



# **Aspen** *Environmental Group*

## **PROJECT MEMORANDUM SDG&E – MIGUEL-MISSION 230 kV #2 PROJECT**

**To:** Jensen Uchida, CPUC  
**From:** Vida Strong, Aspen Project Manager  
**Date:** December 6, 2004  
**Subject:** Weekly Report #18: November 28, 2004 – December 4, 2004  
**CPUC Environmental Monitor (EM):** Christopher Meyer

There was no rain during the CPUC EM site visit.

### **FANITA JUNCTION TO LOS COCHES SEGMENT**

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

The CPUC EM conducted site visits on November 30 and December 1. Stringing and drilling work occurred in the area covered by Notice to Proceed (NTP) #1 during the site visit.

The stringing of transmission line cable started at Fanita Junction during the subject week. The stringing crew worked with a helicopter to thread the cable through the supports on the relatively open section in preparation for future stringing between existing towers. Unfortunately, the helicopter stringing was completed during the weekly meeting and the CPUC EM was not able to observe the activity. The cable reels were set at Fanita Junction and the puller was set east of Santee Lakes (see Figure 1). Several support trucks are used along the string operation to protect other lines and support the cable during the pull (see Figure 2).

A drilling machine worked above the Los Coches Substation at Tower Site 1140 during the site visit (see Figure 3). The access roads to the sites have been repaired and are passable by all vehicles.

#### **Environmental Compliance:**

Best Management Practices (BMPs) have been installed around the pad locations and crews have repaired the pads and the access roads that were not passable after the early season storms. The access roads on this segment were not impacted by erosion to the same extent as the roads on the Los Coches to Miguel Substation Segment.

No environmental issues were noted with the stringing operation during the site visit. The crews were driving slowly over the roads to minimize fugitive dust.

An Essex Environmental Inspector (EI) was on-site for spot-checking environmental compliance issues on the segment.

### **LOS COCHES TO MIGUEL SUBSTATION SEGMENT**

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

Drilling and reseeded activities occurred in the area covered by Notice to Proceed (NTP) #2 during the subject week.

The CPUC EM conducted site visits on November 30 and December 1. Several crews were working throughout the segment during the site visit and access was not a problem on much of the segment now that the right-of-way has dried; however, the section between Tower Sites 925 and 832 was not passable due to severe erosion after the heavy storms. The contractors and SDG&E are working on the problem.

The Low Drill at Tower Site 942 completed the drill will be moving to Tower Site 1160. The contractor and SDG&E have resolved the question over embedment and will allow the concrete from the foundation pour to fill-in the depression around the top of the hole.

The drilling machine continued work at Tower Site 221 during the week. The crew worked with the larger size auger expanding the diameter of the hole. Progress is slow due to the hard bedrock on the ridge top.

A crew started reseeding and installing the permanent BMPs at Tower Site 10 (see Figure 4). The crew raked the slope and then placed the native seed mix. The seed mix was raked into the slope and the slope covered with the straw mat. The straw mat was keyed into the slope with straw waddles.

### **Environmental Compliance:**

The CPUC EM noted that the contractor has used the time between the storms to address many of the SWPPP issues from the previous weeks. Several water bars have been added to the segment to protect the pads from erosion due to storm water flowing down the existing access roads.

SDG&E is looking at ways to stabilize the cut slopes that are partially rock. These slopes are a mix of topsoil and bedrock and cannot be easily stabilized by matting.

Rain is predicted for later in the week and through the weekend. SDG&E is working to address any outstanding BMP issues prior to the predicted rain. No significant erosion or sediment issues were noted during the site visit.

### **NOTICES TO PROCEED (NTP):**

NTPs #1 and #2 have been issued by CPUC for access road upgrade/construction and 138/69 kV tower installation along the Fanita Junction to Los Coches and Los Coches to Miguel segments. NTP #3 to address the 230 kV construction work on Miramar Air Force Base was issued by CPUC November 16. No construction activities were initiated at Miramar Air Force Base during the subject week.

SDG&E is preparing the request for NTP #4 that will cover the 230 kV stringing on the project. The CPUC EM requested that SDG&E address as many temporary work space and stringing site issues as possible in the NTP request to minimize future Variance Requests. The CPUC EM visited Mission Trail Regional Park with the Essex Lead EI and the SDG&E archaeologist to locate an archaeological site near the proposed stringing location. The old and vague map placed the archaeological site near the stringing location; however, field verification placed the site on a small hill to the south. In any case, the proposed stringing location is within the disturbed road cut and no disturbance to archaeological resources is anticipated during the proposed stringing activities. SDG&E will address this site in the NTP request.

### **VARIANCE REQUESTS:**

No Variance Requests were received during the subject week.

**WEEKLY CONSTRUCTION MEETING:**

The CPUC EM attended the Tuesday morning construction meeting. The meeting covered construction progress, safety, the construction schedule, environmental issues, and Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) issues.

The timing and right-of-way preparation for permanent restoration and reseeded was one of the main topics of the weekly meeting. The drilling and foundation crews typically leave the pads and slopes with excess spoil piles and debris that prevents the small reseeded crew from completing the sites (see Figure 5). In addition, the loose soil on the fill slopes needs to be removed in many cases and the slope re-compacted. Several different contractors are working at each site and have different responsibilities under the conditions of their contracts. SDG&E is trying to coordinate getting the proper contractor to address the clean-up and repair work on the pads without significantly impacting construction progress. The Essex EI informed SDG&E that the optimal window for permanent reseeded (use of native seed mix instead of the temporary stabilizing seed mix) is rapidly closing. SDG&E will determine whether temporary or permanent restoration during the current rainy season will best meet their construction schedule and restoration success criteria.

SDG&E proposed clearing vegetation outside the nesting season in areas of potential nesting habitat on the Mission Substation to Fanita Junction Segment. The proposed work would be limited to clearing of surface vegetation but would leave the ground surface and root structures intact. SDG&E does not anticipate that the grading plans will be ready and the contractor could complete the grading in nesting habitat prior to the nesting season. The CPUC EM reviewed the request and the project documents and agrees that the proposed clearing would minimize impacts to sensitive habitat during the nesting season. SDG&E will address this proposed pre-clearing of vegetation in the NTP request.

**TABLE 1**  
**VARIANCE REQUEST STATUS**  
(Updated 12/06/04)

Variance Request #	Date Submitted	Description	Status	CPUC Approval Date
1	07/07/04	Use of five storage and staging areas on the Los Coches to Fanita Junction Section for the duration of the project.	Completed	07/23/04
2	08/10/04	Clearing of coastal sage scrub habitat before September 1 on the Miguel to Fanita Junction section during the 2003/2004 nesting season.	Completed	08/13/04
3	09/01/04	Grading and clearing in quino checkerspot butterfly habitat after October 15.	Completed	09/14/04
4	09/06/04	Allow work on Saturdays near recreational facilities.	Completed	09/14/04
5	09/27/04	Use of six storage and staging areas on the Los Coches to Fanita Junction Section for the duration of the project.	Completed	10/06/04
6	10/20/04	Work on Sunday, October 31 at Tower Site 925 to comply with a Cal ISO outage schedule.	Completed	10/26/04

**UPCOMING ITEMS:** SDG&E holds weekly meetings on Tuesday mornings to review issues and upcoming events.

**AGENCY PERSONNEL CONTACTS:** None

**TABLE 2**  
**TEWS TRACKING**  
(Updated 12/06/04)

Number	Segment	Date Received	Description	Status	Approval Date <sup>1</sup>
*	Los Coches to Miguel	07/06/04	14000 Block of Willow Road, San Diego County	Approved from 7/08 to 9/08	See Variance Request #1
*	Los Coches to Miguel	07/06/04	Vista de Montemar ½ mile north of La Cresta Road, San Diego County	Approved from 7/08 to 9/08	See Variance Request #1
*	Los Coches to Miguel	07/06/04	Vista de Montemar ½ mile north of La Cresta Road, San Diego County	Approved from 7/08 to 9/08	See Variance Request #1
1	Los Coches to Miguel	07/24/04	Vista de Montemar ½ mile north of La Cresta Road, San Diego County	Approved from 7/26 to 9/26	See Variance Request #2
2	Los Coches to Miguel	08/14/04	1600 Block Sweeney Court, San Diego County	Approved from 08/16 to 10/16	See Variance Request #2
3	Los Coches to Miguel	08/14/04	2300 Willow Glen Drive, San Diego County	Approved from 08/16 to 10/16	See Variance Request #2
4	Los Coches to Miguel	08/14/04	South of terminus of Camino Monte Sombra, San Diego County	Approved from 08/16 to 10/16	See Variance Request #2
5	Los Coches to Miguel	08/14/04	Southeast of 2600 block Pence Drive, San Diego County	Approved from 08/16 to 10/16	See Variance Request #2
6	Los Coches to Miguel	08/26/04	North side of Singing Vista Way, San Diego County	Approved from 08/27 to 10/27	See Variance Request #2

<sup>1</sup>For TEWS requests, Approval Date reflects EM approval date. TEWS approvals valid for 60 days only.

\*TEWS submitted as a contingency while Variance Request #1 was under review.

**Photographs**



**Figure 1** – Cable puller and reel truck set up north of Santee Lakes during stringing operation.



**Figure 2** – Support vehicles protected other utilities and the cable during stringing operation.





**Figure 3** – A drill continued work above the Los Coches Substation at Tower Site 1140.



**Figure 4** – The Union crew reseeded Tower Site 10 east of the Miguel Substation.  
Note the condition of the access road following the heavy rainfall.



**Figure 5** – The Union reseeding crew is waiting for other contractors to remove spoil piles and repair most of the pad locations before proceeding with permanent restoration.