

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

505 VAN NESS AVENUE
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94102-3298

NOTICE OF PREPARATION

Environmental Impact Report for the Valley South Subtransmission Project

Application No. A.14-12-013

May 5, 2015

Introduction

The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) intends to prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Valley South Subtransmission Project (VSSP or proposed Project) proposed by Southern California Edison (SCE). The CPUC is the lead agency for the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The CPUC invites written comments on the scope of the environmental analysis and identification of potential issues related to the EIR.

The proposed Project includes construction and operation of a new 115-kilovolt (kV) subtransmission line. The subtransmission line would extend from SCE's existing Valley Substation in the City of Menifee, California, south approximately 15.4 miles, to just west of SCE's existing Triton Substation in the City of Temecula, California (see attached project location map). The purpose of the proposed VSSP is to provide additional capacity to serve long-term forecasted electrical demand, enhance electrical system reliability, provide greater operational flexibility, and provide safe and reliable electrical service.

Notice of Preparation

This Notice of Preparation (NOP) is being sent to the Office of Planning and Research, responsible and trustee agencies, organizations, and interested parties, as well as property owners located within 300 feet of the Project alignment. The purpose of the NOP is to inform recipients that the CPUC is beginning preparation of an EIR for the VSSP and to solicit information that will be helpful in the environmental review process. This notice includes a description of the proposed Project, a summary of potential Project impacts, information on how to provide comments to the CPUC, and information on where you can obtain Project updates and Project-related documents.

Summary Description of the Proposed Project

The proposed VSSP includes construction of a new 115-kV subtransmission line extending approximately 15.4 miles from SCE's Valley Substation in the City of Menifee to just west of SCE's Triton Substation in the City of Temecula. The proposed Project includes minor modifications to the existing Valley Substation, construction of a new approximately 12-mile 115-kV subtransmission line between the Valley Substation and a tubular steel pole (TSP) located at the intersection of Leon Road and Benton Road (Segment 1), and replacement of approximately 3.4 miles of existing 115-kV conductor from the Leon/Benton Road TSP to an existing TSP (Terminal TSP) located just outside Triton Substation (Segment 2). Additionally, existing distribution and telecommunication lines would be relocated from old poles to the new poles, and telecommunications facilities would be installed to connect the new subtransmission line to SCE's telecommunication system.

Project Details

- **115-KV Subtransmission Line: Segment 1** exits the Valley Substation and proceeds approximately 1,600 feet southeasterly on a private SCE access road/farm road between Menifee Road and Briggs Road in a

new underground duct bank. The new line would then rise to an overhead configuration and continue east to the intersection of Briggs Road/McLaughlin Road, where existing pole heads would be modified to create double-circuit poles. The new line would continue south on Briggs Road to Case Road, which would also require existing pole heads to be reconfigured to a double-circuit configuration. The line would continue southeast for approximately one mile to the intersection of Leon Road/Grand Avenue, requiring replacement of existing wood poles, and then south approximately nine miles along Leon Road to Benton Road in a combination of new, franchise, and existing right-of-way (ROW).

- **115-kV Subtransmission Line: Segment 2** begins at the intersection of Benton Road/Leon Road and continues south on Leon Road to the existing Terminal TSP on the south side of Nicolas Road, near the Triton Substation. Segment 2 involves reconductoring approximately 3.4 miles of existing double-circuit 115-kV subtransmission line; existing 653 thousand circular mil (kcmil) aluminum steel-reinforced conductor would be replaced with non-specular 954 kcmil stranded aluminum conductor.
- **Telecommunications** infrastructure would be added to connect the proposed 115-kV subtransmission line to SCE's telecommunications system, and provide Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition, data transmission, and telephone services. Existing SCE and third-party telecommunication cables would be transferred to the new 115-kV subtransmission poles installed as part of Segments 1 and 2. These cables would be attached with wood cross-arms and/or metallic suspension side clamps. Channel equipment would also be installed in the existing Mechanical and Electrical Equipment Rooms at the Valley and Triton Substations.
- **Distribution** infrastructure (12-kV and 33-kV) would be adjusted/lowered in elevation outside Valley Substation to allow for double-circuiting of the existing poles, and would be transferred from existing poles to the new poles along Leon Road. Approximately 230 existing distribution wood poles would be removed and replaced by the new subtransmission poles as part of these activities.

Construction Schedule

SCE anticipates that construction of the proposed VSSP would take approximately 16 months. In order to meet the June 2020 operating date, construction would need to start in March 2018 and would last through July 2019, followed by cleanup activities through November 2019. The operating date may be accelerated if the regulatory processes can be expedited or SCE can compress its construction schedule, as necessary.

Construction would include installation of approximately 243 wood poles, 12 light-weight steel poles, 30 TSPs, and 18 wood guy stub poles. To accommodate the underground portion of the 115-kV subtransmission line at the Valley Substation, approximately 1,600 feet of underground duct bank and one approximately 100-foot TSP riser pole would be installed. To support construction, up to six staging yards and approximately 40 pulling, tensioning, and splicing set-up locations would be utilized.

Project Alternatives

In its application to the CPUC, SCE identified a potential alternative to the proposed Project. This alternative includes a re-route of the proposed 115-kV subtransmission line beginning at the intersection of Leon Road/Scott Road. The alternative would proceed west along Scott Road, south on Menifee Road, east on unimproved Clinton Keith Road to the existing TSP on Benton Road (end point of Segment 1). This alternative alignment would be 3.6 miles longer than the proposed route. The CPUC will consider this alternative in the EIR as well as other potential alternatives, including a No Project Alternative.

Potential Environmental Effects

The EIR will identify and discuss the significant adverse environmental effects of the VSSP, and will identify mitigation measures to avoid or reduce significant adverse effects to the extent feasible. It also will discuss the significant environmental effects of the alternatives and mitigation measures to reduce those effects.

Construction and operation of the VSSP may result in significant adverse effects related to the following environmental resource and issue areas, which will be addressed in the EIR:

- Aesthetics
- Agriculture and Forestry Resources
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Mineral Resources
- Noise
- Population and Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation and Traffic
- Utilities and Service Systems

No determinations have been made as to the significance of these potential effects. Such determinations will be made in the EIR after the issues are thoroughly analyzed. The CPUC invites interested parties, and all affected, responsible, and trustee agencies, to suggest specific areas of analysis to be addressed within these general categories, or other issues not included above, to be considered in the EIR. In addition, the EIR will analyze the potential for growth-inducing impacts, and cumulative effects of the VSSP in combination with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects in the area.

Comments

The CPUC is seeking comments from all CEQA responsible and trustee agencies, all other public agencies with jurisdiction by law with respect to the Project, as well as public input, as to the scope and content of the environmental information to be included in the EIR. Agency responses should identify the issues to be considered in the EIR, including significant environmental issues, alternatives, mitigation measures, and whether the responding agency will be a responsible or trustee agency, and the basis for that determination. Due to the time limits mandated by State law, your response must be sent at the earliest possible date, but must be postmarked within 30 days from the date of receipt of this NOP or no later than **June 8, 2015**. Please send your comments to:

Valley South Subtransmission or Valley-South-Project@aspeneq.com
Project Scoping Comments
c/o Aspen Environmental Group
5020 Chesebro Road, Suite 200
Agoura Hills, CA 91301

Although no public scoping meeting is planned for this Project, there will be future public meetings on the Project when the public draft EIR is published, and possibly through the application review process conducted by the CPUC Administrative Law Judge.

Additional Information

Project Website. Information and documents related to the environmental review process for the VSSP will be posted on the CPUC's website (see address below).

<http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/environment/info/aspen/valleysouth/ValleySouth.htm>

SCE's Proponent's Environmental Assessment (PEA) is currently available for review on the website. The PEA includes a full description of the Project, as well as SCE's evaluation of the potential impacts of the Project.

Project Voicemail. To request Project information, send an e-mail to Valley-South-Project@aspeneq.com or leave a voice message or send a fax to (888) 400-3930.



Proposed Project
SCE Proposed Alternative



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