



# **Aspen** *Environmental Group*

## **PROJECT MEMORANDUM PG&E – TRI-VALLEY 2002 CAPACITY INCREASE PROJECT**

**To:** Jensen Uchida, CPUC  
**From:** Vida Strong, Aspen Project Manager  
**Date:** September 15, 2005  
**Subject:** Weekly Report #75: September 4, 2005 – September 10, 2005  
**CPUC Environmental Monitor (EM):** Anne Sweet

Current construction of the PG&E Tri-Valley Project includes the Phase Three portions of the project, including construction of the overhead transmission line, underground alignment, North Dublin Substation, and transition station; all roadway and vault pad grading; and preparation of the 0.33 acre and 0.94 acre mitigation areas. Opus Environmental is providing the Environmental Inspectors for PG&E (PG&E EIs). Opus is providing environmental, as well as biological monitoring and oversight, including conducting environmental training of all new crew personnel. Road improvement and installation is being conducted by Granite Construction. The tower work is being conducted by PG&E. The underground construction is being engineered by Wilson Construction and is being completed by Ranger Construction.

### **Summary of Phase Three Activity:**

Weather was clear and warm throughout the subject week. During the subject week, the PG&E EIs conducted environmental trainings as new crew members joined the project.

The project mitigation measures require that the CPUC EM field validate the flagging of the right-of-way and resource exclusion boundaries prior to the start of construction. Areas which had been flagged and cleared during the week included the substation and the trench line extending past Road 5 to the transition station. The CPUC EM also signed off on the Transition Station area which had been reviewed and approved previously. All project areas have been signed off except for the bank stabilization work adjacent to Moller Road. Temporary Extra Workspace (TEWS) #4 was signed by the CPUC EM on Thursday, September 8, which allows the contractor to move equipment and materials outside of the right-of-way up to an existing fence line which lies within 5 to 10 feet of the right-of-way.

Backfilling of the underground portion continued north of the Cayetano Substation on North Livermore Avenue. Extending up and over the hill off of Manning Road, crews are finishing up the excavation, conduit installation, and backfill of the second trench of the double circuit line. Crews have trenched through the drainages and installed conduit. Crews initially used a disk to break up the soil and then were able to strip the top soil and stockpile it along the side of the right-of-way. Excavation is being conducted using a trenching machine. Two trenches are being installed 15 feet apart as part of the double circuit project. Underground construction has been approved to extend past Access Road 5, proceeding to the Transition Station.

Granite Construction continued disking and grading along Access Roads 6 and 7 during the subject week. Construction of Access Road 7 is necessary for equipment transport for the underground portion, which is being constructed by another contractor. Upon completion, Road 7 will be an improved permanent road.

Granite Construction also continued to work on the Moller Road access. Two earth movers and a grader are being used to shape and construct the access road. The area is being adequately watered by two water trucks. On September 8 an issue occurred where the CPUC EM and PG&E EI were driving along the Moller Road when a scraper (a very large piece of equipment) was moving at elevated speeds and failed to slow

down. The PG&E EI notified PG&E of the issue. Granite was in turn told to reduce equipment speeds. One biological monitor was present during the Moller Road construction. California red-legged frogs (CRLF) have been repeatedly sighted on Moller Road at approximate Station 27+00. Both Mary Hammer of USFWS and Marcia Grefsrud of the CDFG were notified.

Granite crews continued work in the mitigation pond site. A PG&E EI was present during all the work in the area in order to avoid any impact to the Congdon's tarplant. At least two populations of the rare plant were identified adjacent to the mitigation pond site and these areas were fenced off with orange fence for avoidance. One population, which was within the access road alignment, will not be impacted because crews have reconfigured the construction of the road in order to avoid all rare plants.

PG&E crews continued to work on Towers 1, 2, 3, and 4 during the subject week. Tower assembly is occurring in the lay down yard located off Doolan Canyon Road. Materials are being transported to and from the work sites via helicopter or truck. A biological monitor was monitoring the tower crews during the week.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE:**

On September 8<sup>th</sup>, a scraper driver for Granite drove at elevated speeds and failed to slow when the environmental inspectors were encountered. PG&E reminded Granite to reduce speeds.

PG&E is preparing a mitigation plan for the rare Congdon's tarplant found within the project area. Construction of Road 5 will impact a number of Congdon's tarplants and CDFG approval is pending. On September 8, a meeting was held with PG&E Planners and botanist and CDFG representatives Marcia Grefsrud and CDFG botanist Gene Cooley in the field to discuss plant identification and to review the plant populations and Road 5 construction. The Congdon's Tarplant populations near the Mitigation Site were also reviewed. Marcia Grefsrud requested an amendment to the existing Memorandum of Understanding before she will authorize any 'take'.

Several California red legged frog (CRLF) were seen adjacent to Road 5 on Friday, September 9. CRLF had not been previously identified in the area. All of the frogs were seen within ponded areas along Cayetano Creek which runs parallel to Road 5 (ranging from between 45-60 feet from the road). The frogs were identified 400 feet from active construction. The PG&E EIs are monitoring all construction areas within 800 feet of the habitat. Opus Environmental notified Mary Hammer of the USFWS and Marcia Grefsrud of CDFG.

An active burrowing owl colony was identified along the access road to Towers 3-6. Consultations were made to CDFG and a fence was installed to keep project vehicles on the access road. The buffer was reduced slightly to 240-ft to allow construction to proceed. Project biologists have identified seven owls in the burrows and continue to monitor the owls for signs of disturbance.

The CPUC EM observed that all other Phase Three construction activities were in compliance with mitigation measures adopted in the EIR and other permit requirements.

Three Non-Compliance Reports (NCRs) and two Project Memoranda (PMs) have been issued for the Phase Three portion of the project to date (see Table 1).

**TABLE 1**  
**ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE STATUS**  
(Updated 09-15-05)

Project Memo or NCR	Date Issued	Description	Follow-Up Activities
PHASE THREE			
Project Memorandum	7/20/05	Crews have installed exclusion fencing as well as sediment fencing in areas with potential for spoils to slide in to sensitive areas. Numerous gaps were left in the fencing to allow moving cows. However, no exclusion signs have been installed in the gaps after repeated requests. In addition, the CTS exclusion zone was toured and no sensitive resource or exclusion signs to notify crews of the resource have been installed. Notifications were made to the PG&E EI. On July 14, an operator was not aware of the 500 foot CTS exclusion zone and a 400-foot by 20-foot area was scraped within the zone coming within 100 feet of the CTS burrow. The site Foreman when he realized what was occurring immediately stopped the operator. Opus notified Mary Hammer of the USFWS in an e-mail.	
NCR	7/26/05	A drainage off Manning Road was bridged by steel plates and the area extending upslope from the bridge had been graded up to and possibly within the drainage without an approved CDFG Streambed Alteration Agreement.	CDFG notification required
NCR	7/26/05	Construction at Pole location 9, 10, 11, and 12 and use of associated access roads were started prior to the CPUCEM verifying that proper flagging and exclusion fencing had been installed as required by Project mitigation measures. Directly upslope of a CTS/CRLF breeding pond burrow clusters were not fenced off and the site was left unmonitored though construction was occurring within 200-ft of the pond. Crews were using new routes which were not previously surveyed or approved.	PG&E must properly flag and fence the work and access areas, and provide maps and survey results. Burrow clusters must be fenced for exclusion.
NCR	7/29/05	Crews graded the other side of the drainage referred to in an NCR issued 7/26/05. Note that a CDFG Streambed Alteration Agreement has not been issued for the site.	CDFG notification required
Project Memorandum	8/21/05	Crews placed a dumpster outside of the project area and did not move it for three days.	Dumpster was removed 8/19/05

**AGENCY PERSONNEL CONTACTS:**

A second meeting was conducted with PG&E, and Marcia Grefsrud and Gene Colley of CDFG, on September 8 to discuss the rare Congdon's tarplants found within the project area. PG&E supplied the CPUC EM with numerous e-mail correspondence records with CDFG regarding work around the Congdon's tarplant populations, the barn owl nest located adjacent to Moller Road, and CRLF sightings.

**NOTICES TO PROCEED (NTP):**

Table 2 presents the NTPs issued by the CPUC for the Tri-Valley Project to date. No additional NTPs are anticipated.

**TABLE 2**  
**NOTICES TO PROCEED**  
 (Updated 9-15-05)

NTP #	Date Issued	Description
#1	September 12, 2002	Phase One: Construction on of six different sections of the underground portion of the Vineyard Segment, within the City of Pleasanton, City of Livermore, and unincorporated Alameda County.
#2	October 10, 2002	Phase One: Construction of six additional sections of the underground portion of the Vineyard Segment, within the Cities of Pleasanton, Livermore, and unincorporated Alameda County
#3	December 12, 2002	Phase One: Construct the final sections of the Phase One portion Tri-Valley 2002 Capacity Increase Project, within the City of Pleasanton.
#4	May 5, 2003	Phase Two: Construction of the new 5-acre Cayetano Substation located at the intersection of North Livermore Avenue and May School Road.
#5	July 14, 2003	Phase Two: Construction of 2.3 miles of underground transmission line installation extending from the Cayetano Substation to the North Livermore Transition Station to be constructed at the Contra Costa–Newark Transmission Line Corridor
UAD NTP		Phase Two: Allow construction within the exclusion boundary of the May School road cultural resource discovery area.
#6	June 29, 2005	Phase Three: Construction of the overhead transmission line, the transition station, all roadway and vault pad grading, and preparation of 0.33-acre mitigation area.
#7	August 4, 2005	Phase Three: Underground construction and preparation of the 0.94-acre mitigation area.
#8	August 18, 2005	Phase Three: North Dublin Substation.

**VARIANCE REQUESTS:**

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

**TABLE 3**  
**VARIANCE REQUEST STATUS**  
(Updated 9/15/05)

Variance Request #	Date Submitted	Description	Status	CPUC Approval Date
PHASE THREE				
11	7/7/05	Variance to allow travel through home-stead archaeological site C-Livermore-1H.	Completed	7/8/05
12	7/15/05	Variance to allow the use of staging areas as outlined in road plan drawings along the Phase 3 alignment.	Completed	7/26/05
13	7/29/05	Variance to use three staging areas. Two are located along the Moller Ranch Road. The last is located adjacent to the Cayetano Substation.	Incorporated into NTP #7	
14	8/12/05	Variance to use three access roads, and a laydown area.	Completed	8/19/05
15	8/19/05	Variance to use two laydown areas and one access road near road 6.	Completed	8/26/05

## Photographs



**Figure 1** – Meeting with CDFG and PG&E, September 8, 2005.



**Figure 2** – Congdon's Tarplant identification, September 8, 2005.



**Figure 3** – Substation area which has been flagged, September 8, 2005.  
Note the passing cow.



**Figure 4** – TEWS area approved for use, September 8, 2005.