



# **Aspen** *Environmental Group*

## **PROJECT MEMORANDUM SCE – VIEJO SYSTEM PROJECT**

**To:** Jensen Uchida, CPUC  
**From:** Vida Strong, Aspen Project Manager  
**Date:** November 22, 2005  
**Subject:** Weekly Report #67, November 13 – November 19, 2005.  
**CPUC Environmental Monitor (EM):** Christopher Meyer

The CPUC EM conducted a site visit on November 16<sup>th</sup> and reviewed the substation, 220 kV, and 66 kV construction activities, and Best Management Practices (BMPs). CPUC EM Jenny Slaughter accompanied the Lead EM during the site visit.

### **SUBSTATION CONSTRUCTION**

Construction activities within the substation site are close to completion and only minimal work, relating to the stringing work, was occurring within the substation site during the site visit. No work was observed within the Viejo Substation during the site visit.

### **Summary of Activity:**

1. No progress was observed on the water line leading into the substation site during the subject week. Sections of the open trench on the south end of the access road have been covered with steel plates for safety and to provide access. SCE engineers are working to make the second set of revisions required by the Water Department and resubmit the permit application so that the water line work can resume. The CPUC EM informed SCE that the trench and pipe will need to be examined by a biologist prior to work resuming. Animals may have taken up residence in the trench or pipe since work was suspended. With the recent rains, SCE will have to address dewatering and sediment control now that water has entered the trench. The dirt road has dried out since the rain a few weeks ago; however, there is sediment in the trench and pipe. A crew from the telecommunications company was trenching up to the water line during the site visit. The delay may be related to a request by the Water Department to use a higher pressure line to address recent changes in their requirements. This may be addressed by moving the fire hydrant to the curb at Definition Road.
2. The 220 kV section of the substation site has been marked off with caution tape now that it is energized. The several sections of the 66 kV portion of the site, which are energized, have been surrounded with cyclone fencing and caution tape as well. With the completion of the majority of the civil work, the remaining crews at the substation site have experience working in energized stations. SCE previously provided the CPUC EM with an orientation on visiting an energized station.

### **Environmental Compliance:**

1. All operations observed by the CPUC EM were in compliance with mitigation measures adopted in the MND and other permitting requirements.
2. Straw wattles have been placed at the end of the driveway to prevent sediment from entering the public right-of-way and keep it away from storm drains during trenching for the water line. These Best Management Practices (BMPs) have been maintained prior to and after the recent rainfall.
3. The temporary generators outside MEER #1 have been removed from the project.

4. The site vegetation has been removed from the substation site and a LSA Environmental Inspector (EI) has not been on-site full-time. Several fossils have been discovered and collected for examination by the paleontologist during the course of the project. The majority of the excavation has been completed on the substation site and no fossil discoveries were reported during the subject week.

## **220 kV TRANSMISSION LINE SEGMENT**

### **Summary of Activity:**

No work was observed on the 220 kV transmission line segment during the site visit.

### **Environmental Compliance:**

1. The invasive plant species in the recontoured area of the 220 kV right-of-way, adjacent to the native plant communities, have been removed by SCE without disturbing the native species. However, some of this area was disturbed during the site visit by a crew placing communication conduit along the SCE right-of-way. The disturbance to the steep road leading from the main access road for the substation to the lattice towers has been disturbed by the communication trench and will be rocked to address erosion. This crew is not part of the Viejo System Project. The area adjacent to the project is dominated by native species and is part of a habitat conservation area. The parts of the 220 kV right-of-way that have not recently been disturbed are showing natural revegetation by native species.
2. Several sensitive bird species have been noted in the habitat adjacent to the 220 kV right-of-way. The SCE biologist will work with the crews to avoid any impact to the habitat or disturbance of the nesting birds if any work resumes in the area during the breeding season.

## **66 kV TRANSMISSION LINE SEGMENT**

### **Summary of Activity:**

NTP #3, for the 66 kV work within the City of Lake Forest, was issued on February 1, 2005 and NTP #4 was issued on April 19, 2005 for the remaining 66 kV H-structures. Construction is spread between the Viejo Substation, through within Mission Viejo, to the Chiquita Substation (NTP #4). The structures are numbered 1 through 13, with Structure 13 immediately adjacent to the Viejo Substation and Structure 1 adjacent to the Chiquita Substation.

1. Two SCE transmission line crews were set during the site visit to wreck out the old 66 kV conductor on the adjacent towers between the new H-Structure 5 and the Chiquita Substation (see Figure 1). One crew worked adjacent to the Chiquita Substation disconnecting the old conductor and splicing rope to reel out the old conductor (see Figure 2). The other crew, working adjacent to Structure 5, used a reel truck to bring in the old conductor. Crews watched the two roads crossed by the operation to ensure the safety of passing motorists. No other work was noted during the site visit.
2. Crews have completed repairs to the asphalt transitions damaged during construction at several locations. The road at La Barca was repaired in several places (see Figure 3).

### **Environmental Compliance:**

All work observed on the 66 kV right-of-way during the site visit was in compliance with the mitigation measures adopted in the MND and other permitting requirements. Exclusion fencing has been placed between the work areas and sensitive avian habitat along the 66 kV right-of-way.

BMPs have been implemented at the base of the guard structures to prevent the loose material from being transported onto the public right-of-way. The BMPs placed in v-ditches below the new pads have been maintained in preparation for predicted rainfall.

The slope below the pads above the Viejo Substation have been covered with jute netting in preparation for restoration and native vegetation has emerged through the netting. The non-native species should be removed before they produce seed.

**NOTICES TO PROCEED (NTP):**

NTP #1 was approved for substation construction by the CPUC on July 15, 2004, and NTP #2 was approved for the 220 kV upgrade on September 29, 2004. NTP #3 for 66 kV within the City of Lake Forest was issued by CPUC on February 1, 2005. NTP #4 for the remaining 66 kV H-structures (Mission Viejo and City of Lake Forest) was issued by CPUC on April 19, 2005. No additional NTPs are anticipated.

**VARIANCE REQUESTS:**

No variance requests were submitted for review during the subject week.

**UPCOMING ITEMS:** None.

**AGENCY PERSONNEL CONTACTS:** None.

## Photographs



**Figure 1** – A crew set up adjacent to H-Structure 1 with a boom truck to support the crew wrecking out the old conductor on the 66 kV steel pole.



**Figure 2** – The center conductor on the old 66 kV steel poles has been spliced with rope for wrecking out. The bottom conductor has already been removed.



**Figure 3** – The damage to the access road off La Barca done during construction has been repaired.