

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

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February 16, 2021

Alex Gutierrez
Regulatory Affairs
Southern California Edison
8631 Rush St, General Office 4 – 235E (2nd Floor)
Rosemead, CA, 91770

RE: West of Devers Upgrade Project: Minor Project Refinement #44

Dear Mr. Gutierrez,

On February 16, 2021, Southern California Edison (SCE) submitted a request for Minor Project Refinement (MPR) #44 for a new temporary work area for material and equipment staging during wire wreck-out activities. The additional work areas is located in Segment 3 on private lands in the City of Redlands, in San Bernardino County. The additional work area would support transmission line activities approved under the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) Notice to Proceed (NTP) #4, September 5, 2017, for the West of Devers Upgrade Project in the County of Riverside, California.

The CPUC voted on August 18, 2016 to approve SCE's West of Devers Upgrade Project (Decision D.16-08-017) and a Notice of Determination was submitted to the State Clearinghouse (SCH# 2014051041). The CPUC also adopted a Mitigation, Monitoring, Compliance and Reporting Plan (MMCRP) to ensure compliance with all mitigation measures imposed on the West of Devers Upgrade Project during implementation. The MMCRP also acknowledges that temporary changes to the project, such as final project design and engineering or need for addition workspace, are anticipated and common practice for construction efforts of this scale and that an MPR request would be required for these activities. This letter documents the CPUC's thorough evaluation of all activities covered in this MPR, and that no new impacts or increase in impact severity would result from the requested MPR activities.

MPRs are reviewed for consistency with CEQA requirements and are located within the geographic boundary of the project study area. MPRs do not create new or substantially more severe significant impacts, or conflict with any mitigation measure or applicable law or policy. Also, they do not trigger other permit requirements unless the appropriate agency has approved the change, and clearly and strictly comply with the intent of the mitigation measure or applicable law or policy.

MPR #44 for a new temporary work area for material and equipment staging during wire wreck-out activities to support construction activities (approved under NTP #4) is granted by CPUC based on the factors described below.

SCE MPR Request. Excerpts from the SCE MPR request are presented below (indented):

SWA-3-3X51-1-MPR-44

A new temporary 0.11 acre work area, adjacent to the southeast side of Supersite 3X51, is required to safely stage material and equipment required during wire wreck-out activities associated with M37-T2.

The new temporary work area will result in approximately 0.11 acre of temporarily impacted private property located within the SCE transmission line right-of-way, consisting of 0.102 acre grassland/forbland and 0.008 acre Coastal Sage Scrub.

CPUC Evaluation of MPR Request

In accordance with the MMCRP, the subject MPR request was reviewed by CPUC to confirm that no new impacts or increase in impact severity would result from the requested MPR activities and that the subject request was within the geographic boundary of the Project study area. Additionally, the CPUC Environmental Monitor (EM) conducted a site visit of the requested work area on February 16, 2021. The following discussion summarizes this analysis for agriculture, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, hazards and hazardous materials, land use, noise, paleontological resources, traffic and transportation, visual resources, water resources, and wildland fire. A list of bulleted conditions is presented to define additional information and clarifications regarding mitigation requirements. In some cases, these items exceed the requirements of the Mitigation Measures (MMs) and Applicant Proposed Measures (APMs) and are based on specific site conditions and/or are proposed conditions by SCE.

Agriculture: No Important Farmland is located within the proposed MPR work areas.

Air Quality: During proposed construction, SCE shall implement the Fugitive Dust Control Plan approved by the CPUC on May 22, 2017, as well as the Exhaust Emissions Control Plan approved by CPUC on June 8, 2017. In addition, in compliance with MM AQ-1b, off-road equipment with engines larger than 50 horsepower shall have engines that meet or exceed U.S. EPA/CARB Tier 3 Emissions Standards. No additional impacts to air quality will occur with the implementation of this MPR.

Biological Resources: SCE submitted biological resource survey information with the MPR request. SCE conducted a desktop analysis using aerial imagery, publicly available data, and project biological data. The proposed work areas were covered during previous surveys.

Desert Tortoise (DETO): The new work areas are not located within the range of desert tortoise; therefore, no impacts to DETO are anticipated.

Special-Status Terrestrial Herpetofauna: No special-status terrestrial herpetofauna have been observed within the new work area during Project related surveys. With biological monitoring and implementation of Project mitigation measures, no impacts are anticipated.

Burrowing Owl (BUOW): Burrowing owl habitat is widespread in the Project area. Burrowing owls only have a moderate potential to occur within 500 feet of the new work area and no burrowing owls have been previously observed. No owl buffers intersect the new work area. No burrowing owls, burrows, or sign were observed during the preconstruction survey on February 15, 2021. Active owl burrows observed during preconstruction sweeps and during construction will be mitigated in accordance with the Burrowing Owl Management and Passive Relocation Plan. With implementation of mitigation measures, including appropriate avoidance buffers and biological monitoring during construction, no impacts to burrowing owls are anticipated.

Nesting Birds: Suitable substrates for nesting birds protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and California Fish and Game Code, including transmission structures, trees, shrubs, and the ground surface, are located throughout the ROW. A preconstruction survey of the new work area, including a survey for nesting birds, was conducted on February 15, 2021 during the avian breeding season (Jan 1 – Aug 31) in anticipation of the initiation of construction in the new work area. No active nests were identified during the survey. If active nests are identified during construction, avoidance buffers will be established in accordance with the Nesting Bird Management Plan. With implementation of mitigation measures,

including appropriate avoidance buffers and biological monitoring during construction, no impacts to nesting birds are anticipated.

Listed Riparian Birds: Areas of suitable habitat for riparian birds (LBVI/SWFL) are mapped on the north side of San Timoteo Canyon Road approximately 360 feet north of the access road entrance to towers 3N51/3S51; however, no suitable habitat is present within 500 feet of the new work area. No LBVI or SWFL individuals or nests have been observed within the supersite or the new work area during the course of the Project. No LBVI or SWFL were observed during the preconstruction survey on February 21, 2021. If active LBVI or SWFL nests are identified later within 500 feet of construction activities, avoidance buffers will be established and the nest monitored according to the Wildlife Noise Monitoring Plan. With implementation of nesting bird surveys during nesting season and project mitigation measures, no impacts are anticipated.

Coastal California Gnatcatcher (CAGN): Suitable habitat for CAGN is mapped approximately 25-feet north and west of the new work area. Protocol CAGN surveys were conducted in this area by CAGN permitted biologists, John Green and/or Steve Myers, on March 19, March 27, and April 3 in 2018. No CAGN birds or nests were detected in the new work area during protocol surveys. No CAGN birds or nests have been detected in the area during subsequent nesting bird surveys conducted during the course of the Project. Furthermore, no CAGN were observed during the preconstruction survey on February 15, 2021. Due to a history of subsequently negative CAGN survey results in the area, no impacts to CAGN are anticipated and the Project area in San Bernardino County is considered unoccupied by CAGN at this time. Therefore, no impacts are anticipated with implementation of preconstruction surveys, sweeps, and mitigation measures.

Golden Eagle (GOEA): Based on aerial habitat assessments and protocol surveys conducted for the Project, no suitable nesting habitat for golden eagles is located within 2 miles of the proposed work area. Protocol aerial surveys conducted for the Project in 2019 also showed no golden eagle nests within 2 miles of the new work area. Therefore, no impacts are anticipated.

Stephen's Kangaroo Rat (SKR): The new work area is located within an area mapped as suitable habitat for Stephens' kangaroo rat (SKR). A habitat assessment, pedestrian surveys, and trapping surveys were conducted in Segment 3 during the last trapping season in 2018. No SKR were captured. Based on a lack of historic data, habitat conditions, and negative results over several years of surveys, SKR are not expected. However, to offset additional impacts to Critical Habitat subject to mitigation, the offset area of 0.1 acres near 3S56 will not be used for construction. The offset area will be removed from the Project data upon approval of this MPR.

Special-Status Bats: No suitable bat roosting habitat or buffers occur within the proposed work area; therefore, no impacts to special-status bats are anticipated.

Special-Status Small Mammals: Special-status small mammals such as the pallid San Diego pocket mouse, northwestern San Diego pocket mouse, American badger, desert kit fox, and/or black-tailed jackrabbit can occur in many parts of the Project. Ringtail and Palm Springs round-tailed ground squirrel are not expected. The new work area is located outside the known range of the Palm Springs pocket mouse. There is no mapped suitable habitat for the Los Angeles Pocket Mouse (LAPM) within the survey area. No special-status mammals were observed during the preconstruction survey on February 15, 2021. If any special-status small mammal species are found during construction activities, potential impacts will also be addressed according to the Special Status Small Mammals Avoidance and Minimization Plan.

Special-Status Plants: No special-status plants have been previously observed within the new work area and none were observed during the preconstruction survey on February 15, 2021. If special-status plants are later identified during clearance sweeps/monitoring, they will be avoided to the extent feasible.

Unavoidable impacts to special-status plants will be addressed in accordance with the Special-Status Plant Salvage and Relocation Plan.

Regulated Trees: No tree trimming or removal is required for construction activities within the proposed work areas. Therefore, no impacts are anticipated.

Jurisdictional Waters: No jurisdictional waters intersect the new work area. With proper BMP implementation in accordance with the project SWPPP, no impacts to jurisdictional waters are anticipated.

Cultural Resources: The proposed work area is located within the WOD APE and was covered within the record search data that was conducted during previous WOD surveys and studies West of Devers: Cultural Resources Assessment and Class III Inventory (LSA, 2013) and Area of Potential Effects for the Engineering Refinements Survey and Recommendation of Eligibility for Cultural Resources with Southern California Edison Company's West of Devers Project (ASM, 2015). The record search and survey results for the area were negative for cultural resources.

Geology and Soils: SCE conducted geotechnical studies to evaluate faults, landslides and unstable slopes, and soil characteristics as outlined in MMs G-1a, G-2a, and G-5a. The geotechnical survey reports were reviewed and approved by the CPUC on August 17, 2017. No additional impacts to geology and soils will occur with the implementation of this MPR.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials: As required by MM HH-1a, SCE prepared and submitted a Hazardous Materials and Waste Management Plan to the CPUC on September 27, 2017. Hazardous materials used and stored on site for the duration of construction activities will be managed according to the Plan. A Soil Management Plan has been developed consistent with MMs HH-2a and HH-3a to provide guidance for the proper handling, onsite management, and disposal of impacted soil that might be encountered during construction activities, including soil samples to be collected in construction areas where the land has historically or is currently being used for agriculture and would be subject to ground disturbance by the Project. SCE's Soil Management Plan was combined with the Hazardous Materials and Waste Management Plan described above. Also, SCE's contractor submitted information including written procedures for fueling and maintenance of construction equipment and an Emergency Response Plan. No additional impacts from hazards or hazardous materials will occur with the implementation of this MPR.

Land Use: As required by MM LU-1a, a Construction Notification Plan was prepared by SCE and approved by CPUC on May 22, 2017. The Plan identified the procedures to ensure that SCE will inform property and business owners of the location and duration of construction. The Plan includes provisions for public noticing including mailers, newspaper advertisements, public venue notices, and includes the establishment of a public liaison and toll-free information hotline. No additional impacts to land use will occur with the implementation of this MPR.

Noise: BMPs for construction noise management will be implemented as outlined in MM N-1a to reduce construction noise exposure at noise-sensitive receptors and to avoid possible violations of local rules, standards, and ordinances during construction. Construction noise shall be confined to daytime, weekday hours (7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.) or an alternative schedule developed by SCE based on its coordination with the local jurisdiction(s). Construction traffic and helicopter flights shall be routed away from residences and schools, where feasible. No additional impacts to noise will occur with the implementation of this MPR.

Paleontological Resources: The WOD Paleontological Resources Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (PRMMP) requires full-time, qualified paleontological construction monitoring in areas determined to have moderate (PFYC 3) to very high (PFYC 5) sensitivity. Sediments of unknown (PFYC U) sensitivity shall

be monitored by a qualified paleontological monitor on a part-time basis and geologic units with very low (PFYC 1) or low (PFYC 2) sensitivity may be spot checked to confirm paleontological sensitivity.

The new work area is located within an area of PFYC 3 Moderate paleontological sensitivity; however, no excavation is anticipated, therefore no paleontological monitoring will be required.

Traffic and Transportation: Consistent with MM T-1a and MM T-1b, Construction Transportation and Traffic Control Plans have been developed and approved. The Construction Transportation Plan describes timing of commutes, methods of reducing crew-related traffic, and other methods for reducing construction-generated additional traffic on regional and local roadways. No additional impacts to traffic and transportation will occur with the implementation of this MPR.

Visual Resources: The proposed additional work areas described in this MPR are no different than what was described in NTP #4. No additional impacts to visual resources will occur with the implementation of this MPR.

Water Resources: As required by MM WR-2a, SCE developed and submitted an Erosion Control Plan to the CPUC and BLM. The Erosion Control Plan was incorporated into the SWPPP, which is kept onsite and readily available on request. SCE submitted the SWPPP to the CPUC on May 25, 2017. Any changes necessitated by this MPR will be incorporated into the SWPPP document. No additional impacts to water resources will occur with the implementation of this MPR.

Wildland Fire: SCE submitted a Fire Management Plan on February 10, 2017 to satisfy the conditions of MM WF-1a and the Plan was approved by the CPUC on July 18, 2017. A revised Fire Management Plan was submitted by SCE on October 29, 2018, which was approved by the CPUC on October 30, 2018. The revised Plan was also approved by BLM and State and local fire agencies. No additional impacts to wildland fire will occur with the implementation of this MPR.

The conditions noted below shall be met by SCE and its contractors:

- SCE shall notify the CPUC and provide Collector data for the proposed work areas covered in this MPR prior to the start of construction activities. Additionally, habitat give back areas will be removed from Project GIS data upon approval of this MPR.
- All applicable Project MMs, APMs, compliance plans, and permit conditions shall be implemented. Some measures have on-going/time-sensitive requirements and shall be implemented prior to and during construction where applicable.
- Copies of all relevant permits, compliance plans, and this MPR shall be available on site for the duration of construction activities. All permits and plans shall be made available to the CPUC EM upon request.
- All crew members shall be WEAP trained prior to working on the Project. A log shall be maintained on-site with the names of all crew personnel trained. The WEAP training brochure can be provided in Spanish or other languages if appropriate. All participants will receive a hard-hat sticker for ease of compliance verification.
- No movement or staging of construction vehicles or equipment shall be allowed outside of the approved areas. If additional temporary workspace areas or access routes, or changes in technique and mitigation implementation to a lesser level are required, an MPR request shall be submitted for CPUC review.
- A preconstruction biological survey shall be conducted prior to initiating work in each proposed work area if those sites are no longer active.

Alex Gutierrez
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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Forsythe". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

John Forsythe
CPUC Environmental Project Manager

cc: V. Strong, Aspen