Provide a description of SCE’s practices for vegetation management and other operation and maintenance activities that are designed to comply with state and federal regulations protecting nesting birds.

Response to Question 07:

SCE’s practices for vegetation management and O&M activities include:

1) Environmental specialists conduct an environmental review to identify avian resources that may be impacted by ground-disturbing O&M activities. Avoidance and minimization measures are identified by the specialist, which may include i) pre-activity nesting bird surveys, ii) delaying work when nests are present, iii) having limited operating periods when listed species are breeding, iv) providing biological monitoring and/or v) minimizing the duration and intensity of the O&M activities.

2) Providing annual environmental awareness training to vegetation management crews. In this training, crews are instructed to contact the on-call biologist if avian resources are encountered in the field.

3) Identifying locations where nesting bird impacts are likely to occur and scheduling vegetation management in these areas outside of nesting season.

4) Conducting nesting bird surveys, as needed, ahead of ground-disturbing O&M activities and vegetation management activities. If active nests are discovered, work is delayed until the nest(s) become inactive and a second survey is performed to confirm no new active nests are present.

5) During nesting season, O&M activities and vegetation management is limited to that which is necessary to ensure safe and reliable transmission and distribution.

6) Retrofitting structures that are potentially hazardous to birds.