



## Variance Request Form

### PG&E Hollister 115 kV Power Line Reconductoring Project

Variance Request No.: 33

#### CONTRACTOR SECTION

Request Prepared By: Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E)

Photos?  Yes  No

Landowners:

Christensen; properties are encumbered by easements to access, maintain and operate the power line.

Attachments?  Yes  No

- Attachment A: Variance 33 Map

Current Land Use: Agriculture, primarily cattle grazing

#### Permit Measure or Specification:

- California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) Project Description
  - Deviation from the project description to reclassify ~~portions of~~ the existing access roads between San Juan Grade Road and ~~Tower 3/21 Tower Pull Site (TP)-5~~ to allow for road improvements, and to allow for improvements to the overland access route between Tower 3/21 and Tower Pull Site (TP)-5.

#### Detailed Description of Variance:

As construction has progressed, it has become apparent to PG&E that in order to construct the project during the rainy season, the existing access road and overland travel route between San Juan Grade Road and TP-5 will need to be maintained, restored, and potentially improved. PG&E is requesting authorization from the CPUC to reclassify the existing road ~~and the overland travel route~~ from San Juan Grade Road to ~~Tower 3/21 TP-5~~ (refer to Figure 2-2C) to “existing road – needs improvement,” and to subsequently improve up to a total of approximately 0.768 miles of the road to allow for safe passage by heavy equipment. The improvements to the existing access road would include filling in erosive features with sand and gravel, thereby restoring the road to its pre-project conditions. Improvements are proposed along portions of the 0.76 mile-long existing road. These repairs would require delivering sand and gravel by dumptruck, and placing it with a backhoe in the eroded features. The gravel would be compacted as necessary with a dozer. ~~The improvements to the existing overland travel route would include placing sand and gravel, and potentially geotextile fabric on an approximately 145-foot-long (0.02 mile) section.~~

~~The sand and gravel would be imported from the Hollister area.~~ PG&E is also proposing The road improvements on the approximately 0.02 mile overland access portion of the existing access road between Tower 3/21 and TP-5. These improvements is variance. would be revegetated in accordance with the project’s Habitat Mitigation Plan at the conclusion of construction. The sand and gravel would be imported from the Hollister area. The extent of the road improvements are also shown on Attachment A: Variance 33 Map.

~~Table 1: Access Roads~~ Table 1: Access Roads, provides a summary of the miles of access roads from the MND and previously approved variances, and the changes resulting from the reclassification. Attachment A: Variance 33 Map depicts the location of the reclassification.

**Table 1: Access Roads**

Type of Access	MND and Previously Approved Variances (miles)	Variance Request #33 (miles)	Total (miles)
Existing Road	18.29	(0.76)	17.53
Existing Road – Needs Improvement	1.79	0.768	2.557
New Road	0.32	0.00	0.32
Overland Travel Route	7.31	(0.002)	7.3129
All-Terrain Vehicles (ATV) Overland Access Route	1.20	0.00	1.20
<b>Total</b>	<b>28.91</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>28.91</b>

#### Variance Justification:



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PG&E finished constructing and raising all of the towers along the tower segment in December 2012. Because completion of the tower segment improves the current situation in which PG&E is currently providing service to the Watsonville area (utilization of the shoo-fly line for Hollister limits PG&E's flexibility in serving the Watsonville area), PG&E has decided to work through the wet season and complete the reconductoring of the tower segment as soon as possible.

Tower Pull Site (TP)-5 is critical to complete the reconductoring of the tower segment because it is involved in all of the longest "pulls" of the conductor required. Due to the large amount of rain this year, a gully has formed along portions of the southwestern edge of the approximately 0.76-mile-long existing access road that leads to TP-5. PG&E did not anticipate these improvements would be necessary since the road was easily accessed prior to the wet season this year. The recent rains have exacerbated an erosion issue that was not discovered during project development, or during construction last year because of the limited rainfall. The road currently provides access to lighter duty vehicles, but not for heavy equipment use.

Due to the slope of the overland access route, PG&E has suggested that improvements ~~are may be~~ necessary to this short section of overland access route ~~in the future~~ in order to allow heavy equipment to enter and exit TP-5, ~~although currently it appears that equipment can safely access TP-5 without any improvements. Any i~~Improvements would be temporary and the overland travel route would be restored to pre-project conditions at the conclusion of the project, in accordance with the project Habitat Mitigation Plan.

As described in the resource evaluation section below, potential impacts associated with this variance are consistent with those evaluated during the CEQA review and will not result in any new significant impacts that were not previously identified. Environmental protection measures will be implemented as described in the MND and other project permits.



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#### PG&E ENVIRONMENTAL SECTION

##### RESOURCE EVALUATION

The proposed variance was analyzed to verify that the project change would not introduce new significant impacts and that any potential impacts were fully analyzed in the MND. The following table provides a brief summary of each resource area analyzed in the MND.

CEQA SECTION	Applicable	(Y) Define Potential Impact or (N) Briefly Explain Why CEQA Section is Not Applicable
Aesthetics	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	<p><i>No Change.</i> No new sources of light or glare will be introduced to the area from the improvements proposed. The road is already in use, and this variance will not increase traffic beyond the 200 construction-related vehicle trips per day analyzed in the MND. The improvements will not substantially degrade the quality of the site and its surroundings because views of the trucks will be of short duration, and construction is relatively short term. Environmental protection measures will be implemented as described in the MND. Therefore, potential impacts are consistent with those evaluated in the MND, and the improvements and reclassification will not create significant additional impacts to aesthetics.</p>
Agriculture and Forestry Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	<p><i>No Change.</i> The road does not traverse Important Farmland, but does traverse grazing land. The improvements will not significantly impact agricultural activities because the road is already in use, the improvements are relatively short term, and they will not convert agricultural land to non-agricultural use. The improvements will not result in impacts to forestry resources because it will not require additional tree trimming or removal. Use of the road will not conflict with Williamson Act contracts or existing zoning because it will not result in any changes to existing land uses. Environmental protection measures will be implemented as described in the MND. Therefore, potential impacts are consistent with those evaluated in the MND, and the improvements and reclassification will not create significant additional impacts to agriculture or forestry resources.</p>
Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	<p><i>No Change.</i> The improvements will require truck trips to the road to deliver the sand and gravel; however, traffic will not increase beyond the estimated 200 construction-related vehicle trips per day that were analyzed in the MND. In addition, the improvements will not significantly increase the amount or use of heavy equipment on the project and, therefore, will not increase emissions or fugitive dust, beyond what was analyzed in the MND. These routes will not be closer to residences or sensitive receptors; therefore, pollutant concentrations and objectionable odors will not increase beyond those described in the MND. Environmental protection measures will be implemented as described in the MND. Therefore, potential impacts are consistent with those evaluated in the MND, and the improvements and reclassification will not create significant additional impacts to air quality or greenhouse gas emissions.</p>



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Biological Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	<p><i>No Change.</i> The MND evaluated the project areas and a 500-foot buffer for special status wildlife species. The improvements proposed are located on an existing, approved, <del>overland travel</del> route within the 500-foot survey buffer and were, therefore, evaluated in the MND. The proposed improvements are not located within any CDFG, RWQCB or USACE jurisdictional areas.</p> <p>In accordance with Applicant-Proposed Measures (APMs) and mitigation measures in the MND, pre-construction wildlife surveys for burrowing owl (BUOW), American badger (AMBA), and San Joaquin kit fox (SJKF) were recently completed for the area shown on Attachment A: Variance 33 Map. A report describing the survey results will be submitted to the CPUC. The road has already been used by the project. In addition, surveys for California tiger salamander (CTS), and California red-legged frog (CRLF), and nesting birds will be conducted immediately prior to the improvements being made. If any special-status species or nesting birds are observed, the appropriate and required measures, including construction buffers will be implemented as described in the MND and project permits. The improvements will not require any additional tree trimming or removal beyond what was analyzed in the MND. Environmental protection measures will be implemented as described in the MND and other project permits. Therefore, potential impacts to biological resources associated with this variance are consistent with those evaluated in the MND, and the improvements and reclassification will not create significant additional impacts to biological resources.</p>
Cultural Resources	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N	<p><i>No Change.</i> PG&amp;E prepared a Historic Properties Inventory Report, which included an evaluation of cultural resources in the project area and a 500-foot buffer. The <del>overland travel route and the</del> proposed improvements are located within the 500-foot survey buffer and were, therefore, included in the evaluation. No ground disturbance is anticipated to occur in areas of high archaeological sensitivity, and no impacts to cultural resources are anticipated. Environmental protection measures will be implemented as described in the MND and other project permits. Therefore, potential impacts to cultural resources associated with this variance are consistent with those evaluated in the MND, and the proposed improvements and reclassification will not create significant additional impacts to cultural resources.</p>
Geology, Soils, and Seismicity	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N	<p><i>No Change.</i> The improvements proposed are limited in scale and scope. The locations were included in the evaluation of geology, soils, and seismicity in the project area, and will not result in new geology, soils, or seismicity impacts. Environmental protection measures will be implemented as described in the MND. Therefore, potential impacts are consistent with those evaluated in the MND. The proposed improvements and reclassification of original routes will not create significant additional geology, soils, or seismicity impacts.</p>
Hazards and Hazardous Materials	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N	<p><i>No Change.</i> The improvements will not create new significant hazards or require new hazardous materials, because construction activities will not change. Environmental protection measures will be implemented as described in the MND. Therefore, potential impacts are consistent with those evaluated in the MND, and the proposed improvements and reclassification will not create significant additional impacts from hazards or hazardous materials.</p>
Hydrology and Water Quality	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	<p><i>No Change.</i> The proposed improvements are not proposed within any hydrologic features and they will not result in new significant impacts to hydrology and water quality. Although soil disturbance will result from the improvements, applicable measures in the existing Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and other relevant measures as described in the MND and other project permits will be implemented. Potential impacts are</p>



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		consistent with those evaluated in the MND, and the improvements and reclassification will not create significant additional impacts to hydrology or water quality.
Land Use and Planning	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N	<i>No Change.</i> The proposed improvements will not result in new significant impacts to land use because the current land use will not be converted and the use of these routes will be temporary. Therefore, potential impacts are consistent with those evaluated in the MND, and the improvements and reclassification will not create significant additional impacts to land use or planning.
Mineral Resources	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N	<i>No Change.</i> The improvements do not cross any known mineral resources. Therefore, potential impacts are consistent with those evaluated in the MND, and the improvements and reclassification will not create additional significant impacts to mineral resources.
Noise	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	<i>No Change.</i> The proposed improvements are located in a rural area. The road is already in use and will not be located closer to residences or sensitive receptors. Traffic will not increase beyond the estimated 200 construction-related vehicle trips per day that were analyzed in the MND. In addition, impacts to noise as a result of construction vehicles were analyzed in the MND and the proposed improvements will have the same impacts. Environmental protection measures will be implemented as described in the MND. Therefore, potential impacts are consistent with those evaluated in the MND, and the improvements and reclassification will not create additional significant impacts from noise.
Population and Housing	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N	<i>No Change.</i> The road is already in use and will not be closer to residences than was described in the MND. The use of the road will not induce population growth or displace existing housing or people. Therefore, potential impacts are consistent with those evaluated in the MND, and the improvements and reclassification will not create additional significant impacts to population or housing.
Public Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N	<i>No Change.</i> The improvements will not result in any impacts on public services because they are limited in scope and use of the road will be of relatively short duration. The MND found that potential impacts on emergency response services, fire protection services, police services, school facilities, recreational facilities, public libraries, and hospitals will be less than significant because construction activities are temporary and do not require construction of new or physically altered governmental facilities for public services. Environmental protection measures will be implemented as described in the MND. Therefore, potential impacts are consistent with those evaluated in the MND and the improvements and reclassification of original routes will not create additional significant impacts to public services.
Recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N	<i>No Change.</i> Impacts to recreational resources will not increase substantially beyond those identified in the MND because the improvements are limited in scope and use of the reclassified road will be of relatively short duration. The use of the road will not increase local population or housing and, therefore, will not increase demand for recreational facilities. Environmental protection measures will be implemented as described in the MND. Therefore, potential impacts are consistent with those evaluated in the MND, and the improvements and reclassification will not create additional significant impacts to recreation.
Transportation and Traffic	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	<i>No Change.</i> The improvements will not result in new significant impacts to transportation or traffic because the road is already in use, use will be of relatively short duration, and the road is not a public thoroughfare. In the



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		<p>MND, it was estimated that construction will generate over 200 vehicle trips per day within the project area. The improvements will not require additional trips; therefore, traffic will not increase beyond the estimated 200 construction-related vehicle trips per day that were analyzed in the MND. Environmental protection measures will be implemented as described in the MND. Therefore, potential impacts are consistent with those evaluated in the MND, and the improvements and reclassification will not create additional significant impacts to transportation or traffic.</p>
Utilities and Service Systems	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	<p><i>No Change.</i> The improvements will not result in new significant impacts to existing utilities or service systems because the road is already in use and the construction activities will not change. Environmental protection measures will be implemented as described in the MND. Therefore, potential impacts are consistent with those evaluated in the MND, and the proposed improvements and reclassification will not create additional significant impacts to utility or service systems.</p>
Other Variance Conditions Attached: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No		



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PG&E Approval					
Title	Name	Approval Initials	Date	Conditions (see attached)	
Environmental Compliance Supervisor	Keith Miller	KM	01/ <del>22</del> 15	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Lead Environmental Inspector	Nick Fisher	NF	1/ <del>22</del> 15	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
PG&E Project Biologist (if applicable)	Andrea Henke	AH	1/ <del>22</del> 15	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
PG&E Project Archaeologist (if applicable)	Wendy Nettles	N/A	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
PG&E Storm Water Program Manager (if applicable)	<del>Norm Price</del> Keith-Baker	<del>NP</del> NPKB	1/ <del>22</del> 15	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
PG&E Environmental Compliance Lead	Andy Smith	AS	1/ <del>22</del> 15	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
PG&E Project Manager (if applicable)	Bill Czabaranek	BC	1/ <del>22</del> 15	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Landowner Approval (if needed)					
Landowner Name	Approval Signature	Date			
NA	NA	NA			
Resource Agency Approvals					
Determine required agency approvals based on the following:					
Will biological resources/habitats be affected? NO	If yes, obtain CDFG and USFWS approval				
Is this a variance from a permit? NO	If yes, obtain permitting agency approval				
Will wetlands or waters of the U.S. be affected? NO	If yes, obtain U.S. Army Corps of Engineers approval				
Will riparian areas or drainages be affected? NO	If yes, obtain CDFG approval – may require a permit				
Will surface or groundwater be affected? NO	If yes, obtain RWQCB approval				
Resource Agency	Name	Approval Initials	Date	Conditions (see attached)	
USFWS		NA		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
CDFG		NA		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
USACE		NA		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
RWQCB		NA		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No



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**PG&E Hollister 115 kV Power Line Reconductoring Project**

**CPUC and CPUC CONSULTANT SECTION**

Variance Approved:  Yes  No

**AFFECTED RESOURCE(s) and APPLICABLE MITIGATION MEASURES**

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics:                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture and Forestry Resources: | <input type="checkbox"/> Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources:            | <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources:                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Geology, Soils, and Seismicity:           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hazards and Hazardous Materials: | <input type="checkbox"/> Hydrology and Water Quality:        | <input type="checkbox"/> Land Use and Planning:                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mineral Resources:               | <input type="checkbox"/> Noise:                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Population and Housing:                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public Services:                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation:                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation and Traffic:               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Utilities and Service Systems:   |  |  |

Other Variance Conditions Attached:  Yes  No

**REQUIRED APPROVAL SIGNATURES**

Consultant Environmental Monitor: \_\_\_\_\_ (Note: signature signifies review only)

Consultant Project Manager: \_\_\_\_\_  Level 1 Verbal Approval

CPUC Project Manager: \_\_\_\_\_  Level 1 Verbal Approval

*Level 1 variances require only verbal approval from CPUC Project Manager and Consultant Project Manager. Level 2 variances require signatures.*



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**VARIANCE CONDITIONS**

**Condition Name:**

**Conditions:**

**Condition Name:**

**Conditions:**

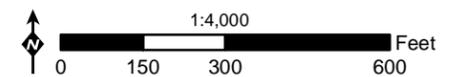
**Condition Name:**

**Conditions:**

# ATTACHMENT A: VARIANCE 33 MAP

## Hollister 115 kV Power Line Reconducting Project

-  New Tower
  -  Existing Tower
  -  Construction Area
  -  Proposed Gate
  -  Crane Pad
  -  Tree Removal and Trimming
  -  Existing Road
  -  Existing Road - Needs Improvement
  -  Overland Travel Route
- Variance 33 Proposed Road**
-  Existing Road - Needs Improvement



Source: ICF, 2008; Insignia, 2013; PG&E, 2013



**Photograph 1:**

Existing access  
road to TP-5  
viewed from the  
east.

Site Photographs



**Photograph 2:**

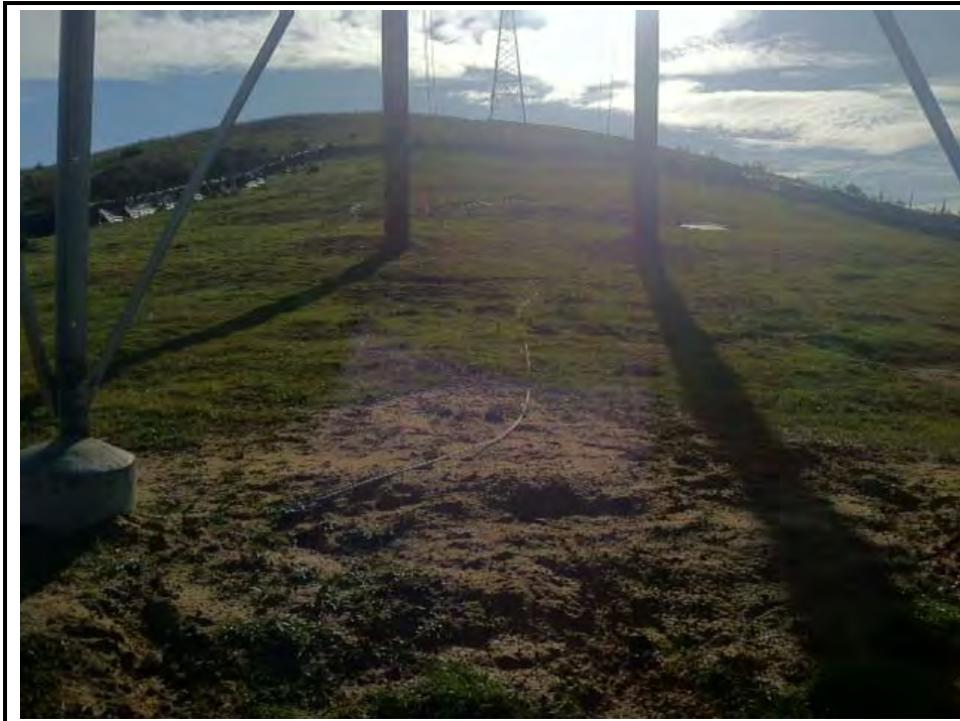
Erosion of the access road to TP-5 viewed from the west.



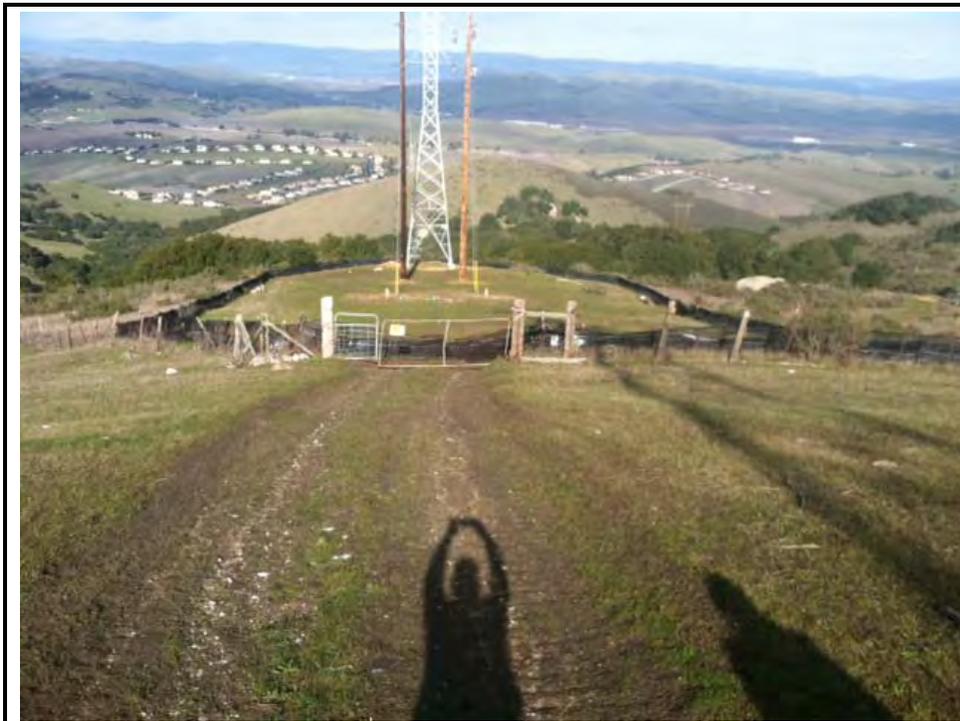
**Photograph 3:**

Existing access road to TP-5, viewed from the east towards Tower 3/21.

Site Photographs



**Photograph 4:**  
TP-5 viewed from the north with Tower 3/21 in the distance.



**Photograph 5:**  
Looking north towards the overland travel route to TP-5.