

# **SUPPLEMENTAL EVALUATION 6 SEGMENT 3A ACCESS AND SPUR ROAD PLAN MODIFICATIONS**

**ON SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA EDISON'S  
APPLICATION FOR**

**Antelope Transmission Project, Segments 2 & 3**

Application No. A.04-12-008

SCH No. 2006041160

Prepared By:



September 2009

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## A. Introduction and Background

The Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Antelope Transmission Project, Segments 2 & 3 (Project) (Aspen Environmental Group, 2006) was certified and a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN) was granted by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) (Docket #A.04-12-008, SCH #2006041160) on March 15, 2007. For a history, background, and overview of the Project, please see Section A of the First Supplemental Evaluation (March 2009).

Southern California Edison (SCE) has completed final engineering on the approved Project and has begun building portions of the Project. Based on final engineering, additional details of various components of the Project have been further defined. Please see Supplemental Evaluations 1 through 5 for a description and analysis of previous Project modifications. These include the following:

- 1) *Supplemental Evaluation [1] of Project Modifications*, March 2009
- 2) *Supplemental Evaluation 2 for Project Modifications*, April 2009
- 3) *Supplemental Evaluation 3 for Wilderness Transmission Line Modification*, April 2009
- 4) *Supplemental Evaluation 4: Construction of Dead-End Lattice Steel Towers in Segment 3B*, May 2009
- 5) *Supplemental Evaluation 5: Converting Temporary Access Roads 12B and 62 to Permanent Roads in Segment 2*, August 2009

This Sixth Supplemental Evaluation addresses additional modifications to the approved Project per communication submitted by SCE to the CPUC on August 20, 2009. These modifications are described in detail in Section B, below.

Based on the evaluation of SCE's proposed modification to the approved Project described in Section C below, no new or substantially different impacts have been identified, no changes to impact significance conclusions are needed, and no new mitigation is necessary. Therefore, there is no need for any additional CEQA analysis of the project modifications described in Section B, below.

## B. Modifications to the Project

Based on final engineering and construction completed to date by SCE on Segment 2, additional modifications to the Project have been identified, as presented in electronic communication dated August 20, 2009. These modifications include re-aligning new permanent access roads between Construct 48 and 52, near Rosamond Boulevard.

LADWP operates two transmission lines along the western side of the Segment 3A alignment between Construct 48 and Construct 52. The currently approved access road plan (Appendix A) depicts access to Constructs 48 through 52 by utilizing existing Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) roads, overland travel, and the construction of three new spur roads. However due to LADWP's safety concerns with the 1000 kV DC line, SCE is not permitted to use existing LADWP roads for maintenance. As part of road use negotiations, LADWP has requested that SCE re-align new permanent access roads between Constructs 48 and 52, near Rosamond Boulevard. The purpose of this re-alignment would be to avoid using access roads over the existing LADWP right-of-way (ROW). As a result, a new permanent access road is necessary along and generally on the eastern side of the Segment



3A alignment. This new road is proposed within the Segment 3A ROW, approximately 300 feet north of Construct 49 to approximately 500 feet south of Construct 51, for a length of approximately 3,500 feet (Appendix B). The new access road would be unpaved and designed similar to the currently approved roads north of Construct 49 and south of Construct 52, located within and generally parallel to the Segment 3A right-of-way.

The new access road modification near Constructs 50 and 51 will provide access to the recently shifted tower sites and avoid a sensitive biological resource at Construct 51. Construct 50 has shifted 275 feet northeast and Construct 51 has shifted 130 feet northeast of their original positions. These structure shifts are in-line and therefore remain at the center of the Segment 3A ROW and entirely within the original Segment 3A alignment. The locations of Constructs 50 and 51 were adjusted in order to better accommodate the overall design of the crossing of the LADWP line between Constructs 48 and 49. The new access road near Construct 51 will be routed around the tower site to avoid a Western Burrowing Owl burrow that was identified in the biological surveys.

Additionally, as part of this modification, two existing roads are proposed to be utilized south of Construct 51. The use of these two existing roadways minimizes the impact to Grimmway Farms and provides access to Constructs 51 and 52. Lastly, the overall new permanent access road modification to Constructs 48 through 52 will eliminate the use of two overland travel roads, and three separate new permanent spur roads. This modification will have no impact to the visual resources identified in the Final EIR (Aspen Environmental Group, 2006).

## C. Evaluation of Modifications

After review of the Final EIR, it was determined that the proposed modifications would not result in any new or substantially different environmental impacts, as discussed below. Those environmental issue areas where a potential change in the nature or magnitude of an impact could occur as a result of the proposed modifications are discussed in Section C.1 and are indicated in the table below. Those issue areas for which it was determined that no change in impacts would occur as a result of the proposed modifications are discussed in Section C.2.

<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Air Quality	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources	<input type="checkbox"/> Geology/Soils/Paleontology	<input type="checkbox"/> Hazards and Hazardous Materials
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hydrology/Water Quality	<input type="checkbox"/> Land Use	<input type="checkbox"/> Mineral Resources
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Noise	<input type="checkbox"/> Population/Housing	<input type="checkbox"/> Public Services
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation/Traffic	<input type="checkbox"/> Utilities/Service Systems	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Visual Resources

### C.1 Issue Areas Where Modifications Result in a Potential Change in Impacts

**Air Quality.** Air quality impacts as a result of the proposed modifications would be similar to the impacts described in the Final EIR. The new road proposed within the Segment 3A ROW, between Construct 48 and 52 would extend for a length of approximately 3,500 feet; however, the change would be minimal compared to the overall scope of the Project and air quality impacts would not differ from



the approved Project. Additionally, the overall new permanent access road modification would eliminate the use of two overland travel roads, and three separate new permanent spur roads. No new air quality impacts would result, no impact significance conclusions would change, and no new mitigation is necessary.

**Biological Resources.** Biological surveys (Appendix C) of the new road alignments between Constructs 48 and 52 were conducted by Burns & McDonnell and LSA Associates Inc. Construction of the new permanent access road between Constructs 48 and 52 will require disturbance to native habitat, however, no special-status plant species were observed throughout the modification area. All known and potential Western Burrowing Owl (BUOW) burrows identified in the survey will be flagged for avoidance. A monitoring biologist will periodically check these burrows for sign of BUOW, and if discovered, then the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) will be consulted. One burrow with BUOW signs has been identified within the disturbance area for the newly shifted Construct 51. Construction activities will be restricted around this burrow, however, the CDFG will be consulted regarding proposed mitigation for temporary BUOW refuge during construction which may include providing pipe sections or the installation of two artificial BUOW burrows between the new location for Construct 51 and Rosamond Boulevard. No new biological resources impacts would result, no impact significance conclusions would change, and no new mitigation is necessary.

**Cultural Resources.** The area proposed for the access road between structures 48 and 52 on Segment 3A was surveyed by Ecorps consulting, Inc (Ahmet, Mason and Bholat, 2006). The Ecorps study included a cultural resources field survey and background research (records search at the South Central Coastal Information Center) pertaining to the prehistory, ethnography and history of the project area. No cultural resources were identified during the Ecorps investigation. The area was resurveyed for cultural resources by Pacific Legacy Incorporated (Way, Jackson and Holm, 2006). The Pacific Legacy survey identified one isolated prehistoric artifact, a rhyolite core approximately 50 feet west of the proposed access road. The isolated artifact is not eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources.

A paleontological resources study was conducted by Cogstone Resources Management (Scott and Gust, 2008), which indicated that there is no sensitivity for paleontological resources at the proposed access road location. If unanticipated discoveries occur, work must halt in the immediate vicinity until the find can be evaluated by a qualified archaeologist or paleontologist to determine if it meets significance criteria under CEQA or section 106.

No new cultural resources impacts would result, no impact significance conclusions would change, and no new mitigation is necessary.

**Hydrology and Water Quality.** Surface water runoff as a result of the new permanent access road modification would slightly increase (greater impermeable surface area); however, as discussed in Final EIR Section C.7 (Hydrology and Water Quality, Impact H-5), potential impacts from spur roads and access roads would be localized and temporary and the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) required by APM HYD-1 would include an erosion control plan to minimize any potential increase in surface water runoff resulting from new or improved roads. Therefore, hydrology and water quality impacts would be the same as the approved Project.

**Noise.** The new road proposed within the Segment 3A ROW, between Construct 48 and 52 would result in additional construction activities. However, the overall new permanent access road

modification would eliminate the use of two overland travel roads, and three separate new permanent spur roads, thereby reducing associated construction activities. The overall impacts to noise would not differ from the approved Project.

**Transportation and Traffic.** The new road proposed within the Segment 3A ROW, between Construct 48 and 52 would not result in a change in traffic and transportation impacts compared to the approved Project, as these roads would be utilized strictly for operations and maintenance between Const 48 and 52. No new traffic or transportation impacts would result, no impact significance conclusions would change, and no new mitigation is necessary.

**Visual Resources.** While the new road proposed within the Segment 3A ROW, between Construct 48 and 52 would result in a permanent change to the visual environment, this additional roadway segment is within the same area as the new transmission structure which would dominate the view. This minor modification to the roadway network would not result in any new or substantially different impacts on visual resources. Additionally, the overall new permanent access road modification would eliminate the use of two overland travel roads, and three separate new permanent spur roads. No impact significance conclusions would change and no new mitigation is necessary.

## **C.2 Issue Areas Where Modifications Result in No Change**

The new road proposed within the Segment 3A ROW, between Construct 48 and 52 would occur within existing disturbance areas. Therefore, potential environmental impacts to agriculture resources, geology/soils/paleontology, hazards and hazardous materials, land use, mineral resources, population and housing, public services, and utilities and service systems are not expected to change or increase in severity from the approved Project.

## **D. Other CEQA Considerations**

### **D.1 Significant Unavoidable Impacts**

The environmental impacts of the approved Project are described in detail in Section C (Environmental Analysis) of the Final EIR, and for the proposed modifications in Supplemental Evaluations 1 (March 2009), 2 (April 2009), 3 (April 2009), 4 (May 2009), 5 (August 2009) and Section C (Evaluation of Modification) of this supplemental evaluation. All the significant and unavoidable (Class I) impacts identified for the approved Project, as discussed in Section E.1 (Significant and Unavoidable Impacts) of the Final EIR, would be the same as for the approved Project with implementation of the proposed modifications.

### **D.2 Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources**

Construction of the proposed modifications identified by SCE would result in the same irretrievable commitment of natural resources as described in the Final EIR. Please see Section E.2 of the Final EIR for a complete discussion of irreversible and irretrievable commitment of resources for the approved Project.



### **D.3 Growth-Inducing Effects**

Construction and operation of the proposed modifications identified by SCE would not change the growth-inducing effects described for the approved Project in the Final EIR. Please see Section E.3.1 and E.3.2 of the Final EIR for a complete discussion of growth-inducing effects for the approved Project.

### **D.4 Cumulative Impact Analysis**

Construction and operation of the proposed modifications identified by SCE would not change the cumulative impacts described for the approved Project in the Final EIR. Please see Section E.5 (Cumulative Impact Analysis by Issue Area) of the Final EIR for a discussion on the impacts of the Project that could potentially be “cumulatively considerable” or might be able to combine with similar impacts of other identified projects in a substantial way.

### **D.5 Effects Found Not to be Significant**

As discussed in Section E.6 (Effects Found Not to be Significant) of the Final EIR, impacts related to Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Mineral Resources, Public Services, and Utilities and Service Systems for the approved Project would not be significant.

The proposed modifications identified by SCE would not result in any different or new impacts to these issue areas and as such would not change the impact significance as identified in the Final EIR.

## **E. References**

- Ahmet, K., R. D. Mason and S. Bholat. 2006. Cultural Resources Survey Report for Antelope-Pardee 500-kV Transmission Project: Segments 2 & 3. Report on file at the South Central Coastal Information Center, California State University, Fullerton, CA, Southern California Edison and CPUC.
- Aspen Environmental Group. 2006. Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR), Antelope Transmission Project, Segments 2 and 3. Report prepared for the California Public Utilities Commission. December.
- Scott, K. and S. Gust. 2008. Paleontological Resources Management Plan for the Tehachapi Renewable Transmission Project (Antelope Transmission Project) Segment 1, Los Angeles County, California with Updated Paleontological Assessment. Report on file with Southern California Edison and CPUC.
- Way, K. Ross, Thomas Jackson and Lisa Holm. 2006. Report of Supplemental Survey and Cultural Resources Management Plan, Tehachapi Renewable Transmission Project Segment 3A, Kern and Los Angeles Counties, California. Report on file with Southern California Edison and CPUC.

**PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

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September 4, 2009

Donald Johnson  
Project Manager  
Southern California Edison  
2131 Walnut Grove Ave.  
Rosemead, C 911770

RE: SCE Antelope Transmission Project, Segments 2 & 3 – Permanent Access Roads between Construct 48-52

Dear Mr. Johnson,

On August 20, 2009, Southern Californian Edison (SCE) submitted a request to modify the Antelope Transmission Project, Segment 3A, as follows:

These modifications include re-aligning new permanent access roads between Construct 48 and 52, near Rosamond Boulevard.

LADWP operates two transmission lines along the western side of the Segment 3A alignment between Construct 48 and Construct 52. The currently approved access road plan depicts access to Constructs 48 through 52 by utilizing existing Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) roads, overland travel, and the construction of three new spur roads. However due to LADWP's safety concerns with the 1000 kV DC line, SCE is not permitted to use existing LADWP roads for maintenance. As part of road use negotiations, LADWP has requested that SCE re-align new permanent access roads between Constructs 48 and 52, near Rosamond Boulevard. The purpose of this re-alignment would be to avoid using access roads over the existing LADWP right-of-way (ROW). As a result, a new permanent access road is necessary along and generally on the eastern side of the Segment 3A alignment. This new road is proposed within the Segment 3A ROW, approximately 300 feet north of Construct 49 to approximately 500 feet south of Construct 51, for a length of approximately 3,500 feet. The new access road would be designed similar to the currently approved roads north of Construct 49 and south of Construct 52, located within and generally parallel to the Segment 3A right-of-way.

The new access road modification near Constructs 50 and 51 will provide access to the recently shifted tower sites and avoid a sensitive biological resource at Construct 51. Construct 50 has shifted 275 feet northeast and Construct 51 has shifted 130 feet northeast of their original positions. These structure shifts are in-line and therefore remain at the center of the Segment 3A ROW and entirely within the original Segment 3A alignment. The locations of Constructs 50 and 51 were adjusted in order to better accommodate the overall design of the crossing of the LADWP line between Constructs 48 and 49. The new access road near Construct 51 will be routed around the tower site to avoid a western burrowing owl burrow that was identified in the biological surveys.

Additionally, as part of this modification, two existing roads are proposed to be utilized south of Construct 51. The use of these two existing roadways minimizes the impact to Grimmway Farms and provides access to Constructs 51 and 52. Lastly, the overall new permanent access road modification to Constructs 48 through 52 will eliminate the use of two overland travel roads, and three separate new permanent spur roads. This modification will have no impact to the visual resources identified in the Final EIR (Aspen Environmental Group, 2006).

A Final EIR was prepared and published for the SCE Antelope Transmission Project, Segments 2 & 3, and the Final EIR was certified and a CPCN was granted by the CPUC (Docket #A.04-12-008, SCH #2006041160) on March 15, 2007. Since that time, SCE has completed final engineering on the approved

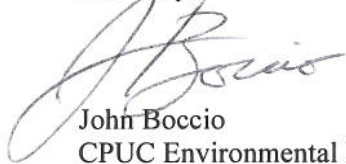


Project and has been building portions of the Project. Based on field conditions during construction, additional details of various components of the Project have been further defined, as presented in a letter to the CPUC from SCE dated August 20, 2009 requesting the realignment of new permanent access roads between Const 48 – 52, and shifting Const 50 and 51 within the approved ROW. A Supplemental Evaluation was prepared to assess the environmental impacts associated with the subject modification. No new impacts or increase in impact severity were identified.

**This request is approved by CPUC for the proposed modifications subject to the conditions noted below which shall be met by SCE and its contractors:**

- All project mitigation measures, compliance plans, and permit conditions shall be implemented during construction activities.
- All new permanent roads shall be compacted, as necessary, to achieve Los Angeles County compaction requirements. No paving materials shall be placed on any of the subject access roads.
- Copies of all relevant permits, compliance plans, and this approval shall be available on site for the duration of construction activities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "J. Boccio", is written over the printed name.

John Boccio  
CPUC Environmental Project Manager

cc: V. Strong, Aspen