



235 Montgomery Street, Suite 935, San Francisco, CA 94104-3002  
Tel. 415-955-4775, Fax 415-955-4776, www.aspeneg.com

**PROJECT MEMORANDUM  
SCE EL CASCO SYSTEM PROJECT**

**To:** Lynne Mosley, CPUC  
**From:** Vida Strong, Aspen Project Manager  
**Date:** September 23, 2010  
**Subject:** Report 36: September 12–25, 2010

**CPUC ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORS (EM):** Lynn Stafford, Allison Roth

CPUC EM Allison Roth was on site September 13 and 22.

The SCE El Casco Project includes the following components:

- Construction of the new El Casco 220/115/12-kilovolt (kV) substation within the Norton Younglove Reserve, Riverside County, California;
- Replacement of approximately 15.4 miles of existing single-circuit 115 kV subtransmission lines with new, higher capacity single-circuit 115 kV subtransmission lines and replacement of support structures within existing SCE ROWs in the Cities of Banning and Beaumont and unincorporated Riverside County;
- Rebuilding 115 kV switchracks within Zanja and Banning Substations in the Cities of Yucaipa and Banning, San Bernardino and Riverside Counties, respectively;
- Installation of telecommunications equipment at the El Casco Substation; and
- Installation of fiber optic cables within public streets and on existing SCE structures between the Cities of Redlands and Banning in San Bernardino and Riverside Counties, respectively.

The following compliance and construction activities occurred during the subject period:

**EL CASCO SUBSTATION**

During the subject period, the contractor for the construction of the substation, Professional Construction, Inc., continued work on the 115 kV switchrack and on the 220 kV transmission towers, including AA banks and the new transformer banks. Additionally, crews continued construction of the 220/115 kV MEER and 12 kV MEER during the subject period. Also, crews installed fiber optics conduit down the cut slope at the southern end of the site (see Figure 1). The transfer of 20,000 gallons of oil into the two 220 kV transformers was scheduled to begin on September 22.

Work began on September 20<sup>th</sup> on tower assembly and erection on the lower pad (see Figure 2); tower assembly and erection had been delayed until after nesting season.

Horizontal directional drilling (HDD) work is scheduled to begin on September 27<sup>th</sup>. The HDD Fraction-out Plan was approved on September 17<sup>th</sup>.

Cattrac, the contractor that conducted the terracing and grading for the substation pad and relocation of the access road, had delayed the removal of the water tower and tank near the entrance to the substation until the end of bird nesting season; they are expected to be removed soon.

**BANNING SUBSTATION**

Work has been completed at the Banning substation.



## **ZANJA SUBSTATION**

Erosion control hydroseeding with a native plant mix was applied on September 17<sup>th</sup>. The hydroseeded area will be watered every 3 days.

## **FIBER OPTIC CABLE (FOC) INSTALLATION**

No Fiber Optic Cable (FOC) work occurred during the subject period. The remaining FOC work is either within 500 feet of the riparian corridor along San Timoteo Canyon Road or is on-hold and scheduled to be done in conjunction with other SCE projects.

## **115-kV SUB-TRANSMISSION LINE REPLACEMENT**

The NTP request for the 115 kV sub-transmission work was submitted to CPUC by SCE on March 3, 2009. On January 5, 2010, NTP #7 was issued to begin construction of Segment 3 while pending submittals and analysis for the other segments are being processed. Segment 3 is a one to one pole replacement within the Sun Lakes Development in Banning between Highland Springs Road and Highland Home Road. Work has been completed on Segment 3.

Notice to Proceed #8 for construction of Segments 5 through 8 was issued by CPUC on July 19<sup>th</sup>. Initial work on Segment 8 is scheduled to begin in October.

NTPs for the remaining portions of the sub-transmission work are currently on hold pending review of the final design of Segments 1, 2 and 4. Maps of the new pole locations have been prepared by SCE and have been distributed to CPUC/Aspen personnel for review. A site visit was held July 8<sup>th</sup> and a follow up meeting was held on August 10<sup>th</sup>.

## **CONSTRUCTION YARDS & OTHER WORKSPACE NEEDS**

Variance Request #1 for a lay down yard immediately south of SCE's existing Maraschino Substation in the City of Beaumont, Riverside County, was requested on April 1 and approved by CPUC on April 16, 2009. Construction of the laydown yard began on May 28 and was completed by June 12, 2009. The yard is currently being used for the storage of materials, including transmission towers.

No requests for additional construction yards or other workspace needs have been submitted to date.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE**

- Biological and other mitigation monitoring continued to be provided by NRC and Chambers Group, respectively. During the subject period, neither cultural resource nor paleontology monitoring was required. NRC and Chambers monitors were continually present during mobilization/construction at the El Casco Substation and periodically at Zanja Substation. Two NRC Biological Monitors were present at El Substation because of the large area and the numbers of tasks involved; including, but not limited to, noise monitoring, nest monitoring, and checking of holes, trenches and V-ditches for animal entrapment.
- Natural Resource Consultants (NRC) biologists verified that there are no more active nests and observed no breeding behavior in the riparian/least Bell's vireo habitat along San Timoteo Creek as reported in a nest report submitted to the CPUC on September 13<sup>th</sup>. As nesting season officially ended on September 15<sup>th</sup>, and the SAWA biologist concurred with the report findings, no field validation was conducted.
- Equipment was continually checked for air pollution control compliance. The Chambers monitor continued to check equipment for leakage. The CPUC EM noticed that several vehicles were parked without spill pans underneath during her visit on September 22<sup>nd</sup> and mentioned it to the SCE site representative.
- Dust control, when necessary, was maintained by water trucks at the El Casco Substation.
- A concrete truck wash-out basin has been established and is in use at the El Casco Substation site.

- Security is on duty at the entrance gate to the El Casco Substation site twenty-four hours, seven days per week. Additionally, cones block entrance to the site, because visitors were not stopping at the guard station to identify themselves. Temporary security cameras have also been installed in the construction area, the trailers and storage yard.
- NRC Biological Monitors continued noise monitoring adjacent to the San Timoteo Creek riparian area at El Casco Substation and access road sites until September 15, the end of nesting season. This noise monitoring was being conducted in accordance with the Noise Analysis/Management Plan for the El Casco Substation and Access Road sites prepared by Chambers Group. This includes sound monitoring stations accompanying the tower construction on the lower pad. The results of the noise monitoring continued to be provided to CPUC on a weekly basis. The latest noise report was submitted on September 15 for the week of September 6th. The loudest noise levels recorded as a result of project activities were in the upper-70s decibel range from construction noise from the scraper spreading spoils. Elsewhere on the project site, noise levels ranged from 38 decibels to 53 decibels.
- Temporary trenches and holes continue to be dug on the pad at the El Casco Substation site. These have the potential to trap animals. NRC Biological Monitors are inspecting the trenches each morning, using flashlights when necessary, for trapped individuals. In addition, it has been noted that permanent V-ditches that have been constructed on the periphery of the substation site may have the potential for entrapment. The issue with the V-ditches is being investigated further by SCE. The majority of the animals that have been trapped are tree frogs and western toads during cold weather, and meadow mice and rattlesnakes at other times. No special status species have been affected. Some of the V-ditches have been covered with plywood at intervals to provide cover for trapped animals.

Table 1 provides a summary of the Non-Compliance Reports (NCRs) and Project Memorandum (PM), and other incidents (i.e., spills, etc.) for the SCE El Casco System Project.

**TABLE 1**  
**NCRs, PROJECT MEMORANDUM, & OTHER INCIDENTS**  
 (Updated 09-28-10)

Type	Date Issued	Description
PM #1	03/16/09	Failure to comply with Mitigation Measure B-18 before, during and after vegetation clearing at the El Casco Substation site. Construction equipment went outside of approved Project boundaries.
	8/21/09	A SCE internal noncompliance at the Banning Substation was issued for mobilization of the site before environmental training and biological pre-construction sweep were conducted.
PM #2	8/27/09	The initiation of construction activity before CPUC authorization and validation of the biological survey at the site of the NTP #3, MOD #1 pole work in Banning.
PM #3	01/14/10	Use of an unapproved area for staging and parking at the Zanja Substation site.
PM #4	03/16/10	Riparian work during nesting bird season along El Casco Substation access road.
PM #5	04/16/10	Installation of a Section of Fiber Optic Cable without CPUC Notification of Route Change or Prior Biological Survey
Incident	06/21/10	SCE O&M grading on restricted access road.
PM #6	8/11/10	Construction activity without a Biological Monitor present within 500 ft. of the riparian corridor, and no noise monitoring.

**NOTICE TO PROCEED (NTP) SUMMARY**

Table 2 summarizes the NTPs submitted, reviewed, and issued to date for the SCE El Casco System Project.

**TABLE 2  
NOTICES TO PROCEED  
(Updated 09-28-10)**

<b>NTP #</b>	<b>Date Requested</b>	<b>Date Issued</b>	<b>Description</b>
#1	02/20/09	02/23/09	Vegetation clearing activities at the future El Casco Substation Site located in the Norton Younglove Reserve Area in Riverside County.
#2	05/15/09	05/22/09	Construction of the underground fiber optic elements of the El Casco System Project in the Cities of Banning and Beaumont.
#3	04/10/09	08/13/09	Banning Substation
#3 Mod #1	08/21/09	08/26/09	Modify work within Banning Substation and add work at 3 existing transmission poles located outside of the substation.
#4	03/05/09	8/27/09	Fiber optic cable installation, remaining (see NTP #2).
#4 Mod #1	09/30/09	10/02/09	Tree trimming.
#5	05/08/09	8/27/09	El Casco Substation construction.
#6	06/19/09	12-02-09	Zanja Substation
# 6 Mod #1	08/13/10	8/23/10	Replace old lattice tower with lightweight steel pole outside of Zanja Substation.
#7	12/17/09	1-05-10	Segment 3 of 115 kV subtrans element.
N/A	06/19/09	N/A	Mill Creek Communication Site – requested work suspended.
#8	02/26/09	07/19/10	Segments 5-8 of the 115 kV subtrans element.
03/03/09		Under Review <sup>1</sup>	115 kV Sub-transmission lines replacement, Segments 1, 2 & 4.

1. CPUC concluded that an SEIR is required..

**VARIANCE & TEWS REQUEST SUMMARY**

Tables 3 and 4 summarize the Variance and Temporary Extra Workspace (TEWS) Requests submitted, reviewed, and issued to date for the SCE El Casco System Project, respectively.

**TABLE 3  
VARIANCE REQUESTS  
(Updated 09-28-10)**

<b>Variance #</b>	<b>Date Requested</b>	<b>Date Issued</b>	<b>Description</b>
#1	04/01/09	04/16/09	Usage of an empty fenced lot immediately south of SCE's existing Maraschino Substation, Beaumont, Riverside County, as a laydown yard to support Project construction.
#2	10/01/09	10/09/09	Placement of two water tanks and above ground pipe to feed water needs at the El Casco Substation site.
#3	09/30/09	10/15/09	FOC Temporary Circuitry: Banning and Calimesa Shoo Flies.
#4	09/30/09	10/15/09	Alternate Access to the Banning Substation from John Street.
#5	09/22/09	10/23/09	SCE has asserted within the variance request that several Geo & Hydro Mitigation Measures should not be required for the 115 kV Subtransmission Line Element.
#6	10/23/09	10/27/09	Installation of a Portable Fuel Tank at the El Casco Substation site.

<b>Variance #</b>	<b>Date Requested</b>	<b>Date Issued</b>	<b>Description</b>
#7	10/27/09	10/29/09	Project Description change from underground to overhead installation for fiber optics circuitry along Colton Avenue in the vicinity of the Mentone Substation.
#8	10/29/09	10/29/09	Removal of five Fremont cottonwood trees that are impacted by the construction of the access road to the El Casco Substation site.
#9	01/11/10	01/12/10	Sunday work on FOC shoo-fly segment during scheduled line outage.
#10	01/14/10	01/19/10	Use of the area east of the Zanja Substation fence line for parking and staging purposes.
#11	06/24/10	06/25/10	Sunday work on the FOC installation across Interstate 10 during minimum freeway traffic hours.
#12	07/22/10	07/23/10	Sunday work on the FOC installation across Highway 60 and Western Knolls Avenue during minimum freeway traffic hours.
#13	08/05/10	08/06/10	Nighttime deliveries of 220/115 kV transformer banks on August 13 <sup>th</sup> and August 17 <sup>th</sup> .
#14	09/8/10	09/13/10	Extended work hours to conduct the transfer of 50,000 gallons of oil into the two 220/115 kV transformer banks at ECSP

**TABLE 4**  
**TEMPORARY EXTRA WORK SPACE REQUESTS**  
(Updated 09-28-10)

<b>TEWS #</b>	<b>Date Requested</b>	<b>Date Issued</b>	<b>Description</b>
#1	04/17/09	04/23/09	Fiber Optic material storage at the pre-existing Zanja Substation, Yucaipa, San Bernardino County
#2	07/20/09		Staging area in a vacant lot north of First Street and west of Highland Springs Road.
#3	02/04/10	02/05/10	Distribution line crew access through an adjacent privately owned field to set equipment on existing poles.

## PROJECT PHOTOGRAPHS



**Figure 1:** At the El Casco Substation site, crews worked on a trench for fiber optic cable on the southern slope of the site.



**Figure 2:** At the El Casco Substation site, crews work on assembling a distribution line tower.