal surveys at the tree removal sites and surrounding area, and supplied the CPUC with results on July 17, 2005. PG&E also notified CDFG.
Project Memo	1-6-06	PG&E contractors mechanically pumped the water from the casing of the underground conduit into Wetland #1 through a filter bag without adequate testing. Wetland #1 is under the Army Corps of Engineers jurisdiction.	Dewatering from the pipe is being conducted into Baker tanks. Test results and subsequent action are pending. The ACOE has been notified.
Project Memo	1-6-06	Large spoil piles are being stored in close proximity to Seasonal Drainage #30 without adequate erosion control measures, which is a violation of APM 7-2. The erosion control along the drainage was in disrepair, which led to silt from the spoil piles being emptied into the CDFG drainage. Siltation entering the drainage is a violation of Condition #2 of the CDFG Streambed Alteration Agreement.	Crews reinforced the erosion control along Seasonal Drainage #30. The CDFG has been notified. Spoil piles have been removed and are not expected to regenerate.

**NOTICES TO PROCEED (NTP):**

Table 2 presents the NTPs issued by the CPUC for the Atlantic–Del Mar Project to date. No additional NTPs are anticipated.

**TABLE 2**  
**NOTICES TO PROCEED**  
 (Updated 04-21-06)

NTP #	Date Issued	Description
1	11-03-03	Mobilization within the Atlantic and Del Mar Substations, and overhead installation from the Del Mar Substation to the railroad right-of-way (northern 0.25 miles), City of Rocklin.
2	3-08-05	Construction of the remaining overhead portion (approximately 4 miles) and the underground portion (approximately 1.3 miles) of the Atlantic–Del Mar Reinforcement Project, within the Cities of Roseville and Rocklin in Placer County.

**VARIANCE REQUESTS:**

No new variance requests were submitted during the subject week. Table 3 presents the Variance Requests reviewed to date.

**TABLE 3**  
**VARIANCE REQUEST STATUS**  
 (Updated 04-21-06)

Variance Request #	Date Submitted	Description	Status	CPUC Approval Date
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1	4-19-05	Modify the implementation of Applicant Proposed Measure 7.2 at Wetlands #2 and #30 to allow the use of non-rubber tired vehicles and to allow discretionary re-fueling on the project right-of-way.	Approved	5-2-05
2	5-19-05	Allow overland travel from an existing access road to the Pole 3/19 site.	Approved	5-25-05
3	6-28-05	Allow specific tree removals outside of the allowable window of November 1 to February 15 as outlined in Mitigation Measure B-3.	Approved	7-7-05
4	6-28-05	Allow movement of track and rubber tired equipment through approximately 15 feet by 100 feet of Cultural Resource site Y2.	Approved	7-7-05
5	9-2-05	Remove either a berm or oak tree to open up space needed for boring operations south of Sunset Ave. Use of an existing disturbed staging area. String and pull conduit through a delineated wetland area.	Approved	9-8-05

**UPCOMING ITEMS:** None

**AGENCY PERSONNEL CONTACTS:**

Jeff Finn, with the CDFG, has been contacted by Kevin Kilpatrick regarding work within the 250-foot buffer area for nesting raptors. A pair of red-shouldered hawks was observed occupying a stick nest; however, it remains uncertain if the nest is active. A proposed monitoring plan was discussed with and approved by Mr. Finn, as described above. He stated that consultation with CDFG does not change or lessen PG&E's responsibility for compliance with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act or other federal and state laws prohibiting take of species.

## Photographs



**Figure 1** – Erosion controls installed to filter the storm water runoff from the construction yard into the street and storm gutters, April 14, 2006.