

Email: SCE Ivanpah Control

From: Daniel Tolbert <dantolbert@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Tuesday, May 5, 2026 3:57 PM
To: Ivanpah-Control Project Team
Subject: Comments to Draft EIR for SCE Ivanpah-Control Project
Attachments: CompressedHelicopter.LLR.mp4

Dear Aspen,

I am one of the owners of Little Lake Ranch, Inc. (LLR), a nonprofit organization, and I am also one of its members, directors, and officers. I'm writing on behalf of myself to share comments on Southern California Edison's proposed Ivanpah-Control Project described in the Draft Environmental Impact Report (March 2026).

LLR owns the Little Lake Ranch property at the southern end of Rose Valley in Inyo County, California. The property is about 1,200 acres and is managed for wildlife habitat and recreation, including hunting, fishing, and wildlife viewing.

The property includes Little Lake, a shallow lake of about 90 acres, along with nearby ponds and wetlands. The lake is about a mile long and averages five feet deep. Its water comes from groundwater-fed springs along the western shore and in the southern wetlands.

U.S. Highway 395 runs through the property and offers scenic views of the area. However, existing Edison transmission poles and lines, located just east of the highway, reduce the quality of these views.

In the early 2000s, LLR completed a major habitat restoration project. This work restored wetlands, marsh areas, and forested creek habitat, and improved surrounding upland areas. As a result, the property now supports a wide range of wildlife and has become an important area for migratory birds.

The property is highly visible from Highway 395, which many people travel. The restoration work has helped increase public appreciation for wetlands and wildlife in the Eastern Sierra. However, the existing transmission lines remain a major visual distraction.

The Draft EIR discusses an alternative called the Fossil Falls Realignment. This option would still meet the project's goals and is considered technically feasible. While it would require access to land from LADWP and BLM, it would reduce impacts to scenic views and cultural resources.

This alternative would move the transmission lines away from Highway 395 and align them with an existing corridor east of Fossil Falls. Doing so would remove the lines from the most visible areas and reduce impacts to sensitive sites.

The EIR identifies the Fossil Falls Realignment as the environmentally superior option for Segment 1.

The visual analysis confirms that the current transmission lines are clearly visible from Highway 395 and disrupt the natural scenery, especially across Little Lake. Moving the lines would improve these views.

The report also notes that Little Lake and its surrounding wetlands provide important habitat. These areas are currently affected by the transmission lines. Relocating the lines would remove these impacts.

Wildlife in the area is abundant. Golden eagles nest on the property, and bald eagles, hawks, ducks, geese, pelicans, and other species are commonly seen. The transmission lines pose risks to birds, including collisions, which can be fatal. Moving the lines farther east would greatly reduce these risks.

The area also contains important cultural resources, including Native American sites and artifacts. Ongoing maintenance of the current transmission lines can disturb these resources. The Fossil Falls Realignment would avoid many of these impacts.

The property is actively used for hunting and recreation. Moving the transmission lines farther east would also reduce potential conflicts with Edison crews accessing the property.

Little Lake is used as a water source for firefighting, with helicopters regularly drawing water from it. The current transmission lines create obstacles for these operations. Relocating the lines would improve safety and access.

There is also a dirt airstrip on the property used by private pilots, hang gliders, and rescue helicopters in distress. The existing transmission lines can interfere with takeoffs and landings. Moving them would eliminate this risk.

The EIR states that the Fossil Falls Realignment is feasible and may cost less than the current proposal, especially when considering easements. It also avoids areas of shallow groundwater and unstable soils near Little Lake.

Overall, this alternative would improve scenic views, reduce impacts to wetlands and wildlife, lower the risk of bird collisions, and better protect cultural resources.

I do not oppose the project. However, I strongly support choosing the Fossil Falls Realignment because it would reduce existing impacts and provide clear environmental and visual benefits.

For these reasons, I encourage the CPUC to direct Edison to remove the existing lines and construct the project using the Fossil Falls Realignment.

Very truly yours,

Daniel R. Tolbert
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