



# **Aspen** *Environmental Group*

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

**To:** Jensen Uchida, CPUC  
**From:** Vida Strong, Aspen Project Manager  
**Date:** January 25, 2006  
**Subject:** Weekly Report #73, January 15 - January 21, 2006.  
**CPUC Environmental Monitor (EM):** Jenny Slaughter

The CPUC EM conducted a site visit on January 18<sup>th</sup> and reviewed the substation, 220 kV, and 66 kV construction activities, and Best Management Practices (BMPs).

### **SUBSTATION CONSTRUCTION**

No construction activities within the substation site were observed during the site visit.

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

1. Minor clean-up activities in the substation are ongoing, as the substation construction is complete.
2. The pipe for the water line for the planned hydrant near the substation site has been removed and the main driveway into the substation site has been backfilled with slurry. The trench will be re-excavated at a later time once the issues surrounding the water line have been resolved.

#### **Environmental Compliance:**

1. All operations observed by the CPUC EM were in compliance with mitigation measures adopted in the MND and other permitting requirements. The large spoils pile behind the Viejo Substation will need to be removed or stabilized. The CPUC EM previously recommended removal of the spoils in dry conditions to avoid tracking of mud or dripping of muddy water onto the public right-of-way.
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. SCE worked to minimize material tracked onto the public right-of-way and any dirt or mud on public roads was removed.
3. 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.

### **220 kV TRANSMISSION LINE SEGMENT**

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

No work was observed on the 220 kV portion of the transmission corridor during the subject week.

#### **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 has been previously disturbed 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 still needs to 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 continue to show 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. Activities during the week included:

1. SCE crews continued to install fiber optic tabs on several of the structures during the site visit.
2. SCE subcontractor, Arizona Pipeline, has been onsite to remove the old tower footings. Most of these footings are being removed using a backhoe, but some will require dismantling by hand because of the location of the footing (see Figure 1).
3. SCE crews plan to restore the right-of-way by doing some minor grading and installing v-ditches. Work that remains to be done includes removing the dismantled poles and restoring access roads.
4. Other work included installation of fiber optic vaults under the base of transmission towers (see Figure 2). Although this work is taking place within the SCE right-of-way, it is unrelated to the Viejo transmission project.

### **Environmental Compliance:**

1. SCE personnel were reminded by the CPUC EM to leave the orange resource exclusion fencing in place until all project activities were completed in these areas.
2. 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.
3. A street sweeper was working on the project during the subject week to address dirt tracked onto the public roadways.
4. 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 of winter rainfall.
5. 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** – Arizona Pipeline crew dismantling a tower footing by hand.



**Figure 2** – Fiber optic vault structure construction at a lattice tower within the SCE right-of-way.