

SIERRA PACIFIC POWER COMPANY HIRSCHDALE POWER LINE PROJECT

Final Mitigated Negative Declaration
(A.06-04-017)

Prepared for:
California Public Utilities Commission

June 2007



**PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
505 VAN NESS AVENUE
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94102-3298**



To: Interested Parties

From: Michael Rosauer, Environmental Project Manager

**Subject: NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF A FINAL MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION
Sierra Pacific Power Company's Hirschdale Power Line Project (A.06-04-017)
SCH# 2007022078**

Date: June 1, 2007

The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) has prepared a Final Mitigated Negative Declaration (Final MND) pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for consideration of Sierra Pacific Power Company's Application to Construct the Hirschdale Power Line Project (A.06-04-017). The Final MND details the Proposed Project, evaluates and describes its potential environmental impacts, identifies those impacts that could be significant, and presents mitigation measures to avoid or minimize these impacts.

Description of the Proposed Project. Sierra Pacific, in its CPUC application (A.06-04-017), filed on April 19, 2006, seeks a Permit to Construct (PTC) an approximately 3,500-foot power line of new 60 kilovolt (kV) circuit on an existing 12.5 kV distribution line in unincorporated Nevada County, near the town of Hirschdale, pursuant to CPUC General Order (GO) 131-D. The Proposed Project would include the removal and installation of 19 poles, string of new conductor and relocated of existing distribution to the new poles. The entire proposed route would be located on an existing Sierra Pacific easement on private property connecting two existing single-circuit 60 kV electric power lines (Line 621 and Line 608) that Sierra Pacific currently operates.

The objective of the Proposed Project is to provide an alternative to the aging and difficult to maintain primary transmission path now serving the Glenshire Substation, thereby assuring continued safe and reliable electric service to customers in the area while also meeting planning criteria.

Contents of the Final MND. The Final MND consists of three chapters plus Appendices. Chapter 1 contains an introduction to the Final MND, including descriptions of the CEQA and public review processes and an overview of the comments received on the Draft MND. Chapter 2 contains the comments on the Draft MND as well as the CPUC's responses to the comments. Chapter 3 contains the Mitigation Monitoring, Reporting, and Compliance Program. A compact disc (CD), located inside the back cover of the Final MND, contains the full document, including the text of the Draft MND as modified from the published Draft MND, with revised text shown in underline (for insertions) and deleted text shown in ~~strikeout~~ (for deletions).

CPUC Actions After Final MND Publication. There is no comment period following issuance of the Final MND. The CPUC will determine the adequacy of the Final MND, and, if adequate, will adopt the document as being compliant with CEQA. If adequate, the CPUC will issue a Decision on the Application, which will be announced and published concurrent with a scheduled CPUC Meeting. After the Commission makes the decision on the Application, a Notice of Determination will be mailed to the State Clearinghouse within 5 days of the Decision. After the Notice of Determination is filed, the 30 day statute of limitations for court challenges begins to run. For further information on the CPUC's decision-making process, please call the CPUC Public Advisor at (415) 703-2074.

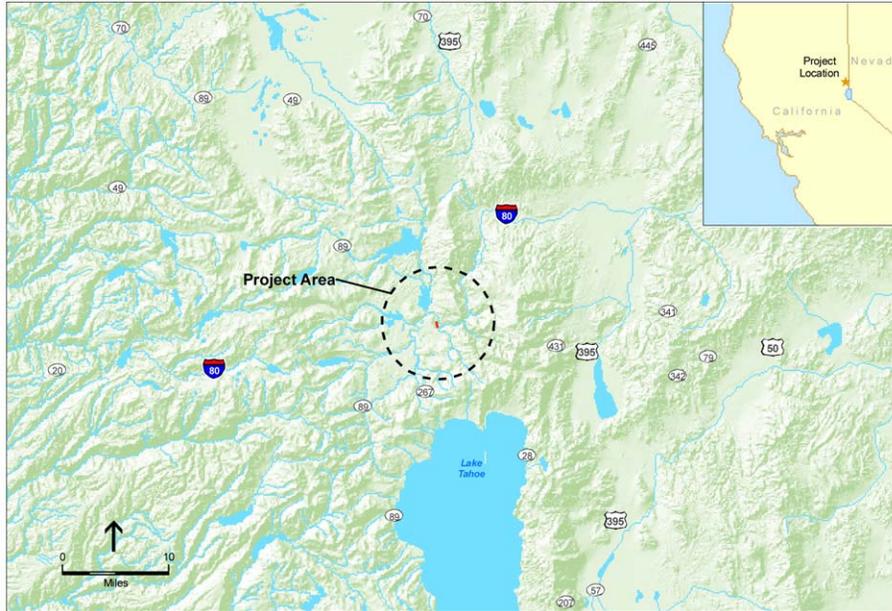
SIERRA PACIFIC'S APPLICATION TO CONSTRUCT HIRSCHDALE POWER LINE PROJECT INFORMATION REPOSITORIES

Availability of Final MND. Copies of the Final MND will be available for public review at the Truckee Branch of the Nevada County Library, and on the project website: <http://www.sppc-hirschdale.com>. Hard

copies or CD copies of the Final MND may be requested by telephone at (415) 962-8409 or by e-mail at hirschdale@esassoc.com.

Truckee Branch Library
10031 Levon Avenue
Truckee, CA 96161
(530) 582-7846
Hours: M & Th: 10AM to 8PM
T, W, F, & Sa: 10AM to 6PM
Closed Sunday.

Map of the Proposed Project Location:



SIERRA PACIFIC POWER COMPANY HIRSCHDALE POWER LINE PROJECT

Final Mitigated Negative Declaration
(A.06-04-017)

Prepared for:
California Public Utilities Commission

June 2007

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A. Sierra Pacific Power Company’s Hirschdale Power Line Project (A.06-04-017) Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration with revisions noted in this FMND (provided on CD) ¹	

¹ See inside of back cover.

SECTION 1

Introduction

1.1 CEQA Process

Pursuant to the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) General Order (GO) 131-D, the CPUC prepared an Initial Study to address the application from PacifiCorp (A.05-12-011) for a Permit to Construct (PTC) an approximately 3,500-foot long power line of new 60 kV circuit on an existing 12.5 kV distribution line in unincorporated Nevada County, near the town of Hirschdale (Proposed Project). The Initial Study determined that the Proposed Project would not have a significant adverse effect on the environment, and a Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration (Draft MND) was prepared by the CPUC.

On February 16, 2007, the CPUC filed a Notice of Completion (NOC) with the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (State Clearinghouse), published a Notice of Intent (NOI) to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration, and released the Draft MND for a 30-day public review period. The Draft MND was distributed to federal state, and local agency representatives, property owners within 300 feet of the Proposed Project, and other interested individuals as outlined in Appendix D of the Draft MND. Additionally, a Public Notice was published in a general circulation newspaper, the Sierra Sun, announcing the availability of the Draft MND for public review in compliance with CEQA. In accordance with Section 15105(b) CEQA Guidelines, the public review and comment period began on February 16, 2007 and ended on March 19, 2007. A public information meeting was held on March 2, 2007 in Truckee, California to hear oral comments on the Draft MND. A summary of the oral comments and copies of all written comments received on the Draft MND are contained in this Final MND¹.

This Final MND has been prepared pursuant to CEQA Guidelines² which outlines all aspects of the preparation of the Draft MND and its review, as well as the subsequent steps to preparing a Notice of Decision. This document incorporates comments from the applicant, public agencies, and the general public, and contains responses by the Lead Agency (the CPUC) to those comments. As a result of applicant, agency and public comments, changes have been made to the Draft MND. The sole intent and purpose of the Final MND is to provide corrections and clarity to certain facts set forth in the Draft MND to ensure accuracy. No new significant environmental

¹ The Final MND is a combination of this Response to Comment Document and the Draft MND. The text of the Draft MND, with relevant changes, is provided in electronic format on a CD that is located on the inside of the back cover the Final MND. The entire Final MND is also available in hard copy format by request and additionally, is available on the project website.

² Title 14, California Code of Regulations, Chapter 3, Sections 15000 – 15387 and Appendices, accessible at http://ceres.ca.gov/topic/env_law/ceqa/guidelines/

impacts are identified in this Final MND. No mitigation measures presented in the Draft MND were deleted; however, modifications were made to clarify or amplify certain mitigation measures.

The Final MND is an informational document prepared by the CPUC to be used by decision makers before approving or denying a proposed project. The Final MND consists of the following:

- (a) A list of persons, organizations, and public agencies commenting on the Draft MND.
- (b) Comments and recommendations received on the Draft MND either verbatim or in summary.
- (c) Revisions to the Draft MND.
- (d) Revisions to the Mitigation Monitoring, Compliance and Reporting Plan (MMCRP).

1.2 Public Review Process

On February 16, 2007, the CPUC mailed a notice to relevant agencies, organizations and individuals residing in the Proposed Project area, announcing that the Draft MND was available for public review. The CPUC established a comment fax line (415-896-0332), e-mail address (hirschdale@esassoc.com), and web site (<http://www.sppc-hirschdale.com>) to enable the public to ask questions, provide comments, and obtain additional information on the Proposed Project discussed in the Draft MND.

Additionally, the CPUC held a public information meeting on Thursday, March 2, 2007 at the Truckee Donner Public Utilities District, 11571 Donner Pass Road, Board Room, Truckee, California between 7:00 and 9:00pm. Comments made during this public informational meeting related to the Draft MND were noted and summarized.

In accordance with Section 15105(b) CEQA Guidelines, the public review and comment period for the Draft MND began on February 16, 2007 and ended on March 19, 2007. In response to the publication of the Draft MND for public review, applicant, agency, and public comments have been received. These comments are presented and discussed in this document.

1.3 Comments on the Draft MND

The following individuals and agencies submitted comments on the Draft MND during the public review period, dates of submittal are noted.

- Lisa and Riaz Finnemore (February 19 and 28, March 18, 2007)
- Larry and Cheryl Andresen (February 20 and March 19, 2007)
- Lisa Finnemore (February 28, 2007)
- Richard & Mary Fehrt (March 4, 2007)

- Terry Garcia (March 13, 2007)
- Ronald and Virginia Legg (March 13, 2007)
- Jamie Cole and Peter Rivara (March 17, 2007)
- Duane Brunson (March 17, 2007)
- Richard Hinkler (March 19, 2007)
- Miriam H. Minnis (March 20, 2007)
- California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (March 16, 2007)
- California Regional Water Quality Control Board Lahontan Region (March 19, 2007)

1.4 Findings

Based on the analysis conducted in this Final MND, the CPUC has found, on the basis of the whole record before it (including the Initial Study/Draft MND and public comments received), that there is no substantial evidence that the Proposed Project would have any significant unmitigable environmental impacts related to either construction activities or operations. Accordingly, mitigation identified in the Final MND for the Proposed Project would avoid or reduce all of the impacts to a less-than-significant level.



Ken Lewis, Program Manager
Energy Division
California Public Utilities Commission



Date

CHAPTER 2

Comments and Responses

2.1 Introduction

This chapter includes copies of the comment letters received during the public review period on the Draft IS/MND and the responses to those comments. A total of fourteen comment letters were received from agencies, organizations, and individuals in response to the Draft IS/MND for Sierra Pacific's Hirschdale Power Line Project application (A.06-04-017).

2.2 List of Comment Letters Received

The comment letters received on the Draft IS/MND are listed below in Table 2-1. Each comment letter has been assigned a corresponding alphabet letter designation.

**TABLE 2-1
LIST OF COMMENTERS**

Letter	Commenter	Date
A	Lisa Finnemore	February 19, 2007
B	Larry Andresen	February 20, 2007
C	Lisa Finnemore	February 28, 2007
D	Richard & Mary Fehrt	March 4, 2007
E	Terry Garcia	March 13, 2007
F	Ronald and Virginia Legg	March 13, 2007
G	Jamie Cole and Peter Rivara	March 17, 2007
H	Duane Brunson	March 17, 2007
I	Riaz and Lisa Finnemore	March 18, 2007
J	Richard Hinkler	March 19, 2007
K	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection	March 16, 2007
L	Larry and Cheryl Andresen	March 19, 2007
M	Miriam H. Minnis	March 20, 2007
N	California Regional Water Quality Control Board Lahontan Region	March 19, 2007
PM	Public Meeting Comments	March 1, 2007

2.3 Responses to Comments

This section contains responses to all of the substantive comments received on the Draft IS/MND during the public review period from February 16, 2007 through March 19, 2007. Each comment letter was assigned a letter according to the system identified previously (i.e., A, B, etc.). Each comment addressed within each letter was assigned a comment number (i.e., A-1, A-2, etc.). On the following pages of this section, each comment letter is reproduced in its entirety followed by the responses to each comment within the letter. Where a response to a similar comment has been provided in another response, the reader is referred to the other response.

All changes to the Draft IS/MND for clarification or amplification are described in the response and referred by the page number on which the original text appears in the Draft IS/MND. Added text is underlined; deleted text is ~~stricken~~.

2.4 Public Meeting Comments and Responses

A public meeting was held on Thursday, March 2, 2007 at 6:00 pm at the Truckee Donner Public Utilities District, 11571 Donner Pass Road, Board Room, Truckee, California. Attendees were: Mike Rosauer (CPUC), Jennifer Johnson, Matt Fagundes and Rachel Baudler (ESA), representatives of Sierra Pacific Power Company, and six members of the public. During the meeting, commenters were encouraged to submit follow-up written comments so that the full text and intent of their comments could be documented and addressed. Verbal comments made at the public meeting were documented to the extent possible. A summary of the verbal comments, and responses to those comments, are presented following the last comment letter in this section and denoted as Letter PM (Public Meeting).

Thank you for answering my questions and concerns. I live in San Francisco and will not be able to travel to Truckee for the meeting that is scheduled for March 1st.

Best, Lisa Finnemore
permanent address
979 Rhode Island street, San Francisco, Ca 94107
415-641-6023

Letter A – Lisa Finnemore

- Response A-1 The commenter states a concern regarding the Proposed Project noise and health hazards. Noise impacts are discussed in IS/MND Section 2.11, *Noise* and potential health hazards are discussed in IS/MND Section 2.7, *Hazards and Hazardous Materials*, as well as IS/MND Appendix A, which provides an informational discussion about electric and magnetic fields. Please see also Responses A-2 through A-8.
- The commenter also expresses a concern that Proposed Project construction will adversely affect rental values of nearby properties. According to CEQA Guidelines section 15131, economic or social effects of a project, even if demonstrated, shall not be treated as significant environmental effects. Economic or social effects may be considered only if demonstrated physical changes could result. Beyond speculation, the comment demonstrates no such physical changes.
- Response A-2 The commenter requests specific hours during which project construction would occur. As provided in Mitigation Measure 2.11-1a (see IS/MND pages 2.11-9 through 2.11-10), general project construction activities will be limited to the hours between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. with no construction activity to occur on a holiday. In addition, as discussed on IS/MND page 2.11-9, the duration of noise impacts would be relatively brief, estimated to be approximately three days at any one pole location along the Proposed Project construction corridor for pole installation and approximately one day at each pole location for conductor stringing. As further detailed in Response F-3, helicopters would not be used for conductor stringing between Poles 5 and 11. Please refer to IS/MND Section 2.11, *Noise*, for additional information regarding noise impacts.
- Response A-3 Please see Response A-2.
- Response A-4 As provided in Mitigation Measure 2.11-1a (see IS/MND pages 2.11-9 through 2.11-10), construction activities requiring the use of helicopters will be restricted to four hours per day to occur only between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Noise impacts associated with helicopters are addressed in further detail on IS/MND pages 2.11-9 through 2.11-10.
- Response A-5 The commenter questions whether the proposed power line would emit any “buzzing” sounds. Noise impacts that could result from operation of the proposed power line are discussed on IS/MND pages 2.11-10 through 2.11-11.
- Response A-6 The commenter requests information regarding noise effects on animals. Information regarding noise impacts on wildlife is provided on IS/MND

pages 2.4-15 through 2.4-16. While noise effects on domestic animals is not specifically provided, general noise impacts that would affect the nearby residential area are discussed in IS/MND Section 2.11, *Noise*.

Response A-7 The commenter requests to view a project construction work plan. Information regarding proposed construction activities is set forth in IS/MND Section 1, *Project Description*.

Response A-8 The commenter requests information regarding health effects that could be caused by the Proposed Project. IS/MND Appendix A provides information regarding health effects caused by electric and magnetic fields associated with power line facilities.

Larry Andresen, P. O. Box 34047, Truckee, CA, 96160
Phone: 530-587-7965 Fax: 530-582-1965

February 20, 2007

Mr. John Boccio
Hirschdale Power Line Project
c/o Environmental Science Associates
225 Bush Street, Suite 1700
San Francisco, CA 94104
Fax: (415) 896-0332
E-mail: hirschdale@esassoc.com
Telephone: (415) 962-8405

Mr. John Boccio,

Enclosed you will find a letter that was written to Lee Simpkins, c/o Sierra Pacific Power Company, dated August 16, 2006, addressing the concerns of the Hirschdale Community.

This letter indicates that the Hirschdale Community would like to see these high voltage power lines put underground. This community values the scenic Truckee River corridor and feels the construction of these high voltage wires would obstruct the vistas and the environment in our community. This would lessen the appeal of the neighborhood and negatively impact our property values.

B-1

The Hirschdale Community residents and property owners are requesting that the new high voltage line construction only be allowed if it is constructed underground.

We value our Community and our environment along with our homes in the community and feel this is only the fair and right thing to do for our community.

Sincerely

Hirschdale Residents

Larry Andresen, P. O. Box 34047, Truckee, CA 96160
Phone: 530 587-7965 Fax: 530 582-1965

August 16, 2006

Lee Simpkins
c/o Sierra Pacific Power Company
6100 Neil Road
Reno, Nevada, 89502
Fax: 775-834-3158
Phone: 775-834-3528

RE: 608-621 High Voltage Line Construction/Hirschdale, CA

Lee,

I am writing you regarding the proposed 608 to 621 lines connection you propose to do through the historic community of Hirschdale.

The people here in Hirschdale highly value the scenic Truckee River corridor. Placing 10" taller poles, high voltage wires, supporting cross arms, bracing insulators, etc, would ruin the vistas and environment. This would lessen the appeal of the neighborhood and negatively impact our property values. Wildlife may also be negatively affected.

]

B-2

In speaking for all residents and property owners in Hirschdale, we all request and insist that any new high voltage line construction only be allowed if it is constructed underground.

Thank you, in advance for responding to our concerns and for pursuing new construction **only** if it is underground in our community.

Confidentially writing on behalf of the Hirschdale residents,

Larry Andresen

Cc: John Boccio-CPUC
Email: JBx@CPUC.CA.GOV
Phone: 415-703-2641

Letter B –Larry Andresen

Response B-1 The commenter states that the proposed power line should be constructed underground to avoid adverse visual impacts to the Truckee River as well as the surrounding environment. California Public Utilities Code Section 320, which requires undergrounding of some transmission facilities, is not applicable to the Proposed Project, because it is not located within 1,000 feet of an officially designated scenic route nor is it within 1,000 feet of an eligible scenic route. Visual simulations showing the Proposed Project were included in the IS/MND (see IS/MND Figures 2.1-2 through 2.1-4). Visual impacts to the Truckee River as well as the surrounding community are addressed in IS/MND Section 2.1, *Aesthetics*.

The commenter also states that the Proposed Project, if not constructed underground, would negatively impact property values in the surrounding areas. Regarding impacts to property values, please see Response A-1.

Response B-2 The commenter states that the Proposed Project would adversely affect the visual quality of the area. Visual impacts to the Truckee River as well as the community are addressed in IS/MND Section 2.1, *Aesthetics*.

The commenter also states that the Proposed Project could adversely affect wildlife. Impacts to wildlife are addressed in IS/MND Section 2.4, *Biological Resources*.

Hi 2/28

After talking to several neighbors we would like this project to go under ground. This was communicated by Larry Andresen back in August 2006 , can you please let me know where this request stands?. We are very concerned about health and the environmental impacts to the community.

C-1

Thank you

Lisa Finnemore (hirschdale address is 10905 Floriston , Truckee) For mail

979 Rhode Island Street

San Francisco, ca 94107

415-641-6023

Letter C – Lisa Finnemore

Response C-1 The commenter states that it would like the proposed power line to be constructed underground. Please see Response B-1.

Sent via email 3/4/2007

To Whom It May Concern:

We have a vacation home in Hirschdale located at 10941 Floriston Avenue. Our property would be directly affected as there is a power pole located directly across the street from our home. We feel that the increased height of the pole would definitely change the character of the community.

We would like to see the power lines placed underground. If this is not financially feasible, perhaps another route for the new power poles could be found that would not pass directly through the Hirschdale community.

Thank you.

Richard & Mary Fehrt (permanent address)
8320 Midland Road
Granite Bay, CA 95746
(916) 652-7660



D-1

Letter D – Richard and Mary Fehrt

Response D-1 The commenter states that the Proposed Project would adversely affect the character of the community and requests that the power line be constructed underground. Please see Response B-1. The commenter also states that if undergrounding of the power line is not financially feasible, that the Proposed Project be re-routed to avoid the Hirschdale community. During its planning phase for the Proposed Project, Sierra Pacific chose the proposed route because it already has existing easements along that route and because it is the shortest route to connect to existing power lines.

Sierra Pacific has not proposed any additional alternatives to the Proposed Project and thus, no alternatives were analyzed in the Draft IS/MND. An MND may be prepared if the Initial Study identifies a potentially significant effect for which the project proponent, before public release of a proposed Negative Declaration, has made or agrees to make project revisions that clearly mitigate the effects. CEQA Guidelines Section 15070(b). The IS/MND identified potentially significant impacts; however, prior to publication of the IS/MND, Sierra Pacific agreed to implement mitigation measures identified to reduce the Proposed Project's impacts to a less than significant level. While an EIR is required to consider a range of reasonable alternatives to the project (CEQA Guidelines Section 12126.6), an MND is not required to include an alternatives analysis.

The MND will be used to guide decision-making by the CPUC by providing an assessment of the potential environmental impacts that may result from the Proposed Project. The weighing of project benefits against environmental effects is outside the scope of this CEQA document. When the Commission meets to decide on Sierra Pacific's application, it will consider the MND (which discloses potential environmental effects of the Proposed Project) along with other considerations; then, it will decide whether or not to approve Sierra Pacific's application to construct the Hirschdale power line.

Terry Garcia
10800 Juniper Way
Truckee, Ca. 96161
530 - 5871090

Mr. Boccio,

I am a home owner in Hirschdale.
Please put the new power lines
underground in Hirschdale.
Bigger, higher more powerful
lines above ground would lower
my property values, bring more
safety issues, impair my view, and
who knows the long time effects
of the stronger current.

Sincerely
Terry Garcia

Letter E – Terry Garcia

Response E-1 The commenter states that the proposed power line should be constructed underground. Please see Response B-1. Regarding impacts to property values, please see Response A-1. And regarding potential health effects associated with the proposed power line, please see Response PM-7.

March 13,2007
Mr. John Boccio
C/O Environmental Science Associates
225 Bush Street, Suite 1700
San Francisco, CA 94104

Re: Hirschdale Powerline Project.

Dear Mr. Roccio,

As property owners at 10965 and 10968 Floriston Ave. Hirschdale, CA. we are very concerned as to the route of the replacement poles being changed from distrabution to add 60KV transmission lines.

F-1

This property was purchased in 1969 and the title only referred to the SPPC . and or telephone or telegraph could run lines and poles ect. The easement was not defined at that time. However, I believe this was changed at a later date without our knowledge.

F-2

The transmission lines would pass directly over our garage if the proposed route stayed as planned.

Two more problems:

1. The line would run through 4 or 5 pine trees which are probably 150 years old, and would have to be cut down.
N0-N0
2. A very major problem is having a 60KV transmission line running through a residential community. Also, the use of a helicopter to string the conductors is in itself hazardous in such a populated enviromnent.

F-3

F-4

The timing of the public information meeting on March 1, 2007 at The Truckee Donner Public Utilities District was not made known to most residents until two days before and as to what was being proposed-NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION and all that it entailed.

F-5

At our and other residents request we contacted Mr. Lee Simpkins (SPPC) for an on sight meeting march 9, 2007 for an explanation of intentions of the entire 19 pole replacement.

F-6

OPTIONS: Reroute the tranmission lines up Glenshire road to the Glenshire sub-station or put them underground thru the Hirschdale Community.

F-7

Enclosed are five photos showing the lines thru the mentioned trees and over the garage at 10968 Floreston Ave. Hirschdale.CA.

F-8

Please give this your very close consideration.

Sincerely,

Ronald and Virginia Legg

Ronald Legg
Virginia Legg

We can be contacted at:

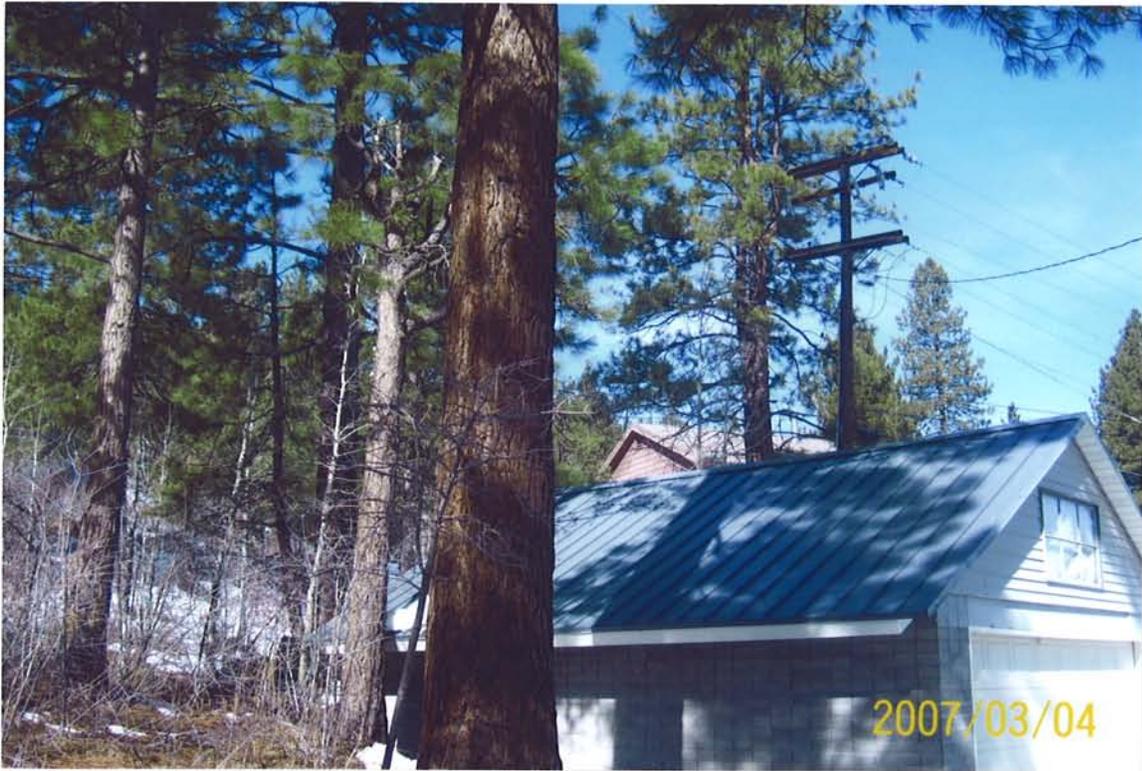
Ronald and Virginia Legg
1340 Princess Ave.
Reno, Nv. 89502

Phone: 775-329-8795
E-Mail r.legg@sbcglobal.net



F-8
(cont.)





F-8
(cont.)





F-8
(cont.)

Letter F – Ronald and Virginia Legg

Response F-1 The commenter states its opposition to the Proposed Project. The comment is noted.

Response F-2 The commenters state that the easement that runs through their property was changed after purchase of the property without the property owner's knowledge. The commenter states that the power line would pass over their property.

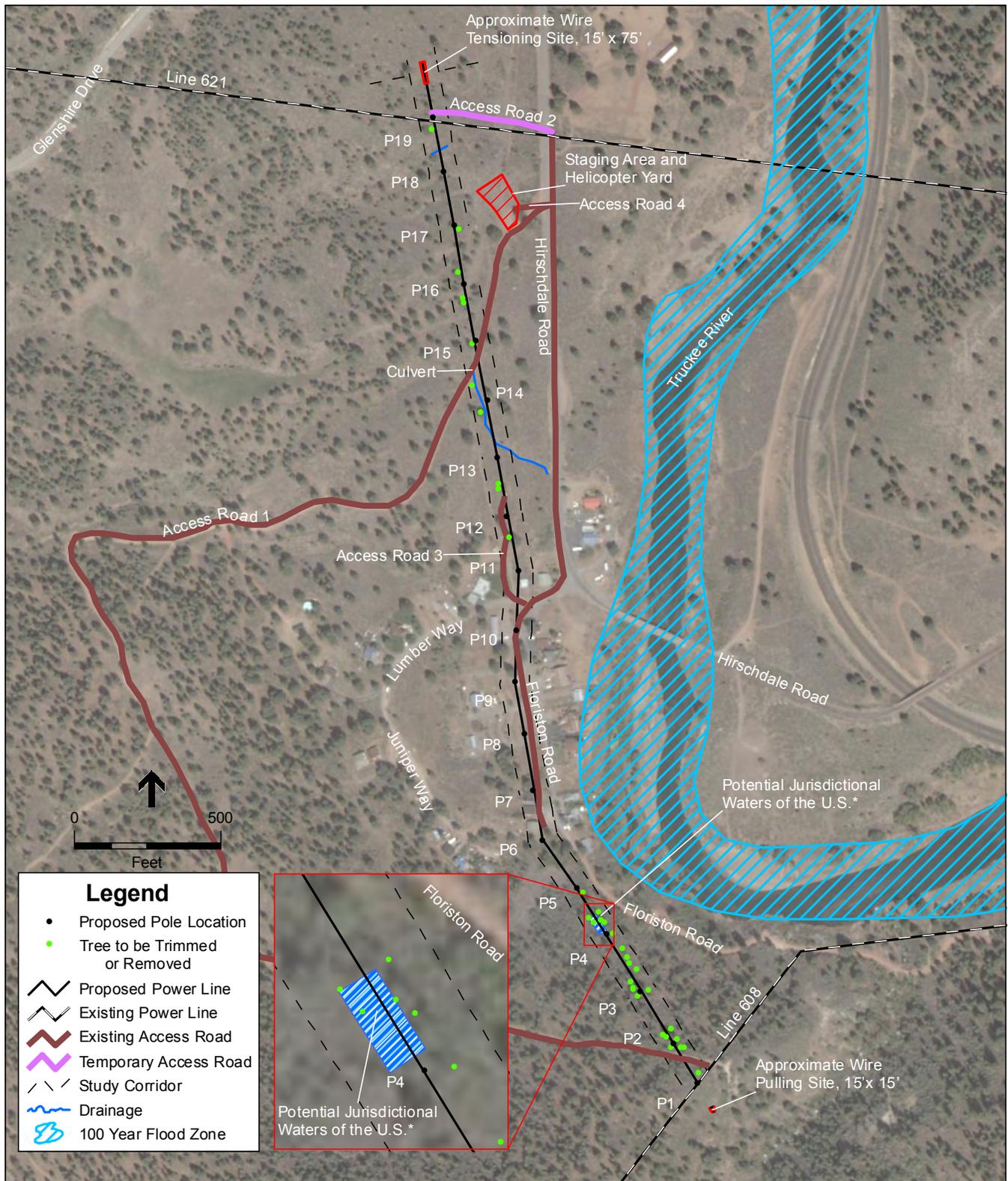
By law, Sierra Pacific may not proceed with project construction on private property unless it is within an easement or unless other legal authorization has been obtained. However, this comment is beyond the scope of this CEQA analysis. This comment does not state a specific concern or question regarding a significant environmental impact or the adequacy of the IS/MND.

Response F-3 The commenters state their concern regarding the removal of trees along the power line route for project construction activities. In response to this comment and other comments received, Sierra Pacific has opted to string the new conductor and shield wires onto the erected structures using a three step process that would greatly reduce the need for tree removal: 1) install the lead-line through travelers on each structure; 2) attach conductors and shield wires to the lead-line and pull by hand, pickup truck, or a rubber-tired truck; and 3) correctly sag and tension the conductors and shield wires and connect them to structures. Thus, rather than using helicopters to string the new wires through the town of Hirschdale,¹ the wires would be strung from the ground, thereby eliminating the need to remove any trees within Hirschdale (i.e., between Pole 5 and Pole 11). Trees beneath or near the power line outside of Hirschdale (i.e., between Pole 11 and Pole 19 and between Poles 1 and 5) may still require removal and trees along the entire power line route would still need to be trimmed. IS/MND Figure 1-3 (Project Area Map) on page 1-5 is revised to show these changes. All tree trimming would be done in conformance with CPUC General Order 95, Section 35, *Tree Trimming*. General Order 95 (CPUC, 2006). Regarding impacts associated with tree removal, please see Response G-8.

Wire stringing would be accomplished through the use of ground crews, pickup trucks and rubber-tired trucks.² The lead line would be installed in the travelers on Poles 1 through 6 by ground crews walking beneath the ROW centerline. From Poles 6 to 11, the lead line would be installed by driving a

¹ Helicopters would still be used for pole installation and may be used for stringing from Pole 1 to Pole 5 and Pole 11 to Pole 19.

² Sierra Pacific will include this requirement to use rubber-tired equipment in its contractor specifications.



SOURCES: FEMA (2007), GlobeXplorer (2007), Sierra Pacific (2006)

Sierra Pacific Power Company Hirschdale Power Line Project .206056

Figure 1-3
Project Area Map

Disclaimer: FEMA flood boundary is approximately located. Project components are not to scale.

*The proposed power line would be suspended above ground and would not pass through or impact this feature

pickup truck beneath the ROW centerline. From Poles 11 to 19, the lead line would be installed using a rubber-tired truck and driving it overland beneath the ROW centerline or, as discussed in the project description on IS/MND page 1-11, with a light duty helicopter. For ground stringing, the lead line would be spooled out from a large motorized drum at one wire site located south of Pole 1 and threaded through the travelers by a ground crew traveling to the next wire site. The lead line would be attached to the conductors and shield wires, which would then be pulled back through to the first wire site. After the conductors and shield wires reach the pulling site, they would be correctly sagged and tensioned, then permanently clipped into the clamps at each structure.

The project description in the Draft IS/MND (page 1-9) stated that “[h]elicopter access would be used to install 13 of the 19 poles as well as the conductor for these locations; however, Sierra Pacific may opt to string conductor by foot in some of these areas in lieu of a helicopter.” This description remains accurate; Sierra Pacific has now opted to string a portion of the conductor from the ground rather than using a helicopter.

- Response F-4 Regarding the proposed power line route, please see Response D-1. Regarding the use of helicopters to string the conductors, please see Response F-3.
- Response F-5 The commenter states that residents of Hirschdale were not given adequate notice for the public information meeting that was held on March 1, 2007. The Notice of Intent to Adopt a Mitigation Declaration (NOI) was mailed to surrounding properties within 300 feet of the Proposed Project. The NOI informed receiving parties that a meeting would occur on Thursday, March 1, 2007 at the Truckee Donner Public Utilities District between 7:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. The NOI was mailed on February 16, 2007, twelve days in advance of the scheduled public meeting time. In addition, a notice was run in the Sierra Sun newspaper on Friday, February 16, 2007 and Wednesday, February 21, 2007 with the same information regarding the March 1, 2007 meeting.
- Response F-6 The commenter states that residents of Hirschdale met with Sierra Pacific for an onsite meeting on March 9, 2007. The comment is noted.
- Response F-7 The commenter states that the power line should be undergrounded through the Hirschdale community or rerouted around the Hirschdale community. Regarding undergrounding of the proposed power line, please see Response B-1. Regarding re-routing of the proposed power line, please see Response D-1.

Response F-8 The commenter includes five photographs showing the existing transmission lines in Hirschdale on and over their property. The comment is noted. Visual impacts are addressed in IS/MND Section 2.1, *Aesthetics*.

March 16, 2007

California Public Utility Commission:

I writing regarding the Sierra Pacific Power Company's Hirschdale Power Line Project. I've lived in Hirschdale for 25 years. Peter and I own the property at 10930 Floriston Ave. 15 of the 26 homes have year round residents. 10 of the homes have been occupied for 25 years or longer by the same families. I would attribute this longevity to the uniqueness of our community. When you are in Hirschdale you feel miles from civilisation, the setting is serene and close to nature. We sit in a bowl with mountains on two sides of us and the beautiful Truckee River in front of us. I know of at least 39 bird species living in our area sometime during the year. A few of the animals that live near us are: mountain lion, bobcat, deer, bear, beaver, cottontail rabbit, marmot, porcupine, and coyote. It is easy to feel a part of a time gone bye and a world that is vanishing. Many of us have chosen quality of life over large incomes. Wages do not compare to those in the San Francisco Bay Area but the trade has always been worth the sacrifices. Sierra Pacific's proposed power line project puts all that we hold dear in jeopardy. I am strongly opposed to the loop going through Hirschdale. Our power service is as good as anywhere in the Sierra's, given the weather conditions. We would rather suffer with additional power outages than have the project in Hirschdale. It is inconceivable to us that Sierra Pacific should be allowed to proceed, through Hirschdale, with this project, We have the following concerns about the project. They are not necessarily listed in order of priority since they all seem important.

G-1

The Sierra Pacific project will compromise the value of our homes and our quality of life, needlessly and unfairly. The project is to run through Hirschdale for the ease and convenience of Sierra Pacific yet does not benefit us. The fact is that Sierra Pacific gave no consideration to our community or our wishes. They admittedly did not even look for an alternate or a better route to take the loop. The loop is intended for the bedroom community of Glenshire. Hirschdale is in the Nevada County, not the Town of Truckee. The Town of Truckee wanted the project pushed onto Hirschdale since they did not want any larger poles obstructing the view going along Glenshire Drive. The truth of it is that Glenshire Drive, going east, is the access to Highway 80, no one lives on that stretch of the road. People travel that section of the road to get to and from work. Yes, there is a beautiful view along the road but it is not marked or travelled as a scenic byway. It isn't a tourist spot. The trees closest to the road are very young, small trees. It would make much more sense to have the poles loop along that section of Glenshire Drive. Another possibility is an area east of Hirschdale where a major forest fire started several years ago. Just before that, as you leave Hirschdale on the dirt road, are power poles going up the hill to Glenshire. The trees have already been removed to allow power poles. There is an access road behind Hirschdale that could be used so as not to destroy trees and property in our community.

G-2

Peter and I have a power pole in our front yard. Sierra Pacific did not even bother to notify us of this project. Notification seemed hit or miss which indicates their lack of respect and regard for people who have been long time customers. We do not want a new large, taller pole on our property. We are concerned about possible consequences of placing a new pole 7 1/2 feet into the ground. Quoting the report, "average area of disturbance for installation of new pole 100 sq. feet." "blasting could be necessary in areas where there is rocky terrain...blasting would be

G-3

G-4

conducted only where digging is impeded by bedrock.” The power pole sits in our garden about 25 -30 feet from our house. We are on a septic system and the septic tank and leach field are all in the same area. This is the only place on our property where we are able to have the septic system. If blasting is necessary I’m concerned about possible damage to our septic system and property. We do not want a larger, higher voltage pole 25 feet from where we live and sleep. We understand that EMF has not been proven to be a health hazard. On the other hand, it has not been proven to be safe either. Since there are miles of open space between Hirschdale and Glenshire we do not feel that we should have to be subjected unnecessarily to possible health risks. Our welfare should come first. The following quote comes directly from the project report, “Most recently the International Agency for Research on Cancer and the California Department of Health Services both classified EMF as a possible carcinogen,” Again, given the fact that the affects of EMF are still uncertain among scientists and physicians, we choose NOT to have high voltage poles running through our neighbourhood either above or underground. As far a we are concerned our deed only gives Sierra Pacific the right to have the pole that are currently in the ground or ones that are exactly the same. In addition to our concerns about EMF, I am very concerned about the affect on my health of having a helicopter flying in Hirschdale all summer. I have had asthma since I was a child. The proposed project is to start in July. At that time of the year there is a lot of dust and pollen from pine trees. flowering trees, sage, and flowering plants. We live on a dirt road, we have no asphalt on our property. This summer will be especially dry and dusty since we are only at 50% of normal precipitation. No amount of mitigation will prevent adverse health conditions for me. I’m very concerned as to whether my lungs can endure 3 or more months of asthma.

G-4 (cont.)

G-5

G-6

G-7

My next area of concern is closest to my heart. It is the devastation to the wildlife. The report mentions a hand full of birds and a couple animals and states low to no impact. Low to no impact certainly is not what the birds, bats, and squirrels will experience when the tree in which they nest come down. Low to no impact is not what the cottontails, chipmunks, ground squirrels, and snakes will experience as the ground is being cleared. But who cares since only humans are considered of value. What kind of biologist says no impact. Perhaps the biologist didn’t realise that we are not in a city and the wildlife are not taxidermists examples of species. The report talked about raptors in terms of the Northern Goshawk and the Bald Eagle nest 4 miles away. It is true that the eagle nest is 4 miles away but the biologist fails to realise that the eagles are seen in Hirschdale quite often. They hunt here, they spend time soaring and riding the air currents above us. I don’t believe that we have any Northern Goshawks in Hirschdale. Raptors that are known to live here are: Bald Eagle, Golden Eagle, Osprey, Red Tailed Hawk, and Sparrow Hawk now known as the American Kestrel. Attached is a list of 39 birds that live around us. It isn’t complete, just what we could remember seeing, many are migratory birds and some are song birds. I thought that raptors, migratory birds, and song birds were protected? I shouldn’t have to state the obvious but you are starting this project while all the birds are nesting and raising their young. Some of the birds have two hatches during the summer. Do you realise that from 1940 to the 1980’s 50 percent of our migratory songbirds disappeared? Migratory song bird populations are currently disappearing at about 3% per year, We have hummingbirds that arrive at the end of March and stay through mid-September. Hummingbirds are under increasing pressure as their habitat is lost, especially at the other end of their migration. Most birds species come back to Hirschdale year after year, generation after generation. Sierra Pacific is going to destroy hundreds of birds and possibly future generations. We also have bats that live here during the summer. Ours are the Little Brown Bat. They are declining in number due to problems where they hibernate. It actually an interesting story but this isn’t the time. They migrate here and live in the trees. They are mammals and their young cling to the trees until they are old enough to fly. They are very beneficial, keeping insect populations in check, most

G-8

importantly mosquitos. For us, the cost to wildlife is the most insidious part of this project. All of these birds and animals are a huge part of why we live here. Quality of life and living in a natural setting, near nature, is very important to us. It is ironic that we give such lip service to saving the rain forest, protecting whales, wolves, mountain lions, most recently the polar bears, and stopping global warming, yet we seem unwilling to do the very thing the we are most able to do. We need to first protect what is in our own backyard and nearby open spaces. The report state that 24 trees will be removed, some are old growth trees that support a multitude of live. I realise that removing 24 trees may not seem like much but in reality it is 24 trees times a zillion projects that is destroying the Lake Tahoe/Truckee area and adversely impacting our wildlife and their habitat. I understand that none of the Hirschdale plant or animal species are on the endangered species list but we are endangering all of nature as man's foot print becomes ever larger. It amazes me that so many people started coming here to experience nature and all it's beauty yet now are the very cause of its demise. Where ever the project ends up being routed it should not be allowed to start until fall when species have finished raising their young, tourists have gone home, and fire dangers have lessened. That does not seem to much to ask. Please insist that the project not start until fall.

G-8 (cont.)

I respectfully request that the California Public Utility Commission turn down the Sierra Pacific Power Company's Hirschdale Power Line Project. Our tiny community should not have the burden and loss to property values, the life style that we embrace, and the danger to our health. Please walk in our shoes and know that you would not want your property values adversely affected, the health of your family endangered, the beauty of your surrounding community destroyed. There is no immediate need for this project. Hirschdale should not be sacrificed to benefit Glenshire, the Town of Truckee, and large corporations that want additional power lines for future development. Sierra Pacific must be required to find an alternate route, bypassing Hirschdale. Since this project is not immediately necessary, Sierra Pacific has plenty of time to explore alternatives and find a route that will be acceptable, one that does not involve Hirschdale Please do what is right for the little person instead of siding with big business. Thank you for your time.

G-9

Sincerely,

Jamie Cole
Peter Rivara

Letter G – Jamie Cole and Peter Rivara

- Response G-1 The commenters generally state their opposition to the Proposed Project. The comment is noted.
- Response G-2 The commenter states that the Proposed Project will compromise property values in Hirschdale and suggests two alternate routes for the proposed power line to avoid the community of Hirschdale. Regarding adverse affects to property values, please see Response A-1. Regarding alternate routes, please see Response D-1.
- Response G-3 The commenter states that Sierra Pacific did not notify the residents of Hirschdale about the Proposed Project. As part of the CEQA process, the CPUC notified the public regarding the environmental review process in a February 16, 2007 Notice of Intent to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration notice. Regarding noticing, please see also Response F-5.
- Response G-4 The commenter states its concern regarding blasting activities associated with project construction and potential impacts to nearby septic tanks. Please see Response PM-5.
- Response G-5 The commenter states its concern regarding potential health risks associated with EMF from the proposed power line. Regarding potential health impacts, please see Response PM-7.
- Response G-6 Regarding Sierra Pacific’s easement to complete the Proposed Project, please see Response F-2.
- Response G-7 The commenter states that the Proposed Project will adversely affect its asthma and that no amount of mitigation will prevent adverse impacts to its health. IS/MND Section 2.3, *Air Quality*, analyzes Proposed Project impacts to air quality. As stated in the IS/MND, air quality impact as analyzed pursuant to CEQA, would be less than significant. In addition, as discussed in Response F-3, while helicopters would be used for pole installation, helicopters would no longer be used for conductor stringing in the town of Hirschdale.
- Response G-8 The commenter disagrees that the Proposed Project would have a “low to no impact” to wildlife. In particular, the commenter states that potential effects to raptors and migratory birds as well as bats are inadequately addressed. A list of bird species observed in the area is also provided by the commenter. As noted in Section 2.4, *Biological Resources*, CEQA must address potential effects to species of special concern, or “any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.” Species that meet this criteria and that may be affected by project activities are listed in Table 2.4-1 on IS/MND page 2.4-6. Species described by the commenter that occur in the project vicinity and that also meet this criterion include golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*), and osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*). Other species, including the little brown bat (*Myotis lucifugus*), do not meet this criterion and are therefore not addressed. Although osprey and golden eagle are not specifically addressed in the IS/MND, they are generally addressed under Impact 2.4-2 (IS/MND page 2.4-15), which addresses potential effects to nesting raptors. Mitigation Measures 2.4-2a and 2.4-2b address this potential impact and would protect active nest stands for all raptors in the project area.

The commenter also states that the removal of 24 trees may be a significant impact because some are “old growth” and their removal is significant on a cumulative level. CEQA requires that the removal/modification of upland vegetation be considered potentially significant if it is either habitat for species addressed by the criterion above (“special status species”) or if it is a “sensitive natural community.” While some of the trees on the site may be considered habitat for the special status species described above, it is a regionally abundant habitat type. In addition, tree removal would be spread over a broad area. Therefore, this impact is not significant when considered individually and cumulatively.

Lastly, the commenter stated that the start date of construction should be moved to the fall to prevent impacts to nesting raptors and songbirds in the area. IS/MND Mitigation Measures 2.4-2a and 2.4-2b state that when feasible, all vegetation clearing shall occur outside of the nesting and breeding season. A qualified biologist would conduct a pre-construction survey for nesting birds within one week prior to the start of any possible nest-disturbing activities that would occur during the breeding and nesting season. For any active nests found, an appropriate nest protection zone shall be assigned by the biologist in coordination with DFG and USFWS guidelines. Active nests would be monitored during construction; if disturbance to a nesting bird is observed, construction activities would be halted and appropriate regulatory agencies would be contacted.

Response G-9

The commenter generally states its opposition to the Proposed Project. The comment is noted. Specifically, the commenter cites as reasons for its opposition issues related to decrease in property values, adverse affects to the character of the community of Hirschdale, and potential health hazards. The commenter also states that it would like Sierra Pacific to construct the power line on an alternate route. Regarding property values, please see Response A-1. Regarding adverse visual impacts to the community, please see Response B-1.

Regarding potential health hazards, please see Response PM-7. And regarding alternate routes for the power line, please see Response D-1.

Mr. John Boccio:

I am responding to the initial study you have done and want to point out some items of concern that I have with your study.

H-1

This project has no benefit to the community of Hirschdale only to SPPC and future development in the surrounding areas. It puts the residents at risk from EMF and makes the power poles even a more visible eyesore.

AESTHETICS

Presently the power lines going thru Hirschdale are very visible and do take away from the scenery we have of the mountains and Truckee River. If the upgraded transmission line is constructed and 10 feet more pole height is added the visual effect will be even more so, as the poles can be seen from a further distance.

H-2

The Town of Truckee has identified the Truckee River as a scenic resource and Interstate 80 as a scenic corridor and Hirschdale to be within the Sphere of Influence. The Town of Truckee persuaded Nevada County to not issue a permit for another project that is 1 mile down the road from Hirschdale (a mini storage project) within the Sphere of Influence of the Town of Truckee, because of the damage to the scenic resources into the town via Glenshire Drive.

H-3

In other areas of the Initial Study the Sphere of Influence for the Town of Truckee is addressed but is missing in the aesthetics portion.

Sooner or later Hirschdale will be annexed into the Town of Truckee and I would hope that SPPC would be planning for such things in the future and consider putting the new line underground as the Town of Truckee requires for new construction.

H-4

SAFETY/ HEALTH

The Initial study states that there is no sufficient evidence that concludes that EMF causes cancer, but goes on to say the California Department of Health Services classifies EMF as a possible carcinogen. I went online to explore EMF and came up with 75,000 hits, that must mean something. It is not proven that EMF does not have health effects and or cancer.

So 20+ years ago we said the same about smoking, and now we say smoking causes cancer.

H-5

I would hope SPPC looks at this as a way to be a good neighbor and steps up to the plate in a positive way to support the community by putting the powerlines underground and not go with the low cost attitude to fix unknown hazards of EMF.

If underground is too costly than another route bypassing Hirschdale should be explored.

Duane Brunson
10909/10931 Floriston Ave
530-587-6474

Letter H – Duane Brunson

- Response H-1 The commenter states its general opposition to the Proposed Project. The comment is noted. Specifically, the commenter cites as reasons for its opposition issues related to health (EMF) and aesthetic impacts. Regarding health effects, please see Response PM-7. Regarding aesthetic impacts, please see Response B-1.
- Response H-2 The commenter states that the Proposed Project would result in an added visual impact to the visual quality of the area because of the increased pole heights. Visual impacts to the Truckee River as well as the surrounding community are addressed in IS/MND Section 2.1, *Aesthetics*.
- Response H-3 The commenter states that the Truckee River is identified as a scenic resource by the Truckee General Plan and states that the community of Hirschdale is within the Town of Truckee’s sphere of influence. As stated on IS/MND page 2.9-3, it is true that the Proposed Project is located within the Town of Truckee’s sphere of influence. In addition, the IS/MND identified the Truckee River as a scenic resource (see IS/MND page 2.1-2). The commenter states that the Town of Truckee’s sphere of influence is not discussed in the Aesthetics section of the MND. A discussion of the Town of Truckee General Plan as well identification of the Truckee River as a scenic resource is included in Section 2.1, *Aesthetics*, on IS/MND pages 2.1-2, 2.1-4, and 2.1-5.
- In addition, as stated on IS/MND page 2.9-4, the Town of Truckee Development Code does not apply to electrical transmission and distribution lines that carry less than 100 kV. Moreover, as stated on IS/MND page 2.9-3, local regulation of electric power line projects is preempted under CPUC General Order 131-D.
- Response H-4 Regarding conformance to Town of Truckee plans and polices, please see Response H-3.
- Response H-5 The commenter states its concern regarding potential health effects of EMF. The commenter also states that the proposed power line should be constructed underground or on an alternate route. Regarding health effects related to EMF, please see Response PM-7. Regarding undergrounding of the power line, please see Response B-1. And regarding alternate power line routes, please see Response D-1.

Sierra Pacific Hirschdale Truckee Power line Project

March 17th, 2007

The following are comments from Riaz and Lisa Finnemore in regards to the Hirschdale electrical project.

Mailing address:

979 Rhode Island Street, San Francisco, Ca 94107

Home phone 415-641-6023

Email address- Lisa@Finnemore.net and Riaz@Finnemore.net

Property owners of:

10905 Floriston Ave, Truckee Ca

Parcel 48-120-35-000

Summary

We are opposed to the new Hirschdale power line project (A.06-04-017) Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration (Draft MND) 60 Sierra Pacific wants to erect in the Town of Truckee, Hirschdale division. We feel this will have a significant impact on our lives, future generations and our current and future property value. We believe that the new power line would not be legally right to construct.

I-1

We would like Sierra Pacific to consider all of the below before placing these unwanted power lines in our neighborhood and the effects of these power lines to the residence of the Hirschdale community. We read through the Draft mitigated negative declaration booklet and could not find any benefit to this community or ourselves.

Issues and Concerns with the Sierra Pacific Plan which will have a significant impact to our lives

- Concern or fear of possible health effects from electric or magnetic fields caused by high voltage lines. It is not proven that this does not cause health effects and or cancer. Studies have shown that EMF's to alter cell structure. We do not want to risk our health for these additional power lines.
- Visual unattractiveness of the new transmission lines- this will change the natural beauty of the community
- The noise from the construction- 7 days a week 12 hours a day and helicopter noise.
- The potential noise from the transmission noise (hissing and crackling)
- Devalue of our property because of all of the above – Statistic's state at least 14% decrease in property value based on new high voltage lines
- Loss of vacation rental income due to construction and unattractiveness of the power lines.
- Impact to wildlife, nature and future generations.

I-2
I-3
I-4
I-5
I-6

Additional information requested prior to approval

Before this project can continue we request the following information and or questions to be answered by Sierra Pacific

- Need additional photos that show a realistic view of the full impact. The current photos do not adequately show what the impact will be to the community and to the environment. Only one photo we believe does show what a huge impact these wires will have on the community, all others photos distance is too far away to show an accurate photo. The photos need to show all views from the

I-7

community's point, the river and open lots. Also included would be to show the full impact of cut back trees and cut down trees. For example: there are several low, one story homes where the wires would show above the roof line while looking from the bridge and or the river . Recommended list of photos are on the last page.

- The town of **Truckee General plan 2025 listed on page 2.1-4** would be impacted and this would have a significant impact to the natural beauty of the river, the hillside and the bluffs. This has an impact to future generations and the communities of Truckee at whole, who come to our community to enjoy nature, fly fishing, kayaking, hiking, biking, picnicking, etc. Need further investigation on the general plan to this project. Today you barley notice any wires if this project is erected it would change the natural environment. **This additional line has a huge impact on the beauty of our environment and the town of Truckee, which is in contradiction to the general plan of the town of Truckee** which states “ that the natural environment around corridors such as the Truckee river, hill side and bluffs should be protected.”
- The Sierra Pacific easements state the following “*an electrical transmission line consisting of* “. By definition this means one or singular. The plan proposes an additional line which would exceed **one** line erected but **two** lines which is not “**an**” or “**a line**” per the easement agreement. **It may not be legal to add another power line without an addendum to the easements or to re-purchase a new easement from the current property owners.** We are requesting this be reviewed legally.
- Are you asking any property owner who is not part of Sierra Pacific easement to cut back or cut down trees? If so, we would oppose any cutting of any trees on our property to support this additional line.
- Sierra Pacific will need to mark the easements for the community and land owners so that we all can visually see how large purchased easements are compared to the full impact of the new power lines and the property needed both on the ground and in the air to support the additional transmission line.
- What are the legal set back requirements for homes from high voltage lines? Various safety and insurance organizations consider anything outside of the ELV range (i.e. greater than 50 V) to be dangerous and in need of regulation. Voltages above this range are capable of producing heart fibrillation if they produce electric currents in body tissues which happen to pass through the chest area. What will be the safety requirements for these wires? I have read many states require 12-16 feet safe distance to the poles is required .No building of metal structures, metal fences are allowed within this distance of the poles and wires
- Sierra Pacific will need to retain a qualified biologist. The community will need to ensure that Sierra Pacific is not disturbing any rare or protected species and animals such as, snowshoe hare, hawks, bald eagles, Sierra Nevada red fox, American marten, northern goshawk, Sierra mountain beaver, Hermit warbler and mountain yellow-legged frog, Lahontan cutthroat trout etc...
- This project is located within an important deer habitat, some of the deer's are the black tailed and Rocky mountain mule deer which are known to be spotted in the Truckee area and Hirschdale hillsides. The shrubs in our community are an

I-7 (cont.)

I-8

I-9

I-10

I-11

I-12

I-13

I-14

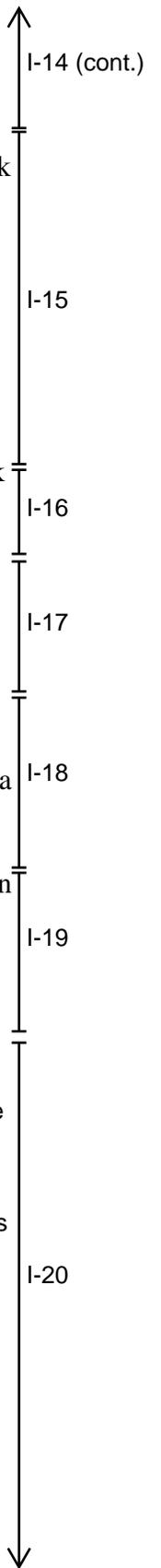
important habitat for the migrating deer's. What is the mitigation if Sierra Pacific removes their vegetation, will it have an impact on future migrating deer's throughout Truckee? This is something that needs to be considered.

- There is a creek that flows from our hillside above our homes and community year round to the Truckee River waterway, this creek and any underground creek could be supporting riparian habitat. This has wetlands associated within and could be a breeding ground for Brown and Golden wild trout and Federally-threatened /protected Lahontan cutthroat trout. We would like to see a biology report on the environmental impact of the construction to this waterway and the wetland in the hillside. We would like Sierra Pacific to consult the Army core and the Lahontan water quality control board in regards to this creek and many of the underground creeks that exist in the Hirschdale hillside. We would also like to see the soil engineering report to the hillside above our community.
- Please create a new mitigation for construction the current plan of 7 days a week 12 hours a day is not acceptable. This would allow no time to enjoy any peace and quiet in our neighborhood for the months of construction
- High voltages often produce violet-colored corona discharges in air, as well as visible sparks, hissing and crackling sounds. Please provide an example of a sound file so that we all understand the noise levels generated by the proposed transmission lines.
- Was the "aging 608" maintained to a reliable service condition before it was removed in 2004? SPPC maintains the 608 line is "difficult to access" as a contributing reason this project is needed. It seems if it was accessed a 70 years ago go without helicopters, all terrain vehicles it should be able to be accessed today with the current transportation choices.
- Please explore and report out on other option for placement of these transmission wires that would help protect our health, the environment and our property values, such as
 1. Away from the homes and our community
 2. An underground option so that are buried deep in the ground.

Recommended photos-

The following photos should be taken

1. A photo showing what it will look like from the bridge looking towards the neighborhood hillside
2. A photo showing the impact of the wires on low sq feet homes above their roof line
3. A photo taken from the river looking at open lots on the river
4. A photo where there are 1 story homes
5. A photo showing trees removed or cut back and the impact of less foliage where the new poles will be placed
6. A photo from Hirschdale street right before you turn the road to Floriston Street looking up at the hills above the neighborhood
7. A photo taken looking down from the hill looking down at the open lot (looking down towards the river) this an open lot and will have an impact to the view from the hillside
8. A photo looking up off the fire road from the other side of the river (not the home side) facing the hillside, about 50 feet from the last house on Floriston street.
9. A photo from the y where Floriston and Hirschdale meet prior to entering the neighborhood facing the hillside
10. A photo from the Hillside above Hirschdale and the Y of Floriston street towards the river above the proposed wires.



Comment Letter I

Please provide the neighborhood with these additional photos so that we can have a true assessment of the new power lines. Each photo should show before and after.

↑
I-20 (cont.)

Letter I – Riaz and Lisa Finnemore

Response I-1 The commenters state their opposition to the Proposed Project. Regarding the Proposed Project's affects on property values, please see Response A-1. The commenter also states that the IS/MND does not state any benefits to the residents of Hirschdale. CEQA does not require the MND to include a discussion of benefits to the surrounding community, rather it requires that environmental effects on the surrounding environment be disclosed. Regarding impacts on the surrounding environment, see generally IS/MND Section 2, *Environmental Checklist and Discussion*.

Response I-2 Regarding potential adverse health effects due to EMF, please see Response PM-7.

Response I-3 Regarding visual impacts, please see Response B-1.

Response I-4 Regarding project construction noise impacts, please see Responses A-2 and F-3.

Response I-5 Regarding impacts to property values as well as loss of vacation rental income, please see Response A-1.

Response I-6 The commenters state their concern for wildlife, nature, and future generations. This comment does not state a specific concern or question regarding a significant environmental impact or the adequacy of the IS/MND. Impacts to wildlife are discussed in IS/MND Section 2.4, *Biological Resources* and impacts to nature in general are addressed throughout IS/MND Section 2, *Environmental Checklist and Discussion*.

Response I-7 The commenters state that additional photographs are needed to show the full visual impact of the Proposed Project. As stated in Response B-1, visual simulations showing the Proposed Project were included in the IS/MND (see IS/MND Figures 2.1-2 through 2.1-4). Visual impacts to the Truckee River as well as the surrounding community are addressed in IS/MND Section 2.1, *Aesthetics*.

However, in response to this comment, Figure 2.1-5: Existing Similar Structures, is added as IS/MND page 2.1-10. Additionally, the text of the first paragraph on IS/MND page 2.1-5 is changed to read:

... Moreover, the Proposed Project would not significantly impact existing views from the Town of Hirschdale, as the Proposed Project consist of the replacement of existing poles with poles that would be 9 feet taller and the addition of three heavier conductors. Figure 2.1-5 shows a close-range view of a similar structure to give the reader a

conceptual idea of what the proposed poles would look like.

Additionally, as shown in Figure 2.1-1, the Proposed Project would not be visible from Glenshire Road looking southeasterly toward the Truckee River and the slopes in the background. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not result in a substantial adverse affect on a scenic vista and therefore, this impact would be less than significant.

The commenters also state that the visual simulations need to show the impact of cut back and removed trees. As stated in Response F-3, because helicopters would no longer be used to string conductor wire from Poles 5 to 11, tree removal through the town of Hirschdale is no longer necessary. However, some trees along the project route may still need to be removed (between Poles 1 and 5 and 11 and 19). Additionally, trees along the project route would need to be trimmed to be in compliance with CPUC General Order 95, Rule 35, regarding tree trimming. Because trees would have to be trimmed along the existing project route to be in compliance with General Order 95 regardless of the Proposed Project, visual impacts associated with tree trimming would be less than significant. Visual impacts associated with tree removal would also be less than significant because as discussed in Response F-3, tree removal would not occur within the town of Hirschdale. Additionally, for the areas where trees may be removed, the removal of those trees would not significantly affect the visual character of the area that contains an existing transmission line and is surrounded by other mature growth trees.

- Response I-8 Regarding consistency with the Town of Truckee General Plan, please see Response H-3.
- Response I-9 The commenters state that Sierra Pacific's easement does not include the use of an additional power line. Please see Response F-2.
- Response I-10 The commenters state their concern that Sierra Pacific will ask property owners to trim or remove trees from their property. Sierra Pacific would not affirmatively require property owners to do anything to prepare for project construction. As stated in Response F-3, tree removal between Pole 5 and Pole 11 will no longer be required. However, Sierra Pacific and/or its contractor(s) would still need to trim trees along the project corridor and may need to remove trees between Pole 11 and Pole 19 and between Pole 1 and Pole 5 in compliance with General Order 95. However, tree trimming or removal activities would only occur within Sierra Pacific's existing easement.
- Response I-11 The commenters request that Sierra Pacific mark the boundaries of the easements. This comment is beyond the scope of this CEQA analysis and

does not state a specific concern or question regarding a significant environmental impact or the adequacy of the IS/MND.

- Response I-12 The commenters state their concern regarding the safety of structures and people near power line. Regarding potential health effects related to EMF exposure, please see Response PM-7. The commenters request ‘safe distances’ to the poles from structures/buildings. Under General Order 95, Section 37 Minimum Clearances of Wires above Railroads, Thoroughfares, Buildings, Etc., Table 1, for a 60 kV power line, the minimum vertical clearance required is 12 feet and the minimum horizontal clearance is 6 feet (CPUC, 2006).
- Response I-13 The commenters state that a qualified biologist will need to be retained by Sierra Pacific. Mitigation Measures 2.4-1 and 2.4-2b (see IS/MND pages 2.4-14 through 2.4-16) require that a qualified biologist be retained to ensure that potential effects to various special status species are avoided or minimized. In addition, the commenters state that the community of Hirschdale needs to ensure that Sierra Pacific does not disturb any rare or protected plant or wildlife species present in the project area. Please see Response PM-3. Impacts to special-status species as well as mitigation measures to address those impacts are discussed on IS/MND pages 2.4-15 through 2.4-16. In addition, as stated in the Mitigation Monitoring, Reporting and Compliance Program contained as IS/MND Chapter 5, the CPUC is responsible for enforcing the procedures for monitoring through the environmental monitor. The environmental monitor shall note problems with monitoring, notify appropriate agencies or individuals about any problems, and report the problems to the CPUC.
- Response I-14 The commenters state that shrubs in the Hirschdale and Truckee area provide migration habitat for deer. As described in Section 2.4, construction activities associated with the Proposed Project would be temporary and would occur in an area that sees a fair amount of human activity. Therefore, while construction activities may temporarily disrupt seasonal forage and movement activities of deer, they would not result in a permanent change in foraging availability, nor would they result in a change in existing or future migration patterns.
- Response I-15 The commenters request that a biology report be completed that assesses the potential construction impacts to a creek that flows from their hillside above their homes and community to the Truckee River. The commenter states that it could be a breeding ground for brown and golden trout and federally listed Lahontan cutthroat trout. Please see Response N-12 which notes that all drainages and wetland features would be avoided by construction equipment and any vegetation clearing would be done by hand. Furthermore, any

proposed construction activities within wetlands or other waters of the U.S. that may discharge fill into those features must first be permitted under Sections 404 and 401 of the Clean Water Act. While the Proposed Project does not propose to discharge fill into any of these features, the project applicant would adhere to the requirements of the Clean Water Act throughout project construction.

Response I-16 Regarding construction noise, please see Responses A-2 and F-3.

Response I-17 The commenters request a sound file of the noise levels from the corona discharge that would be generated by the Proposed Project. This comment is beyond the scope of this CEQA analysis and does not state a specific concern or question regarding a significant environmental impact or the adequacy of the IS/MND. IS/MND pages 2.11-10 through 2.11-11 address operation noise impacts associated with corona discharge.

Response I-18 Regarding alternate routes please see Response D-1.

Response I-19 Regarding property values, please see Response A-1. Regarding alternate routes, please see Response D-1. And regarding undergrounding of the power line, please see response B-1.

Response I-20 The commenters request that additional photographs be taken from 10 suggested vantage points. Regarding existing conditions photographs and visual simulations, please see Response I-7.



Sierra Pacific Hirschdale Power Line Project . 206056

SOURCE: Sierra Pacific (2007)

Figure 2.1-5
Existing Similar Structures

Public Comment Card

Sierra Pacific Power Company's Hirschdale Power Line Project
 Draft IS/MND Public Meeting
 March 1, 2007 7:00 P.M.



Comment Card: Name: Richard Hinkel

Address: 10953 Floriston Ave

Comment: ASK YOURSELF. Do you want a high power transmission line twenty feet out your front door?

J-1

- How would that impact your property value?

- Smoking for years was not a cause of cancer. High Power line have the same type health

concerns and debates. When it is determined high voltage electrical fields do cause health problems, will the Power Company compensate my living relatives?

J-2

- There are alternative routes. Why are these not being considered. Underground (Too expensive) What is the cost of our health.

J-3

- The current power line runs across a private building. See Photo 1 IS this proper? Notice the old growth tree on the left. IT STAYS.

J-4

- Photo's 2 and 3 show our quite community. This project definitely has a negative impact of all the homeowners, ~~and~~ residents, and visitors.

J-5

- I recommend an alternative route be found.

J-6



Photo | **Comment Letter J**
J-4 (cont.)

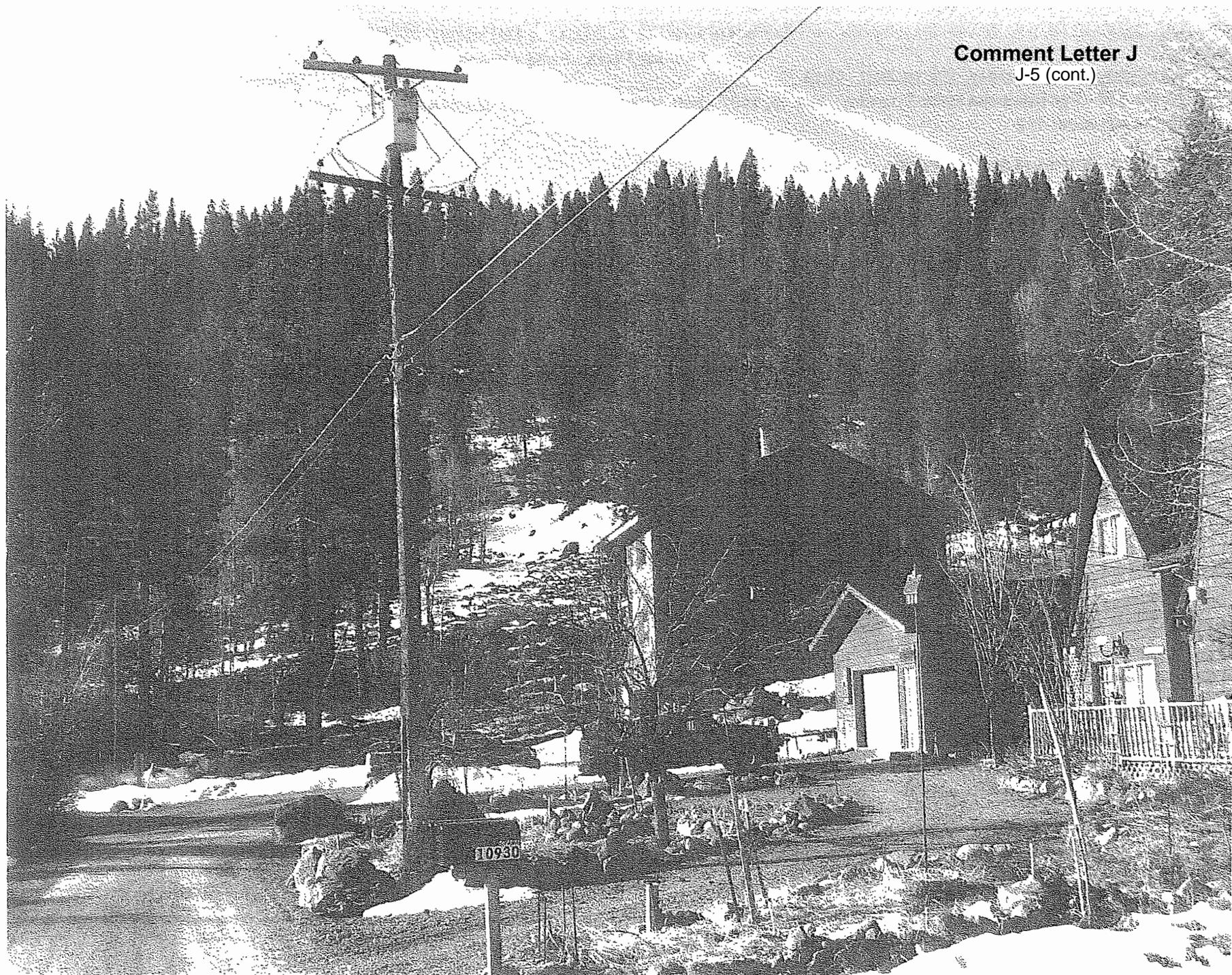


Photo 2



Photo 3

DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION

Nevada-Yuba-Placer Unit

13760 Lincoln Way

Auburn, CA 95603

Website: www.fire.ca.gov

(530) 823-4904



March 16,2007

TO: Michael Rosauer

California Public Utilities Commission

505 Van Ness Avenue

San Francisco, CA 94102

RE: Mitigated Neg Dec Sierra Pacific Power Hirsedale Power Line Project

SCH#: 2007022078

Prior to construction, this project may require a Timberland Conversion and Timber Harvest Plan as per the following:

California Code of Regulations, per section 1103, and Public Resources Code 4581 requires a Timberland Conversion Permit and/or Timber Harvest Plan be filed with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection if the project involves the removal of a crop of trees of commercial species (regardless of size of trees or if trees are commercially harvested).

K-1

The Timberland Conversion Permit shall address the following:

- a. *The decrease in timber base in the county as a result of the project.*
- b. *The cover type, including commercial species, density, age, and size composition affected by the project.*
- c. *The ground slopes and aspects of the area affected by the project.*
- d. *The soil types affected by the project.*
- e. *Any significant problems that may affect the conversion.*

If you require further clarification, please contact Forester Jeff Dowling at (530) 587-8926.

Sincerely,

Brad Harris
Unit Chief

Jeff Dowling
Truckee Area Forester

jd

Letter K – California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

Response K-1 The commenter states that a Timberland Conversion Permit and/or Timber Harvest Plan may be required for the Proposed Project if it “involves the removal of a crop of trees of commercial species.” As stated on IS/MND page 1-9 and 1-10, if trees are removed, they would be lopped and scattered within the ROW. Specifically, the wood would be cut into 12-inch lengths and the pieces larger than 8 inches in diameter would be split to speed drying. While Sierra Pacific would not use the trees that are to be removed for commercial purposes, trees of commercial species may nonetheless be removed. Since this comment was received, Forester Jeff Dowling of the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection has stated that Sierra Pacific may apply for a waiver from this permit requirement. However, Sierra Pacific will consult with the California Department of Forestry and obtain such a waiver. If a waiver is not available, Sierra Pacific, as required by California Public Resources Code Section 4581, will obtain the necessary Timberland Conversion Permit.

March 19, 2007

Mr. John Boccio
Hirschdale Powe Line Project
c/o Environmental Science Associates
225 Bush Street, Suite 1700
San Francisco, CA 94104
hirschdale@esassoc.com

Dr Mr. John Boccio,

The Hirschdale power line project (A.06-04-017) Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration (Draft MND) does not adequately consider the impacts and does not prove the legal right for the construction of the proposed 60 kV circuit.

L-1

Photos are needed which illustrate the esthetic impacts, and scenic vistas impacts from the residents' prospective. Resident's views are through the air space the proposed new wires, cross arms, insulators, hardware and poles would occupy causing degradation and significant impacts.

L-2

The proposed project would cause excessive use of the easements, which was not the original intent when easements were created.

The proposed project description states "the entire proposed route would be located on an existing Sierra Pacific easement", the existing Sierra Pacific easement is for the existing transmission line, which is also being used for distribution. Changing the terminology of the existing "transmission line" to a "distribution line" appears to be a strategic grammatical effort to misconstrue what the existing easement allows. The easement description does not allow for two transmission lines.

L-3

When taking into consideration that the easement was created for the existing transmission line and that there is no easement in effect which facilitates another transmission line, this project should not be allowed.

"The objective of the proposed project is to provide an alternative to the aging and difficult to maintain primary transmission path." An aging path is not a valid reason to cause environmental degradation through the historic, scenic, river corridor residential community.

L-4

If there is a need to provide an alternative transmission line, why was the 608 alternative transmission line removed? How does "intense development" warrant removing a needed source of alternative transmission power? Please explain.

L-5

Was the "aging 608" maintained to a reliable service condition before it was removed in 2004? How much of the 608 line that was damaged by the 2001 Martis Fire has been rebuilt? SPPC maintains the 608 line is "difficult to access" as a contributing reason this

L-6

project is needed. How much of the 608 line is located in the same area and uses the same access routes as the 621 line? Has the difficulty of access to maintain the 608 line changed since it was constructed 70 years ago? Can modern all-terrain equipment and helicopters significantly reduce the “access difficulty” “Access difficulty” does not appear to be a significantly concerning reason for needing to construct the new transmission line degrading our community’s environment.

↑
L-6
cont.

Who is responsible for the portion of the 608 line that has been removed? Should the party or entity responsible for the removal of the 608 line be responsible for replacing the line without environmental degradation of the Hirschdale Community?

Mitigation, which includes underground construction, may diminish significant environmental impacts.

Thank you for your consideration.

Larry and Cheryl Andresen
P. O. Box 34047
10867 Floriston Ave
Truckee, CA 96160
530-587-1985
landresen@telis.org

Letter L – Larry and Cheryl Andresen

- Response L-1 The commenter states that the IS/MND does not adequately address the impacts of the Proposed Project. This comment does not state a specific concern or question regarding a significant environmental impact or the adequacy of the IS/MND.
- Response L-2 The commenter states that aesthetic impacts from residents' views should be analyzed. Environmental review may focus on public views; under CEQA, "the question is whether a project will affect the environment of persons in general, not whether a project will affect particular persons. (See *Mira Mar Mobile Community v. City of Oceanside*, 119 Cal.App.4th 177). Additionally, the photographs and visual simulations provided in IS/MND Section 2.1, *Aesthetics*, provide representative views of the Proposed Project from the community of Hirschdale, which adequately represent visual impacts to individuals as well as the public in general. Additionally, please see Responses B-1 and I-7.
- Response L-3 Regarding the Sierra Pacific easement for the proposed project route, please see Response F-2.
- Response L-4 The commenter generally states that the Proposed Project objectives do not justify any environmental impacts to the community of Hirschdale. Please see Response D-1.
- Response L-5 The commenter states that Sierra Pacific's reason for choosing the Proposed Project route is insufficient. Please see Response D-1.
- Response L-6 Regarding undergrounding the proposed power line, please see Response B-1.

Comment Letter M

Dear Mr. John Boccio:

I am writing regarding the Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Sierra Pacific Power Company's Hirschdale Power Line Project. My primary concerns, as a home owner and resident of Hirschdale, are aesthetic and health.

M-1

The Project Description inaccurately describes the project as being near the town of Hirschdale when, in fact the project will go directly through the main street of our small town, with the greater length being outside of the town. So the impact is greater to us than one would suppose from the printed Project Initial Study.

M-2

The visual simulations that purport to show what the Proposed Project area would look like seem to be misleading to me, because they neither show the visual impact of the new lines after tree trimming and removal nor do they show the views of the lines actually going through our neighborhood - what we, the residents, will have to live with! These simulations only show what the person driving by our neighborhood will see. My view will be substantially degraded through this alteration - certainly any prospective buyer in our neighborhood would notice this. This issue concerns me not only because the visual impact will be so much greater than indicated, but also because it leads me to infer that the report may have the same "drive by" attitude in aspects that aren't so visible to those of us who are not technically oriented.

M-3

I am old enough to remember when sensible people thought that smoking was not a public health problem and research results remained inconclusive. The concern about electric and magnetic fields seems to be in a similar state today. If, indeed, the issues follow a similar course, I will have no recourse years from now if my health is compromised by these higher voltage wires.

M-4

Several years ago there was an incident when a live wire fell on the roadway. Fortunately it was not a windy day and no one was injured. We were just inconvenienced by the danger. With the taller poles our homes will not move farther from the lines, but would be closer targets.

M-5

Are these problems really necessary? Two alternatives that I can think of are to put the wires underground and thereby provide shielding for us from any dangers or gain another easement around the outside of Hirschdale where there are no residents and install the higher voltage wires there.

M-6

Thank you for your attention to my concerns. I would be interested in receiving the Final MND and knowing the subsequent action in this issue.

Very truly,

Miriam H. Minnis

10949 Floristan Avenue

P.O. Box 2170

Truckee, CA 96160

jminnis@usamedia.tv

530-587-2950

Letter M – Miriam H. Minnis

- Response M-1 The commenter states that it opposes the Proposed Project for primarily aesthetic and health reasons. Regarding visual impacts, please see Response B-1. Regarding health effects, please see Response PM-7.
- Response M-2 In response to this comment, the first paragraph of IS/MND page 1-1 is clarified to read:
- Sierra Pacific Power Company (Sierra Pacific), in its California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) application (A.06-04-017), filed on April 19, 2006, seeks a Permit to Construct (PTC) an approximately 3,500-foot power line of new 60 kilovolt (kV) circuit on an existing 12.5 kV distribution line in unincorporated Nevada County, through and near the town of Hirschdale, pursuant to CPUC General Order (GO) 131-D. ...
- Impacts to the town of Hirschdale are addressed throughout IS/MND Section 2.0, *Environmental Checklist and Discussion*.
- Response M-3 The commenter states that the visual simulations provided in IS/MND Section 2.1, *Aesthetics*, are misleading. Regarding visual impacts generally, please see Responses B-1 and I-7. Specifically, regarding private views, please see Response L-2. Regarding impacts to property values, please see Response A-1. Regarding visual impacts associated with tree removal, please see Response I-7. Regarding visual impacts associated with tree trimming, visual impacts would be less than significant because in compliance with CPUC General Order 95, Section 35, Sierra Pacific is currently (and would continue to be) required to trim trees along the power line route.
- Response M-4 Regarding health concerns related to EMF, please see Response PM-7.
- Response M-5 The commenter states its concern regarding the possibility that the new transmission line wires could fall on nearby homes. Sierra Pacific is required to periodically inspect and maintain their transmission system in accordance with applicable safety orders such as CPUC General Order 95 and the National Safety Electric Code (see IS/MND Section 1.9, *Operation and Maintenance*). Downing of transmission lines during extreme weather or other events can occur, but it does not rise to the level of a significant environmental impact under CEQA.
- Response M-6 Regarding alternate routes for the Proposed Project, please see Response D-1. Regarding undergrounding the proposed power line, please see Response B-1.



California Regional Water Quality Control Board Lahontan Region



Linda S. Adams
Secretary for
Environmental Protection

2501 Lake Tahoe Boulevard, South Lake Tahoe, California 96150
(530) 542-5400 • Fax (530) 544-2271
<http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/lahontan>

Arnold Schwarzenegger
Governor

Comment Letter N

MAR 19 2007

John Boccio
Hirschdale Power Line Project
% Environmental Science Associates
225 Bush Street, Suite 1700
San Francisco, CA 94104

COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT INITIAL STUDY AND MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION FOR SIERRA PACIFIC POWER COMPANY HIRSCHDALE POWER LINE PROJECT, NEVADA COUNTY (SCH# 2007022078)

Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board (Water Board) staff has reviewed the above Draft Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) document. Our comments follow.

Brief Project Description

The Hirschdale Power Line Project involves the construction of an approximately 3,500-foot long power line in unincorporated Nevada County. The Project would include installation of power poles and new conductor wire, and connect two existing power lines that Sierra Pacific currently operates. The proposed project would disturb approximately 15,000 square feet of soils during the installation of the power poles, clearing vegetation with a hydroaxe for a staging area, and construction of a new 20-foot wide and 500-foot long access road. Placement of poles would be accomplished via helicopter and removal of trees within the Right-of-Way would occur by hand using chain saws. The Project is situated on an existing Sierra Pacific easement on private property.

N-1

Comments

1. **Executive Summary: Environmental Impacts, Hydrology and Water Quality, Page ES-9.** This section of the document does not list any potential hydrological or water quality impacts, and includes the statement stating "No mitigation required." However, Figure 1-3, Project Area Map, shows potential jurisdictional waters of the US directly in the path of the proposed power line. Additionally, the Environmental Checklist and Discussion (Checklist), page 2.8-2, indicates that the proposed project corridor crosses three ephemeral channels. The Mitigation Measure discussions starting on page 2.8-4 indicate impact to these water bodies can be mitigated to "less than significant" through certain actions. The Executive Summary must reflect the information provided in the Checklist.

N-2

Staff Recommendations – The Executive Summary in the final IS/MND must include a listing of the potential environmental impacts; in this case, a statement that the proposed project could impact the listed water bodies which exist on and adjacent to the project site. The Executive Summary Mitigation Measures must discuss whether these waterbodies will be avoided or whether other Best Management Practices (BMPs) will be used to insulate the water bodies from site activities. Where the Checklist lists "Less than Significant," the Executive Summary must include that information.

N-2
cont.

2. **Section 1, Project Description, Subsection 1.8.1.3, Access Roads, Page 1-9.** The information provided in this section, and the Mitigation Measures section starting on page 2.8-4 on the proposed project road work lacks sufficient specificity to determine whether hydrologic impacts could occur within the project, or how these will be specifically mitigated. Furthermore, a footnote on page 1-8 indicates that the equipment which could be used to clear vegetation may be mounted on either a rubber-tired tractor or a bulldozer. These two pieces of heavy equipment have entirely different effects on soils and both must be evaluated individually in this document.

Staff Recommendations – The final environmental document must include the following information regarding road work in the project area: 1) whether the new road will be permanent or temporary (provide clarification regarding decommissioning vs. abandonment of roads); 2) the basis for the proposed road alignment; 3) clearer labeling on Figure 1-3 in order to differentiate shorter road segments by name; 4) road proximity to, and crossing of, any perennial, ephemeral, or jurisdictional waters and their 100-year flood plains (in both the narrative and Figure 1-3); 5) a topographic map (with a useful contour interval) of the project area footprint with specific BMPs identified; 6) a detailed discussion, in the appropriate Mitigation and Measures section, of all the BMPs to be applied, including revegetation and post-project monitoring of disturbed areas; 7) a description of the specific heavy equipment to be used to clear vegetation and how will each piece of equipment which may be used will affect soils and soil compaction; and 8) a spill contingency plan for heavy equipment.

N-3

3. **Section 1, Project Description, Subsection 1.8.1.5, Vegetation Removal, Page 1-9, and Section 2.4 Biological Resources.** The narrative indicates that a hydroaxe will be used to clear a 14,000 square foot staging area, an access road, and landing areas for a helicopter-delivered compressor. As noted above, a footnote illustrates that the specifics regarding the exact hydroaxe methodology (and therefore its impacts on the environment) have not been identified. The narrative also indicates that trees within the ROW will be felled by hand using chainsaws, but does not indicate whether any of these trees would be cut or lopped and scattered in or near the water channels or 100-year flood plains, or if trees required for the stability of soils along stream banks would be retained. Although Figure 1-3 identifies trees which are proposed to be removed, neither the map nor the narrative indicates where the water bodies are in relation to those trees.

N-4

Comment Letter N

Hirschdale Power Line Project

Additionally, the draft IS/MND is very vague throughout the document. This document contradicts itself regarding the "potential jurisdictional waters of the US" noted on Figure 1-3 and whether any riparian vegetation (e.g., aspen, alder, willow, etc.) exists or would be impacted by the planned vegetation removal. Page 2.4-2 notes that the southern-most ephemeral channel supports riparian vegetation, but does not indicate where this channel is, or if this riparian vegetation will be affected by the project. A description of the Operations on page 2.4-17 notes that "some" of the (presumably riparian) vegetation "would likely" be cleared for the installation of the power lines. Item "c)" on page 2.4-17 is the only place in the document which notes that the "potential jurisdictional waters of the US" are, in fact, jurisdictional, but adds that **no impact would occur by driving a heavy, tracked vehicle** (the hydroaxe, which, by the IS/MND's statement, could be mounted on a bulldozer) **directly through the wetlands**. The draft document again contradicts itself further down the page by indicating in section "e)" that wetlands, riparian zones, and streams will be spanned. Finally, although the draft IS/MND indicates that disturbed areas would be seeded following project completion, it does not propose any mitigation monitoring to ensure that the revegetation efforts will work. No specific revegetation efforts for the loss of the riparian vegetation are discussed.

N-5

N-6

N-7

Staff Recommendations – The final environmental document must include detailed, consistent, and specific information on the existing wetlands and riparian vegetation throughout the project sites, the potential impacts of each of the pieces of equipment which may be used during operations, the revegetation efforts (including the riparian vegetation), and the monitoring and follow-up mitigation efforts of all revegetation efforts. Staff recommends that monitoring efforts be conducted annually for at least five years to ensure that vegetation is re-established and soils are stabilized.

N-8

Water Board staff also recommends that the project be designed to avoid the destruction of any vegetation within the wetlands and along the ephemeral channel banks, which provide stability to the soils. Further, staff recommends that trees which must be removed near stream banks and the wetlands be directionally felled away from the channels and wetlands. If the project plans are not changed to avoid these impacts, the draft IS/MND must be changed to state that the proposed project, as currently described, will create significant impacts to the environment, by removing trees along watercourses and driving heavy equipment through wetlands and across ephemeral channels without mitigation measures. Finally, Water Board staff requests a copy of the wetlands delineation assessment to help evaluate the extent of impacts.

N-9

Section 1, Project Description, Subsection 1.8.1.5, Vegetation Removal, Page 1-9.

Please note that the Water Board adopted a renewed Timber Waiver at its February 14, 2007 meeting. The new application form and instructions have been updated and are available on our website at:

<http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/lahontan/>. Please review the eligibility criteria and conditions specified in the Timber Waiver instructions to ensure that this

N-10

Hirschdale Power Line Project

project will comply with the requirements and submit your application and all required information for the Timber Waiver once a decision on this project is made .

Staff Recommendations – Our Timber Waiver waives the requirement to submit reports of waste discharge or obtain waste discharge requirements for specified timber harvest activities where the project is shown to meet Water Quality Control Plan requirements. This project may be covered under this waiver; however, we will require more information and additional mitigation measures before we can grant the waiver for this project. The Timber Waiver application for the project will not be approved, and therefore no trees can be cut, if the project proponent continues to provide inconsistent information and propose the use of heavy equipment within the wetlands or across the ephemeral channels without mitigation measures. Water Board staff recommends that these proposed actions be removed from the project proposal in order to ensure that the Timber Waiver will be granted.

N-10
cont.

4. **Section 2.8, Hydrology and Water Quality, Hydrology and Water Quality Impacts and Mitigation Measures, Page 2.8-1.**

No further mention of the four waterbodies noted in Comment #1, above, or of spanning streams and wetlands, as in Comment #3, above, is made in the Hydrology and Water Quality section of the draft IS/MND. Furthermore, neither the ephemeral channels nor 100-year flood plains are shown on any maps. Statements within the Impacts and Mitigation Measures section of 2.8 continually note that the project area is not located within a 100-year flood plain, yet the project crosses these three channels. The Checklist does include information on beneficial uses and Clean Water Act Section 303(d) listing for excessive sedimentation of the adjacent Truckee River. However, Section 28 makes no connection between these requirements and potential project impacts to the specific water bodies on or near the project site. Disturbance of soils in or near the ephemeral channels could potentially discharge sediments into the Truckee River during precipitation events, yet this is never mentioned. The purpose of the IS/MND is to evaluate the potential impacts of the project on the specific surrounding environment, not to make broad statements about activities in general.

N-11

Staff Recommendations – Additional information to evaluate potential impacts to the "potential jurisdictional waters of the U.S." and three ephemeral channels must be provided. The final environmental document must provide consistent information regarding these already delineated wetlands (as noted above) throughout the document, but especially within this section, and provide alternative analyses to avoid all impacts to these sensitive wetlands. If the project is not changed to avoid these impacts the final document must be corrected to state that the project, as currently proposed, will create a significant impact by driving heavy equipment through wetlands and across ephemeral channels and their flood plains without mitigation measures.

N-12

Comment Letter N

Hirschdale Power Line Project

All water bodies and their 100-year flood plains must be properly illustrated on maps in the IS/MND in order to evaluate potential impacts. The narrative must also include detailed, consistent, and specific information on the location and type of these water bodies within and adjacent to the project boundaries, and every interaction the proposed project might have with these specific water bodies (i.e., road construction, stream/wetland crossings, timber removal activities, storage location and use of various chemicals, oils, greases, or fuel, etc.): If streams and wetlands are to be spanned to avoid impacts, then the narrative must include this information in this section, and include details on how the entire flood plains are to be spanned. Any proposed encroachment must be identified in the final environmental document, accompanied with sufficient information for this agency to evaluate whether or not such an impact would qualify for an exemption to a prohibition of the Water Quality Control Plan for the Lahontan Region (Basin Plan). The Basin Plan prohibits the discharge of earthen materials into the Truckee River and its tributaries (i.e., the three ephemeral channels), which would most likely occur if the hydroaxe was driven across these without any mitigation measures. The distance to, and slopes in the vicinity of, 100-year flood plains and water bodies must be taken in account when determining the potential for discharge of loosened soils into these sensitive areas.

N-13

Additionally, when discharges of dredge or fill materials (i.e., from crossings or other activities in or adjacent to the water body) to wetlands or other jurisdictional waters of the U.S. are involved in a project, it is mandatory that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Sacramento are contacted regarding applicable federal permitting requirements. If the project is subject to the jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, the Water Board may need to certify that the project is in compliance with state water quality standards and policies pursuant to Section 401 of the Clean Water Act.

N-14

Finally, as stated previously, equipment will not be allowed to operate within the designated wetlands or 100-year flood plains, without demonstrated operational mitigation measures and an exemption to Basin Plan prohibitions. Destruction of any portion of the wetlands must be mitigated at a ratio of 1½ created to 1 impacted. Water Board staff strongly recommends that the project proponent re-evaluate this portion of the proposal to develop routing around or over the wetlands and 100-year flood plains, or alternatives to cutting back the vegetation within these sensitive areas.

N-15

We have identified a number of potentially significant project effects on water quality that are not adequately analyzed or mitigated in the IS/MND. The document must disclose the specific impacts to waters proposed as part of the project, evaluate feasible mitigation measures, and impose specific, actual mitigation measures and monitoring requirements to reduce these impacts to insignificant levels, or the Lead Agency must prepare an Environmental Impact Report for this project. If any project-level impacts in 100-year flood plain areas are later associated with this Project, the

N-16

Comment Letter N

Hirschdale Power Line Project

- 6 -

Water Board will likely be unable to use the IS/MND, as prepared, for its CEQA compliance for any associated permitting for this project.

↑ N-16
| cont.

If you have questions regarding our comments, please contact Dale Payne at 530-542-5464, or George Cella (for timber-related issues) at 530-542-5426.



Lauri Kemper
North Lahontan Watersheds Division Manager

cc: State Clearinghouse
Michael Rosauer, California Public Utilities Commission

DYP/adw/T\ SPPC Hirschdale Project Comments 03-07-07.doc
[Sierra Pacific Power Company / Nevada County Cross-File Under: {timber, Nevada County}]

Letter N – California Regional Water Quality Control Board – Lahontan Region

Response N-1 The commenter provides a summary of the Proposed Project. This comment does not state a specific concern or question regarding a significant environmental impact or the adequacy of the IS/MND. The comment is noted.

Response N-2 The commenter summarizes inconsistencies between the Executive Summary and Environmental Checklist and Discussion sections in the IS/MND noting that the Executive Summary, when discussing Hydrology and Water Quality, states “No mitigation required” while the Environmental Checklist and Discussion indicates that impacts can be mitigated to “less than significant” through certain actions. To clarify, the proposed project includes construction practices and avoidances which will effectively avoid or reduce the potential for impacts to water quality without any additional mitigation as part of the IS/MND. Consistent with CEQA practice, applicant-proposed measures are treated as part of the Proposed Project and are not considered mitigation. As stated in the IS/MND page ES-2, Potential Environmental Impacts: “Based on the Draft IS/MND, approval of the application would have no impact *or less than significant effects* in the following areas: ...hydrology and water quality....” (emphasis added). Therefore, the Executive Summary is consistent with the Environmental Checklist and Discussion, which states that impacts associated with Hydrology and Water Quality would be less than significant or have no impact.

The commenter further states that the Executive Summary must include a list of potential environmental impacts as well as avoidance and/or minimization measures. Although an IS/MND is neither intended nor required to include the level of detail that is typically found in an EIR, since no guidance is provided for the requirements of an Executive Summary for an IS/MND, CEQA Guidelines, Section 15123, which contains guidance for preparing an EIR summary, was referenced. CEQA Guidelines Section 15123 states that “[a]n EIR shall contain a brief summary of the proposed actions and its consequences...and shall identify (1) each significant effect with proposed mitigation measures...that would reduce or avoid that effect...” Therefore, a list of potential environmental impacts and associated avoidance and/or minimization measures that do not rise to the level of a significant effect with proposed mitigation measures is not required. To help address this comment, however, the summary table on page ES-9 has been amended to include the following potential impact for clarification purposes:

Potential impacts to water quality were noted during the construction of the proposed project. The potential impacts were in general associated with ground disturbance activities which could have the potential to cause erosion and sedimentation of surface waters. However, the

proposed project plans include best management practices such as avoidance of the intersecting drainages, directionally felling trees away from water courses, and completion of work during the dry season which effectively reduce the potential impact to a less than significant level without any required mitigation.

Response N-3 In response to this comment, footnote two on IS/MND page 1-8 has been clarified to read:

² A hydroaxe is a type of vegetation cutting machine that is typically mounted on a rubber tired tractor or bulldozer. For the Proposed Project, only a rubber tired vehicle would be used.

Responding to Staff Recommendations with corresponding numbering:

- 1) As previously described, the hydroaxe would remove existing vegetation by cutting it down to approximately 5 inches above ground surface. This would leave the root zone intact so that the cut areas would quickly recover their natural vegetation and would be less prone to erosion. In response to this comment, IS/MND page 1-9, Section 1.8.1.3 Access Roads has been clarified to read:

Construction crews would use existing roads along the Proposed Project corridor to access six of the pole sites. The other 13 pole sites would be accessed by helicopter. ~~One~~ A new temporary 20-foot wide and approximately 500-foot long overland access road is proposed from Hirschdale Road to the existing Line 621 ROW. The new temporary access road would be prepared by removing all vegetation within the 20-foot by 500-foot area using a hydroaxe. The temporary access road would be abandoned upon completion of construction of the Proposed Project. These areas are identified on Figure 1-3. Turn-around areas would be required at the ends of Proposed Project right-of-way, along the Line 608 and Line 631 access roads.

Additionally, Figure 1-3 has been updated to differentiate between existing and temporary access roads, and Table 1-2, Summary of Access Road Requirements, has been updated to further reflect this clarification. Also please see Response N-3, Subsection 4.

- 2) In order to avoid traversing through a drainage to access Pole 19 and the Tensioning Site, a temporary access road is required; siting was based on avoidance and shortest distance to access Pole 19 and the Tensioning Site.

- 3) Commenter request clearer labeling in order to differentiate shorter road segments by name. To provide clarification, shorter road segments have been named and IS/MND page 1-9, Table 1-2, Summary of Access Road Requirements, has been updated to reflect these changes as follows:

**TABLE 1-2
SUMMARY OF ACCESS ROAD REQUIREMENTS**

Road Name	Type of Road	Preparation Type	Area
Hirschdale Road	Existing - Paved	None	None
Floriston Avenue	Existing - Paved	None	None
Access Road 1	Existing - Dirt	None	None
Access Road 2	Proposed <u>Temporary</u>	Hydroaxe	10,000 square feet
Access Road 3	Existing - Dirt	None	None
<u>Access Road 4</u>	<u>Existing - Dirt</u>	<u>None</u>	<u>None</u>

- 4) In response to this comment, IS/MND Figure 1-3 has been clarified to include all drainages analyzed in this IS/MND. The drainage between Pole P14 and P15 is the only drainage within the project area that is traversed by an access road. This road is an existing dirt access road and the drainage flows through an existing culvert buried in the road. For discussion surrounding the 100 year flood zone, and a narrative description of the drainages, please see Response N-11.
- 5) Commenter requested a topographic map with project area and specific BMPs identified. This level of detail is beyond what was required to make an impact determination under CEQA; accordingly, no changes are being made to the IS/MND. However, Sierra Pacific will coordinate directly with the RWQCB on this issue if further information is required.
- 6) Regarding BMPs please see Response N-11. Regarding revegetation and post-project monitoring please see Response N-7.
- 7) Regarding specific heavy equipment to be used to clear vegetation, see above for clarified description of the hydroaxe. Regarding effect to soils and soil compaction, the proposed construction of a temporary 500 foot long access road (Access Road 2) could cause some level of disturbance and compaction although the soils are rocky and contain a significant amount of weathered volcanic rock fragments that are less susceptible to erosion. However, the IS/MND identified the potential for the construction disturbance to affect water quality. As discussed in the IS/MND, the use of a rubber tired vehicle combined with the relatively short duration of construction (3 months), the relatively small area of disturbance (less than one acre across the entire length of the alignment),

the use of effective best management practices which include work during the dry season and use of tree trimmings as mulch and erosion control, would combine to effectively mitigate the potential impact to a less than significant level. The potential for sedimentation to create water quality impacts is also discussed in Response N-11

- 8) Regarding spill contingency plan, please see **Mitigation Measure 2.7-1b: Hazardous Substance Control and Emergency Response Plan** on IS/MND page 2.7-9. A courtesy copy of the Plan will be sent to the RWQCB by Sierra Pacific prior to construction.

Response N-4

Regarding clarification of the specifics associated with a hydroaxe, please see Response N-3. The commenter also requests information regarding tree trimming and removal near water channels and flood plains, and along streambanks. In response to this comment, to provide further clarity, the last paragraph of IS/MND page 1-9 is clarified to read:

Helicopter construction would eliminate the need for a new permanent road within the Proposed Project ROW; however, Sierra Pacific would need to clear low vegetation using a hydroaxe within the easement near structures 1 to 5 and 12 to 19 to land a compressor to dig new holes. In wooded or forested areas, trees would be removed within the ROW to provide safe clearance for the wires (See Figure 1-3). Because there would be no new ROW road for the new 60 kV line, access to trees requiring removal would be achieved by overland travel (i.e., by foot) from the nearest road. Tree removal would be done by hand using chain saws; trees would be directionally felled away from any drainage channels or wetland features. The removed trees would be lopped and scattered within the ROW; no slash material would be deposited into channels or wetland features. Specifically, the wood would be cut into 12-inch lengths and pieces larger than 8 inches in diameter would be split to speed drying. Figure 1-3 identifies the trees that are proposed to be removed. After tree removal, as mentioned above, Sierra Pacific would need to hydroaxe a 20-foot wide, 500-foot long road for overland travel along the existing 621 line ROW from Hirschdale Road to the distribution line.

Regarding potential effects within the 100-year flood plains please see Response N-11. Regarding potential effects to soil stability from tree removal, IS/MND Figure 1-3 on page 2-22 has been clarified to include a graphical depiction of the stream drainages analyzed in the IS/MND. Revised Figure 1-3 is reproduced on page 2-22 of this Response to Comments document and has also been updated in the Draft IS/MND. Up to three trees may be removed near wetlands and waterways. Two of the trees are

approximately 30 feet from an ephemeral channel; these trees would be removed in accordance with the description provided above. One tree is located within a riparian wetland. As described, this tree would be felled by hand and slash material would be deposited outside of the wetland. The removal of only three trees would not result in a significant impact to soil stability along the stream bank because the proposed action would not significantly increase the amount of rainfall that intercepts the soil horizon or decrease the amount of fine root structures within the soil and duff layers on a broad scale.

Response N-5 The commenter notes contradictions regarding impacts to potential jurisdictional waters of the U.S. and impacts to associated riparian vegetation. As noted in Response N-4, IS/MND Figure 1-3 has been clarified to include stream drainages. In response to this comment, the second paragraph of IS/MND page 2.4-2 is clarified to read:

The corridor intersects three small ephemeral channels. The southern most channel supports riparian vegetation consisting of willow and alder while the northern channel banks consist of sagebrush pine vegetation (see Figure 1-3).

The commenter is referred to IS/MND page 2.4-17 for more information on the impacts to riparian vegetation.

Response N-6 In response to this comment, the last paragraph of IS/MND page 2.4-17 (significance criteria (d)) is clarified to read:

The Proposed Project would comply with the objectives of the Nevada County General Plan because it would be: 1) utilizing the existing right of way; 2) completely avoiding construction in forest lands and near lakes; and 3) ~~spanning~~ avoiding sensitive areas such as wetlands, riparian zones, and streams.

Response N-7 The commenter states that the IS/MND indicates that disturbed areas would be seeded following project completion. The IS/MND, in Section 2.8, *Hydrology and Water Quality* on Page 2.8-5, does state that disturbed areas would be seeded as part of Sierra Pacific's standard BMP program. However, for this project, a hydroaxe would be used to cut existing vegetation down to approximately 5 inches above the soil surface, which would not remove or damage the soil or roots. As stated in the Project Description of the IS/MND a hydroaxe would be used to prepare Access Road 2, pole sites, pull and tension sites, and the staging area/helicopter yard. Furthermore, as clarified in Response N-3, the hydroaxe, and all equipment associated with the Proposed Project, would have rubber tires; therefore, impacts to vegetation

from overland travel would be minimal³. Thus, the only seeding that would be *expected* for this project would be a small area immediately around each pole structure. Because it is anticipated there would not be any large scale disturbance that would require seeding, there is no need for a specific mitigation and/or a mitigation monitor for long-term revegetation efforts. Implementation of the BMPs, including any reseeding, would be monitored for compliance under the MMRCPP, which is described in Section 5.0 of the IS/MND and would include a post-construction site visit by the CPUC Project Manager to ensure compliance.

However, to reflect the commitment of the CPUC to address the concerns of the RWQCB regarding the effectiveness of Sierra Pacific's BMP of reseeding any disturbed areas, Page 5-6 of Section 5.0 Mitigation Monitoring, Reporting and Compliance Program, Enforcement and Responsibility, of the IS/MND has been updated with the following text:

The CPUC Project Manager, to address concerns from the RWQCB regarding revegetation effectiveness, will conduct a post-construction site visit to monitor the effectiveness of Sierra Pacific's BMP of reseeding any disturbed areas as part of standard construction practice.

- Response N-8 Regarding impacts to riparian vegetation the commenter is referred to IS/MND page 2.4-17. Regarding impacts to vegetation in general and the need for revegetation, monitoring, and follow-up mitigation efforts, please see Response N-7.
- Response N-9 Regarding clarifications regarding general vegetation removal please see Responses N-3 and N-7. For specifics regarding tree removal please see Response N-4. The commenter also requested a copy of the Wetland Delineation Assessment. A copy of the Wetland Delineation Assessment was mailed via the U.S. Postal Service to the RWQCB after receipt of this comment letter.
- Response N-10 The commenter notes that a Timber Waiver may be required for the Proposed Project. Sierra Pacific will coordinate directly with the RWQCB to attain such a waiver, if required. Regarding use of equipment within wetlands or across ephemeral channels, please see Response N-6.
- Response N-11 The commenter states that the four waterbodies in the area are not discussed in the IS/MND Hydrology and Water Quality section, the 100-year floodplain is not shown on any figure, and that the potential for sedimentation into the Truckee River is not adequately addressed. The four waterbodies, the Truckee River and three ephemeral drainages, are discussed

³ Minimal would include compaction of vegetative matter.

as part of the hydrological setting on IS/MND page 2.8-2. In response to this comment, the second paragraph of IS/MND page 2.8-2 is clarified to read:

The Proposed Project corridor crosses three small drainages: two north of the Hirschdale residential area and one south that drain toward the Truckee River. These three drainages appear to be ephemeral and were dry during a field visit in August (ESA, 2006).

A discussion of potential impacts to these waterbodies is contained on IS/MND pages 2.8-4 and 2.8-5. The 100-year floodplain was not shown on a figure in the Draft MND because the entire project corridor is located outside of the floodplain. However, to document this conclusion, revised Figure 1-3 now shows the 100-year floodplain. The 100-year floodplain projection for the Truckee River depicted on Figure 1-3 was obtained directly from the FEMA Federal Insurance Rate Map, Panel 060210 0050 B, which covers the project area and surrounding region. The other three drainages within the project area have not been assigned floodplain projections by FEMA. None of the poles for the Proposed Project would be located within any of the drainages. The pole nearest any of the drainages is P14, located approximately 20 feet away according to GIS data. Pole P13 would be 42 feet away from the nearest drainage. Typically, ephemeral drainages such as these are capable of handling large flows which are usually responsible for their creation. As the Proposed Project would have only two poles placed within 50 feet of these drainages, and no new roads would be created in or near these drainages, should a flood event occur the sediment contribution from Proposed Project activities would be inconsequential.

The potential for sedimentation into the Truckee River is also discussed on IS/MND page 2.8-5 (“Construction activities have the potential to temporarily increase the sediment load of stormwater runoff from construction areas”). However, as discussed on that same page, Sierra Pacific has committed to implement BMPs, which include erosion control measures such as completing work during the dry season, preserving existing vegetation where possible, and implementing erosion control structures (such as straw wattles or silt fencing and use of tree trimmings as mulch) where appropriate, and most importantly the avoidance of any work within the drainages. BMPs are an effective means of mitigating potential sedimentation impacts and therefore reduce the potential impact to a less than significant level. Implementation of the BMPs would be monitored for compliance under the MMRCP, which is described in Section 5.0 of the IS/MND.

Response N-12 In response to this comment, the first paragraph of IS/MND page 2.4-17 (significance criteria (c)) is clarified to read:

A jurisdictional delineation of the Proposed Project corridor (JBR, 2006) identified a 70-foot long segment, between Pole P4 and P5, within the power line right-of-way as meeting the criteria of a wetland (Figure 1-3). Tree clearing would be done by hand, using a chain saw, and vegetation clearing, if required, would also be done by hand by using a hydroaxe. Neither of these activities, nor any other project activity, would cause the discharge of fill materials to waters of the U.S.; therefore, there would be no impact to jurisdictional waters of the U.S.

No heavy equipment would be driven through either of the two drainages or the potential wetland feature that intersect the project alignment.

- Response N-13 As stated in Response N-11, the project alignment is located outside of the 100-year floodplain. In addition, the construction activities would not cross any of the ephemeral drainages that intersect the project alignment. Because the project schedule would complete all construction in the dry season, and the project would use only rubber-tired equipment, sediment discharge into the Truckee River is unlikely; therefore, potential impacts would be less than significant.
- Response N-14 The commenter suggests that the Proposed Project may be subject to an Army Corps of Engineers Section 404 permit. As stated above, project construction activities would not cross the one identified jurisdictional wetland. Therefore, there would not be any discharges of dredge or fill materials into waters of the U.S. and a Section 404 permit would not be required.
- Response N-15 See Response N-12.
- Response N-16 The commenter requests that the IS/MND disclose potential impacts to waters or identify mitigation measures required to reduce these impacts. As described in the previous responses, the Proposed Project includes measures that would effectively protect jurisdictional wetlands and the ephemeral drainages from significant erosion. Use of rubber-tired construction equipment, avoidance of the intersecting drainages, directionally felling trees away from water courses, and completion of work during the dry season effectively reduces the potential impact to a less than significant level.

**Public Meeting: March 1, 2007
Truckee, California**

Commenter: Jamie Cole, Hirschdale resident [Plans on submitting written letter]

Jamie Cole does not support the power line project. The line goes through her front yard and she is concerned about the following issues:

- Why does the line have to go directly through their community? Is there an alternative route? | PM-1
- Jamie commented that there was a huge burn area nearby that has not revegetated yet. Can the line go through this burn area? She is concerned about the birds nesting habitat and thinks the burn area is better because it has not had the chance to revegetate. |
- Jamie would rather be without power at some points than have line upgraded. | PM-2
- Jamie does not think that the MND list of birds in the area is accurate. She has counted over 30 species of birds in the area compared to the six on the MND list. | PM-3
- She thinks that the analysis in the MND seems like an opinion. She explained that even though a species is not endangered elsewhere, taking out numerous trees along the power line would significantly decrease and endanger the number of species in their community. How could this not be a significant impact? | PM-4
- She is concerned about the noise impacts from the workers being there seven days a week. She is specifically concerned about the blasting. Will blasting occur in her front yard? Also, how would this effect her septic tank located in her front yard? Who will pay for the tank if it is damaged by the blasting/construction? | PM-5
- She had questions about the environmental process. Specifically, could CPUC make Sierra change their route at this point in the process? | PM-6
- Jamie is concerned about the carcinogenic effects of line because there is a pole located 30 feet from her house. She does not understand the language of the mitigation measures related to the health effects of the line. She would like them stated more clearly. Has a safe distance been determined? | PM-7
- She believes that Hirschdale was an easy target because they are a very small community without any power. She said that 15 of the 30 houses in the community have year-round residents, with two-thirds of these residents living there for over 25 years. She is concerned that the line upgrade will disturb the tranquility of the area. | PM-8
- Jamie is concerned about the little brown bats. She pointed out that this species was not mentioned in the MND. How would the little brown bats be affected? | PM-9
- She stated that her garden is within the 100 square foot clearance zone for the pole in her front yard. Would her garden be removed or damaged? | PM-10

Commenter: Pete Rivair, Hirschdale resident

Pete Rivair is opposed to the power line project. He is very concerned with the air quality impacts from this project in addition to the increase in trucks trips in the area from another project, Teichert Quarry (over 800 trips per day). Has this cumulative increase to air quality been evaluated? | PM-11

Public Meeting Comments

Commenter: Ron Legg, Hirschdale resident

- Pole 6 is on his property. He is most concerned about the impact to old growth trees on his property (specifically from pole 1 to 6). He is upset because he recently paid \$600 to trim trees next to his garage because the power company did not do maintenance. He wants clarification about the trees near his house – A) which ones will be affected? B) of the trees affected, how many trees on his property will be removed and how many will be trimmed? PM-12
- Where and how old is the easement? PM-13
- Why will it take this long for only 19 poles? Ron said that he had worked on installing poles in the past and it had never taken that long. PM-14
- Also, does this line actually serve Hirschdale? PM-15
- Why does the project need to happen now? The trees have never been trimmed before. Why now? PM-16

Commenter: Larry Andresen, Hirschdale resident [Plans on submitting written letter]

- Have any other routes been analyzed? PM-17
- Why is the power line upgrade needed? PM-18
- Larry believes that because Somerset cut the power line off, Hirschdale is getting this project. He is upset because this project would not exist if it were not for the funding from Somerset. PM-19
- Could this line go underground? PM-20
- This project will make real estate values depreciate. Also, he knows of people who have friends who will not rent their homes in Hirschdale because of this project (specifically because of the construction impacts). PM-21
- Every morning an eagle flies by his window. PM-22
- How will the limbs of trees that are not within the easement be handled if they need to be cut down? What is the proper clearance? PM-23
- Larry needs more clarification on which trees are going to be impacted. Has the easement been surveyed? He wants a better map that adequately defines which trees will be need to be trimmed or cut down. He thinks the document is inadequate without this information. PM-24
- How was it determined that the new poles will not have significant impacts? He thinks this is inaccurate. PM-25

Commenter: Duane Brunson, Hirschdale resident

Duane Brunson is a Hirschdale resident that is concerned about the health effects of the power line upgrade. He thinks this issue needs to be further addressed. PM-26

Public Meeting Comments – March 1, 2007

- Response PM-1 The commenter states its opposition to the power line route that goes through the community of Hirschdale and asks if there are any alternative routes. Please see Response D-1. The commenter also states its concern for bird nesting habitat. Impacts to nesting raptors are discussed in Impact 2.4-2 on IS/MND page 2.4-15.
- Response PM-2 The commenter states that it would prefer to be without power than to have the Proposed Project constructed and operated. The comment is noted.
- Response PM-3 The commenter states that the list of bird species in the MND is incomplete as she has counted over 30 species in the project area. The MND only considers species identified as sensitive, candidate, or special-status in local or regional plans, policies or regulations or by the Department of Fish and Game or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Special status species in the project area were identified in IS/MND Table 2.4-1 on IS/MND page 2.4-6, and in Figure 2.4-1 on IS/MND page 2.4-7.
- Response PM-4 The commenter states that while species may not be endangered elsewhere, removing numerous trees along the power line would significantly decrease and endanger the number of species in the community; the commenter believes this to be a significant impact. Impacts to special-status species as well as mitigation measures to address those impacts are discussed on IS/MND pages 2.4-15 through 2.4-16.
- Response PM-5 Regarding construction noise impacts, please see Response A-2. The commenter also states that it is concerned that blasting associated with project construction would adversely impact residences and their septic tanks. As stated on IS/MND page 2.11-11, the closest potential blasting site is located approximately 100 to 200 feet from residences. In addition, Mitigation Measure 2.11-1a (IS/MND pages 2.11-9 through 2.11-10) limits blasting activities to the hours between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Regarding the commenter's concern over who would pay to damage caused to septic tanks, Sierra Pacific would be liable for any damages to property as a result of its construction activities, if such damages were to occur.
- Response PM-6 The commenter asked whether the CPUC could make Sierra Pacific alter the Proposed Project route. The CPUC has not yet made a decision on Sierra Pacific's application. To say what the CPUC will ultimately decide regarding Sierra Pacific's application would be speculative. Regarding analysis of alternatives in the MND, please see Response D-1.
- Response PM-7 The commenter states its concern regarding carcinogenic effects of the proposed power line. As stated on IS/MND page 2.7-2, impacts related to

electric and magnetic fields (EMF) are not considered, in the context of CEQA analysis, as environmental impacts because there is no agreement among scientists that EMF creates a potential health risk and because CEQA does not define or adopt standards for defining any potential risk for EMF. However, additional information regarding EMF generated by power lines is included in IS/MND Appendix A for informational purposes.

As a result of this comment, a typographical error regarding the location of the EMF information in IS/MND was noticed. Therefore, in response to the comment, the last sentence of the first full paragraph of MND page 2.7-2 is changed to read:

For informational purposes, additional information about EMF generated by power lines is provided in Appendix ~~D~~A.

MND Appendix A (specifically page A-3) sets forth the guidelines for Sierra Pacific's implementation of no and low cost steps to reduce magnetic field strengths.

- Response PM-8 The commenter states that the Proposed Project route through Hirschdale was chosen because Hirschdale is a small community and that the proposed power line would disturb the tranquility of the area. During its planning phase for the Proposed Project, Sierra Pacific chose the proposed route because it already has existing easements along that route and because it is the shortest route to connect to existing power lines. IS/MND Section 2.1, *Aesthetics*, addresses impacts to the visual character and quality of the project area.
- Response PM-9 The commenter stated that little brown bats were not mentioned in the MND and would like to know how the Proposed Project would affect this species. The little brown bat (*Myotis lucifugus*) is not listed as sensitive, candidate, or special-status in local or regional plans, policies or regulations or by the Department of Fish and Game or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, as the species is abundant across North America. In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Appendix G, the MND only considers candidate, sensitive, or special status species in its impact determination.
- Response PM-10 Regarding private gardens being located within the power line clearance zone, please see Response F-2 for general information regarding easements. In addition, as the easement owner, Sierra Pacific has the duty under common law to repair any property damage that may be caused by construction of the proposed power line project.
- Response PM-11 Subsequent to receiving this comment, the CPUC has confirmed that Teichert Company submitted an application to the Nevada County

Community Development Department in January 2007 for a use permit and reclamation plan associated with its operations at the Hirschdale Rock Quarry (Nevada County, 2007). Due to the timing of the release of the IS/MND on February 16, 2007, and the submittal of the Teichert Quarry project application in January 2007, the Teichert Quarry project was not a cumulative project considered in the Draft IS/MND. However, in response to this comment, a row for the quarry project has been added to IS/MND Table 2.17-1 (Cumulative Projects Within the Vicinity of the Project):

TABLE 2.17-1
CUMULATIVE PROJECTS WITHIN THE VICINITY OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

APN or Project Name	Description	Address / Location	Agency / Organization	Details	Distance from Proposed Project
<u>Teichert Quarry Project</u>	<u>Teichert Company submitted an application for a use permit and reclamation plan to the County in order to bring its operations at the Hirschdale Rock Quarry into compliance with the existing County permit for the quarry.</u>	<u>16774 Hinton Road, Truckee.</u>	<u>Nevada County Community Development Department (lead agency)</u>	<u>The original permit for operations at the quarry, issued in 1983, allowed for the development of 20 acres and currently 40 acres are being mined. The revised permit and reclamation plan would bring the current operations at the quarry into compliance. The County has not determined when it will begin the CEQA review process for this project.</u>	<u>The quarry is approximately one mile northeast of the Proposed Project Site. However, quarry trucks use Hirschdale Road as a haul route, which is as close as 150 feet to the Proposed Project alignment near the community of Hirschdale.</u>

As described in revised Table 2.17-1, the use permit and reclamation plan would bring the current operations of the quarry into compliance with its current permit. The use permit would not result in a change in the existing operations at the quarry. Therefore, the truck trips that are currently occurring as a result of the non-compliant operations at the quarry are considered part of the baseline conditions as described in the IS/MND for the Proposed Project. Furthermore, because the County has not yet begun its CEQA review process for the quarry project, and construction of the Proposed Project is estimated to be completed by this summer, it is unlikely that the use permit and reclamation plan would be approved by the County before construction of the Proposed Project would be complete. Because the Proposed Project would result in only short-term construction emissions, cumulative impacts associated with the approved Teichert Quarry project and the Proposed Project would be less than significant.

Response PM-12 Regarding tree trimming and removal, please see Response F-3.

Response PM-13 Regarding Sierra Pacific’s easement, please see Response F-2.

- Response PM-14 The commenter states that the proposed three-month construction schedule is too long. While Sierra Pacific anticipates that construction would not take an entire three-month period, the three-month construction schedule includes time for any project delays or setback.
- Response PM-15 The commenter questions whether the proposed power line would serve Hirschdale. The power line would serve Hirschdale as it would provide an alternative route for distribution from the Glenshire Substation via the 608 line.
- Response PM-16 The commenter questions why the project is proposed. As stated on IS/MND page 1-2, the project is proposed to “ensure the area transmission system meets planning criteria by providing an alternative transmission path to the Glenshire Substation as the primary source is aging and difficult to maintain.”
- Regarding required tree trimming, please see Response F-3.
- Response PM-17 Regarding alternative routes please see Response D-1.
- Response PM-18 Regarding the purpose of the Proposed Project, please see Response PM-16.
- Response PM-19 The commenter states its opposition to the Proposed Project. The comment is noted. This comment does not state a specific concern or question regarding a significant environmental impact or the adequacy of the IS/MND. Please also see Response PM-16.
- Response PM-20 Regarding undergrounding the proposed power line, please see Response B-1.
- Response PM-21 Regarding impacts to property values, please see Response A-1.
- Response PM-22 The commenter states that an eagle flies by his window. The comment is noted. This comment does not state a specific concern or question regarding a significant environmental impact or the adequacy of the IS/MND.
- Response PM-23 The commenter questions whether tree limbs that are outside of Sierra Pacific’s easement will be trimmed. A minimum clearance of 4 feet from wire to trees is required.
- Response PM-24 The commenter requests additional information regarding trees that would be impacted by the Proposed Project. Please see Response F-3.
- Response PM-25 The commenter states that the installation of the new poles will have significant impacts. Environmental impacts associated with installation of the new poles are addressed throughout IS/MND Section 2.0, *Environmental Checklist and Discussion*.
- Response PM-26 Regarding potential health effects of EMF, please see Response PM-7.

References

California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), 2006. *Rules for Overhead Electric Line Construction, General Order 95*, January 2006.

FEMA, 1983. Flood Insurance Rate Map Nevada County, panel number 060210 0550 B, January 19, 1983.

Nevada County, 2007. Personal communication with Todd Herman, Planner, Nevada County Community Development Department, March 13, 2007.

CHAPTER 3

Mitigation, Monitoring, Reporting and Compliance Program

3.1 Summary

For informational purposes, this chapter includes Table 5-1, Mitigation Monitoring, Reporting and Compliance Program for the Hirschdale Power Line Project which has been reproduced beginning on the following page to summarize the impacts and mitigations for the Proposed Project, noting that no changes have occurred as a result of comments on the Proposed Project Draft MND.

**TABLE 5-1
MITIGATION MONITORING, REPORTING AND COMPLIANCE PROGRAM FOR HIRSCHDALE POWER LINE PROJECT**

Environmental Impact	Mitigation Measures Proposed in this MND	Implementing Actions	Monitoring/Reporting Requirements	Timing
Aesthetics No mitigation required.				
Agricultural Resources No mitigation required.				
Air Quality				
2.3-1: Construction activities would generate emissions of criteria pollutants, including suspended and inhalable particulate matter and equipment exhaust emissions. This would be a potentially significant impact.	2.3-1: Sierra Pacific shall ensure that the skycrane helicopter (or any other heavy-duty helicopter designed to lift heavy loads) is not operated for more than four hours per day. In addition, only one other piece of heavy equipment (e.g., line truck) shall be permitted to operate for no more than four hours per day on the same days that the skycrane or other heavy-duty helicopter is operated, and no heavy-truck haul trips associated with the Proposed Project shall be permitted to occur on skycrane helicopter operation days.	Sierra Pacific and/or its contractor(s) to implement measure as defined.	CPUC mitigation monitor to inspect compliance.	At least once per week during all phases of construction.
2.3-2: Construction activities would generate emissions of criteria pollutants, including suspended and inhalable particulate matter and equipment exhaust emissions. These activities could expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.	Implement Mitigation Measure 2.3-1.	See Mitigation Measure 2.3-1.	See Mitigation Measure 2.3-1.	See Mitigation Measure 2.3-1.

TABLE 5-1 (continued)
MITIGATION MONITORING, REPORTING AND COMPLIANCE PROGRAM FOR HIRSCHDALE POWER LINE PROJECT

Environmental Impact	Mitigation Measures Proposed in this MND	Implementing Actions	Monitoring/Reporting Requirements	Timing
Biological Resources				
2.4-1: Construction activities could affect populations of <i>Plumas ivesia</i> should it be present within the Proposed Project corridor.	2.4-1: Plant surveys shall be completed by a qualified botanist during the flowering season (May-July) prior to the beginning of any construction activities. If <i>Plumas ivesia</i> or any other sensitive species is found, the applicant shall avoid direct impacts where possible. If avoidance is not feasible, the project applicant shall work with the CDFG to transplant affected populations to a protected location off site.	Sierra Pacific to implement measure as defined.	Receipt by the CPUC of the described plant surveys.	During May through July and at least one week prior to the commencement of construction activities.
			If <i>plumas ivesia</i> or any other sensitive species is found during the survey, CPUC mitigation monitor to inspect compliance.	At least once per week during all phases of construction.
			If avoidance is not feasible, receipt by the CPUC of evidence of consultation with the CDFG and results of consultation.	At least one week prior to start of construction activities.
			If avoidance is not feasible, CPUC mitigation monitor to inspect compliance.	Within one week after the completion of construction activities.
2.4-2: Construction activities associated with the Proposed Project could disturb nesting raptors, including the northern goshawk, which is known to occur in the vicinity of the Proposed Project	2.4-2a: To the extent feasible, vegetation removal shall occur outside the nesting and breeding season of March 1 through August 15 to avoid impacts to nesting birds and raptors. 2.4-2b: For any potential nest-disturbing activities that are to occur during the period from March 1 through August 15, Sierra Pacific shall contract with a qualified biologist who shall conduct a pre-construction survey for nesting birds. The survey shall be conducted no more than one week prior to the start of work activities and would cover all affected areas including the power line route, staging area, pull and tension sites, and access roads areas where substantial ground disturbance or vegetation clearing is required.	Sierra Pacific and/or its contractors to implement measure as defined.	Sierra Pacific to submit construction schedule to the CPUC.	At least 30 days prior to start of construction activities.
			Sierra Pacific shall submit pre-construction survey results for nesting birds to the CPUC showing any applicable protection zones if established.	At least 15 days prior to planned construction activities occurring during the nesting and breeding season.
			CPUC mitigation monitor to inspect compliance.	At least once per week during construction activities that occur during the nesting and breeding season.

**TABLE 5-1 (continued)
MITIGATION MONITORING, REPORTING AND COMPLIANCE PROGRAM FOR HIRSCHDALE POWER LINE PROJECT**

Environmental Impact	Mitigation Measures Proposed in this MND	Implementing Actions	Monitoring/Reporting Requirements	Timing
<p>2.4-3: Construction activities could potentially spread noxious or invasive weeds within the Proposed Project area where weeds do not currently exist.</p>	<p>If any active nests are found, an appropriate nest protection zone shall be established by the qualified biologist. The guidelines for protection zones for active nest shall be as follows: for passerine birds, a 50 - 100-foot zone; for raptors, a 300-foot zone and for golden eagles a 500-foot zone. Once these zones are established, they may be modified on a site-specific basis as determined by the qualified biologist or in coordination with CDFG.</p> <p>During construction, active nests within the project area shall be monitored for signs of disturbance. If the biological monitor determines that a disturbance is occurring, construction shall be halted, and the appropriate regulatory agencies shall be contacted as to the measures that shall be implemented to reduce further disturbance.</p> <p>2.4-3: Sierra Pacific shall develop and implement a Noxious Weed and Invasive Plant Control Plan, consistent with standard Best Management Practices (see for example: Department of Transportation, State of California (2003); Storm Water Quality Handbooks; and Project Planning and Design Guide Construction Site Best Management Practices Manual). The plan shall be reviewed and approved by the CPUC and shall at a minimum address any required cleaning of construction vehicles to minimize spread of noxious weeds and invasive plants.</p>	<p>Sierra Pacific and its contractors to implement measure as defined.</p>	<p>Sierra Pacific to submit a Noxious Weed and Invasive Plant Control Plan to the CPUC for review and approval.</p> <p>CPUC mitigation monitor to inspect compliance with the Plan.</p>	<p>At least 15 days prior to start of construction activities.</p> <p>At least once per week during all phases of construction.</p>

TABLE 5-1 (continued)
MITIGATION MONITORING, REPORTING AND COMPLIANCE PROGRAM FOR HIRSCHDALE POWER LINE PROJECT

Environmental Impact	Mitigation Measures Proposed in this MND	Implementing Actions	Monitoring/Reporting Requirements	Timing
Cultural Resources	<p>2.5-1: In the event that any prehistoric or historic subsurface cultural resources are discovered during ground disturbing activities, all work within 50 feet of the resources shall be halted and Sierra Pacific and/or the CPUC shall consult with a qualified archaeologist to assess the significance of the find. If any find is determined to be significant, representatives of Sierra Pacific and/or the CPUC and a Specialist shall meet to determine the appropriate avoidance measures or other appropriate mitigation, with the ultimate determination to be made by the CPUC. All significant cultural materials recovered shall be, as necessary, subject to scientific analysis, professional museum curation, and a report prepared by a Specialist according to current professional standards. A Specialist for purposes of this mitigation measure is defined as one who meets the Secretary of the Interior's 1983 Historic Preservation Qualification Standards listed in the Federal Register (48 FR 44716-01) and the Code of Federal Regulations (36 CFR 61.3).</p>	<p>Sierra Pacific to provide CPUC staff with the name(s), statement(s) of qualifications, and signed contract(s) of its environmental monitor and designated cultural resources specialist(s) who will be responsible for implementation of all project-related cultural resources mitigation measures.</p>	<p>Receipt by the CPUC from Sierra Pacific of the described documentation.</p>	<p>At least one week prior to the start of construction activities.</p>
	<p>In considering any suggested mitigation proposed by the consulting archaeologist in order to mitigate impacts to historical resources or unique archaeological resources, the CPUC shall determine whether avoidance is necessary and feasible in light of factors such as the nature of the find, project design, costs, and other considerations. If avoidance is infeasible, other appropriate measures (e.g., data recovery) shall be instituted. Work may proceed on other parts of the project site while mitigation for historical resources or unique archaeological resources is carried out.</p>	<p>Sierra Pacific to notify the CPUC of discovery of any cultural resources.</p>	<p>Receipt by the CPUC from Sierra Pacific of verbal and/or written notification of such discovery.</p>	<p>Within 24 hours of discovery of a cultural resource.</p>

**TABLE 5-1 (continued)
MITIGATION MONITORING, REPORTING AND COMPLIANCE PROGRAM FOR HIRSCHDALE POWER LINE PROJECT**

Environmental Impact	Mitigation Measures Proposed in this MND	Implementing Actions	Monitoring/Reporting Requirements	Timing
<p>2.5-2: Construction activities may result in an adverse impact to an unknown paleontological resource.</p>	<p>2.5-2: In the event a fossil is discovered during construction, excavations within 50 feet of the find shall be temporarily halted or diverted until the discovery is examined by a qualified paleontologist, in accordance with Society of Vertebrate Paleontology standards (SVP, 1995). The discovery shall be documented as needed, the potential resource evaluated, and the significance of the find shall be assessed under the criteria set forth in Section 15064.5 of the CEQA Guidelines. The paleontologist shall notify the CPUC to determine procedures to be followed before construction is allowed to resume at the location of the find. If the CPUC determines that avoidance is not feasible, the paleontologist shall prepare an excavation plan for mitigating the effect of the project on the qualities that make the resource important, and the plan shall be implemented. The plan shall be submitted to the CPUC for review and approval.</p>	<p>Sierra Pacific to implement measure as defined.</p>	<p>Sierra Pacific to submit contact information and qualifications of a paleontologist to be notified of any unanticipated discoveries during construction.</p>	<p>At least one week prior to start of construction activities.</p>
			<p>Sierra Pacific and/or its contractor(s) to provide immediate verbal notification to the paleontologist and the CPUC of any discovered cultural resources; with follow up written documentation noting date of discovery, type of discovery and actions taken to protect the resource(s).</p>	<p>Immediately upon discovery.</p>
			<p>CPUC mitigation monitor to monitor compliance.</p>	<p>At least once per week during all phases of construction.</p>

TABLE 5-1 (continued)
MITIGATION MONITORING, REPORTING AND COMPLIANCE PROGRAM FOR HIRSCHDALE POWER LINE PROJECT

Environmental Impact	Mitigation Measures Proposed in this MND	Implementing Actions	Monitoring/Reporting Requirements	Timing
2.5-3: Project construction could result in damage to previously unidentified human remains.	2.5-3: In the event that human skeletal remains are uncovered during construction activities for the Proposed Project, Sierra Pacific shall immediately halt work, contact the Nevada County Coroner to evaluate the remains, and follow the procedures and protocols pursuant to Section 15064.5 (e)(1) of the CEQA Guidelines. If the County Coroner determines that the remains are Native American, Sierra Pacific shall contact the California Native American Heritage Commission, pursuant to subdivision (c) of Section 7050.5 of the Health and Safety Code, and all excavation and site preparation activities shall cease until appropriate arrangements are made.	Sierra Pacific and its contractor(s) to implement measure as defined.	Sierra Pacific and/or its contractor(s) to provide immediate verbal notification to the Nevada County Coroner and the CPUC of any discovered human remains; with follow up written documentation noting date of discovery, type of discovery and actions taken to protect the resource(s). Sierra Pacific to contact Native American Heritage Commission if Coroner determines remains are Native American. CPUC mitigation monitor to monitor compliance.	Immediately upon discovery. Upon notification that remains are Native American remains by the Nevada County Coroner. At least once per week during all phases of construction.
Geology, Soils, and Seismicity				
No mitigation required				
Hazards and Hazardous Materials				
2.7-1: Construction activities associated with the Proposed Project would require the use of certain materials such as fuels, oils, solvents, and other chemical products that, in large quantities, could pose a potential hazard to the public or the environment if improperly used or inadvertently released.	2.7-1a: Sierra Pacific and/or its contractor(s) shall implement construction best management practices including but not limited to the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow manufacturer's recommendations on use, storage, and disposal of chemical products used in construction; Avoid overtopping construction equipment fuel tanks; During routine maintenance of construction equipment, properly contain and remove grease and oils; and 	Sierra Pacific and/or its contractor(s) to implement measure as defined.	CPUC mitigation monitor to monitor compliance.	At least once per week during all phases of construction.

TABLE 5-1 (continued)
MITIGATION MONITORING, REPORTING AND COMPLIANCE PROGRAM FOR HIRSCHDALE POWER LINE PROJECT

Environmental Impact	Mitigation Measures Proposed in this MND	Implementing Actions	Monitoring/Reporting Requirements	Timing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Properly dispose of discarded containers of fuels and other chemicals. <p>2.7-1b: Hazardous Substance Control and Emergency Response Plan – Sierra Pacific shall prepare a Hazardous Substance Control and Emergency Response Plan (the Plan) for the Proposed Project and implement it during construction to ensure compliance with all applicable federal, State, and local laws and guidelines regarding the handling of hazardous materials. The Plan shall prescribe hazardous material handling procedures to reduce the potential for a spill during construction, or exposure of the workers or public to hazardous materials. The Plan shall also include a discussion of appropriate response actions in the event that hazardous materials are released or encountered during excavation activities. The Plan shall be submitted to the CPUC for review and approval prior to the commencement of construction activities.</p>	Sierra Pacific and its contractor(s) to implement measure as defined.	<p>Sierra Pacific to submit the Plan to the Nevada County Department of Emergency Services, Hazardous Materials Division, the County's Certified Unified Program Agency, and the CPUC for review and approval.</p> <p>CPUC mitigation monitor to inspect compliance at least once weekly.</p>	<p>Submit final plan to specified agencies and the CPUC at least one week prior to start of construction activities.</p> <p>At least once per week during all phases of construction.</p>
	<p>2.7-1c: Health and Safety Plan – Sierra Pacific shall prepare and implement a Health and Safety Plan to ensure the health and safety of construction workers and the public during construction. The plan shall include information on the appropriate personal protective equipment to be used during construction. The Plan shall be submitted to the CPUC for review and approval prior to the commencement of construction activities.</p>	Sierra Pacific and its contractor(s) to implement measure as defined.	<p>Sierra Pacific to submit the Health and Safety Plan to the CPUC for review and approval.</p> <p>CPUC mitigation monitor to inspect compliance at least once weekly.</p>	<p>Submit final Health and Safety Plan to the CPUC at least one week prior to start of construction activities.</p> <p>At least once per week during all phases of construction.</p>

TABLE 5-1 (continued)
MITIGATION MONITORING, REPORTING AND COMPLIANCE PROGRAM FOR HIRSCHDALE POWER LINE PROJECT

Environmental Impact	Mitigation Measures Proposed in this MND	Implementing Actions	Monitoring/Reporting Requirements	Timing
	<p>2.7-1d: Worker Environmental Awareness Program (WEAP) – Sierra Pacific shall ensure that an environmental training program is established and delivered to communicate environmental concerns and appropriate work practices to all construction field personnel. The training program shall emphasize site-specific physical conditions to improve hazard prevention, and shall include a review of the Health and Safety Plan and the Hazardous Substance Control and Emergency Response Plan. Sierra Pacific shall submit documentation to the CPUC mitigation monitor prior to the commencement of construction activities that each worker on the project has undergone this training program.</p>	<p>Sierra Pacific and its contractor(s) to implement measure as defined.</p>	<p>Sierra Pacific to submit its WEAP containing a description of training to the CPUC.</p>	<p>WEAP to be submitted to the CPUC at least 15 days prior to start of construction activities.</p>
	<p>2.7-1e: Emergency Spill Supplies and Equipment – Sierra Pacific shall ensure that oil-absorbent material, tarps, and storage drums shall be used to contain and control any minor releases. Emergency spill supplies and equipment shall be kept adjacent to all areas of work, and shall be clearly marked. Detailed information for responding to accidental spills and for handling any resulting hazardous materials shall be provided in the Proposed Project's Hazardous Substance Control and Emergency Response Plan (see Mitigation Measure 2.7-1b), which shall be implemented during construction.</p>	<p>Sierra Pacific and its contractor(s) to implement measure as defined.</p>	<p>CPUC mitigation monitor to inspect compliance.</p>	<p>At least once per week during all phases of construction.</p>
		<p>See Mitigation Measure 2.7-1b.</p>	<p>See Mitigation Measure 2.7-1b.</p>	<p>See Mitigation Measure 2.7-1b.</p>

**TABLE 5-1 (continued)
MITIGATION MONITORING, REPORTING AND COMPLIANCE PROGRAM FOR HIRSCHDALE POWER LINE PROJECT**

Environmental Impact	Mitigation Measures Proposed in this MND	Implementing Actions	Monitoring/Reporting Requirements	Timing
2.7-2: Construction activities could release previously unidentified hazardous materials into the environment.	2.7-2: Sierra Pacific's Hazardous Substance Control and Emergency Response Plan shall include provisions that would be implemented if any subsurface hazardous materials are encountered during construction. Provisions outlined in the Plan shall include immediately stopping work in the contaminated area and contacting appropriate resource agencies, including the CPUC designated monitor, upon discovery of subsurface hazardous materials. The plan shall include the phone numbers of County and State agencies and primary, secondary, and final cleanup procedures. The Hazardous Substance Control and Emergency Response Plan shall be submitted to the CPUC for review and approval prior to the commencement of construction activities.	Sierra Pacific and its contractor(s) to implement measure as defined.	CPUC mitigation monitor to inspect compliance.	At least once per week during all phases of construction.
2.7-3: Proposed Project construction activities could ignite dry vegetation and start a fire.	2.7-3: Water tanks shall be sited in the Proposed Project area and be available for fire protection. All construction vehicles shall have fire suppression equipment and construction personnel shall be required to park vehicles away from dry vegetation. Sierra Pacific shall contact and coordinate with the California Department of Forestry and Truckee Fire Protection District to determine the minimum amounts of fire equipment to be carried on the vehicles and appropriate locations for the water tanks. Sierra Pacific shall submit verification of its consultation with CDF and the Truckee Fire Protection District to the CPUC.	Sierra Pacific and/or its contractor(s) to implement measure as defined.	Sierra Pacific to submit evidence of its contact with the California Department of Forestry and Truckee Fire Protection District. This evidence submitted to include fire equipment to be carried on vehicles and the determined locations for water tanks. CPUC mitigation monitor to inspect compliance.	Evidence of contact with fire departments and determine equipment and water tank locations to be submitted at least 30 days prior to the start of construction activities. Water tanks to be sited at least one week prior to start of construction activities. CPUC mitigation monitor to inspect compliance at least once per week during all phases of construction.
Hydrology and Water Quality	No mitigation required.			
Land Use, Plans, and Policies	No mitigation required.			

TABLE 5-1 (continued)
MITIGATION MONITORING, REPORTING AND COMPLIANCE PROGRAM FOR HIRSCHDALE POWER LINE PROJECT

Environmental Impact	Mitigation Measures Proposed in this MND	Implementing Actions	Monitoring/Reporting Requirements	Timing
Mineral Resources				
No mitigation required				
Noise				
2.11-1: The Proposed Project could generate adverse noise levels during project construction.	<p>2.11-1a: General construction activity shall be limited to the least noise-sensitive daytime hours between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. and blasting and helicopter activity shall be limited to between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., with some exceptions (as approved by the CPUC and/or the Sheriff Department) as required for safety considerations or certain construction procedures that cannot be interrupted. Helicopter use shall be limited to Sierra Pacific's proposed four hours per day. No construction activity shall occur on a holiday.</p> <p>2.11-1b: The following noise reduction and suppression techniques shall be employed during project construction to minimize the impact of temporary construction-related noise on nearby sensitive receptors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comply with manufacturers' muffler requirements. Notify residences in the community of Hirschdale of the construction schedule and how many days they may be affected. The notice shall provide specific information regarding the planned schedule for helicopter and blasting activities. The notice shall contain the phone number of the construction supervisor who would handle construction noise questions and complaints. 	<p>Sierra Pacific and its contractor(s) to implement measure as defined.</p> <p>Sierra Pacific and/or its contractor(s) to implement measure as defined.</p> <p>Sierra Pacific and/or its contractor(s) to implement measure as defined.</p>	<p>CPUC mitigation monitor to monitor compliance.</p> <p>CPUC mitigation monitor to periodically inspect construction equipment.</p> <p>Sierra Pacific to provide evidence of notification to residences in the community of Hirschdale.</p>	<p>At least once per week during all phases of construction.</p> <p>Equipment inspection prior to start of construction activities and at least once every other week during all phases of construction.</p> <p>Evidence of notification to be provided to the CPUC at least one week prior to the start of construction activities.</p>

TABLE 5-1 (continued)
MITIGATION MONITORING, REPORTING AND COMPLIANCE PROGRAM FOR HIRSCHDALE POWER LINE PROJECT

Environmental Impact	Mitigation Measures Proposed in this MND	Implementing Actions	Monitoring/Reporting Requirements	Timing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimize idling of engines; turn off engines when not in use, where applicable. 	Sierra Pacific and/or its contractor(s) to implement measure as defined.	CPUC mitigation monitor to monitor compliance.	At least once per week during all phases of construction.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shield compressors and other small stationary equipment with portable barriers when within 100 feet of residences. 	Sierra Pacific and/or its contractor(s) to implement measure as defined.	CPUC mitigation monitor to monitor compliance.	Inspect portable barriers prior to use of equipment within 100 feet of residences and inspect at least once every other week during all phases of construction.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Route truck traffic away from noise-sensitive areas where feasible. 	Sierra Pacific and/or its contractor(s) to implement measure as defined.	CPUC mitigation monitor to monitor compliance.	At least once per week during all phases of construction.
Population and Housing				
No mitigation required				
Public Services				
2.13-1: Proposed Project construction activities could temporarily increase the demand for fire protection services.	<p>2.13-1a: Sierra Pacific shall implement Mitigation Measure 2.7-1c (see Section 2.7, <i>Hazards and Hazardous Materials</i>).</p> <p>2.13-1b: Sierra Pacific shall implement Mitigation Measure 2.7-3 (see Section 2.7, <i>Hazards and Hazardous Materials</i>).</p>	<p>See Mitigation Measure 2.7-1c.</p> <p>See Mitigation Measure 2.7-3.</p>	<p>See Mitigation Measure 2.7-1c.</p> <p>See Mitigation Measure 2.7-3.</p>	<p>See Mitigation Measure 2.7-1c.</p> <p>See Mitigation Measure 2.7-3.</p>
2.13-2: Proposed Project construction work in proximity to public roadways could potentially affect vehicle access and fire department response times.	2.13-2: Sierra Pacific shall coordinate with Nevada County emergency service providers prior to construction to ensure that construction activities and associated lane closures would not significantly affect emergency response vehicles. Sierra Pacific shall submit verification of its consultation with emergency service providers to the CPUC.	Sierra Pacific to implement measure as defined.	Sierra Pacific to provide evidence of its consultation with Nevada County emergency service providers to the CPUC.	At least one week prior to start of construction activities.

TABLE 5-1 (continued)
MITIGATION MONITORING, REPORTING AND COMPLIANCE PROGRAM FOR HIRSCHDALE POWER LINE PROJECT

Environmental Impact	Mitigation Measures Proposed in this MND	Implementing Actions	Monitoring/Reporting Requirements	Timing
2.13-3: Proposed Project construction activities could temporarily increase the demand for police services.	2.13-3a: Sierra Pacific shall implement standard precautionary measures, such as securing equipment when left unattended to minimize theft and vandalism. 2.13-3b: Sierra Pacific shall provide traffic control, if necessary, in coordination with the appropriate police agency. 2.13-3c: Sierra Pacific shall implement public safety measures, including covering and securing all open holes once activity at that location is stopped (after hours), and the placement of safety structures adjacent to roadways during overhead wire installation activity to protect vehicles and pedestrians.	Sierra Pacific and/or it(s) contractors to implement measure as defined.	Sierra Pacific to submit evidence of notification to its contractors of procedures for securing equipment. CPUC mitigation monitor to inspect compliance.	Submit evidence at least one week prior to start of construction activities. At least once per week during all phases of construction.
		Sierra Pacific and/or its contractor(s) to implement measure as defined.	Sierra Pacific to submit evidence of coordination with affected police department(s). This evidence is also to include details of planned provisions of traffic control. CPUC mitigation monitor to inspect compliance.	Submit evidence at least one week prior to start of any construction activities that would result in disruption to roadways. At least once per week during all phases of construction that would result in disruption to roadways.
		Sierra Pacific and/or its contractor(s) to implement measure as defined.	Sierra Pacific to submit evidence of notification to its contractors of procedures for securing construction areas. CPUC mitigation monitor to inspect compliance.	Submit evidence at least one week prior to start of construction activities. At least once per week during all phases of construction.
Recreation No mitigation required				

**TABLE 5-1 (continued)
MITIGATION MONITORING, REPORTING AND COMPLIANCE PROGRAM FOR HIRSCHDALE POWER LINE PROJECT**

Environmental Impact	Mitigation Measures Proposed in this MND	Implementing Actions	Monitoring/Reporting Requirements	Timing
Transportation / Traffic				
<p>2.15-1: Project construction activities could adversely affect traffic and transportation conditions in the Proposed Project area.</p>	<p>2.15-1a: Sierra Pacific shall coordinate short-term construction activities at private road crossings with the applicable private property owners. Evidence of private property coordination shall be provided to the CPUC prior to the commencement of construction activities.</p>	<p>Sierra Pacific to implement measure as defined.</p>	<p>Sierra Pacific to submit evidence of coordination with private property owners to the CPUC.</p>	<p>At least one week prior to the start of construction activities that would effect private property owners.</p>
	<p>2.15-1b: Sierra Pacific shall prepare and implement a Traffic Management Plan subject to approval by Nevada County. The approved Traffic Management Plan and documentation of agency approval shall be submitted to the CPUC prior to the commencement of construction activities. The plan shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include a discussion of work hours, haul routes, work area delineation, traffic control and flagging; • Identify all access and parking restriction and signage requirements; • Lay out plans for notifications and a process for communication with affected residents and landowners prior to the start of construction. Advance public notification shall include a mailing or door to door posting of notices to residents of Hirschdale and appropriate signage of construction activities. The written notification shall include the construction schedule, the exact location and duration of activities within each street (i.e., which road/lanes and access point/driveways would be blocked on which days and for how long), and a toll-free telephone number for receiving questions or complaints; and 	<p>Sierra Pacific to implement measure as defined.</p>	<p>Sierra Pacific to submit the Traffic Management Plan to Nevada County and the CPUC for review and approval.</p> <p>CPUC mitigation monitor to inspect compliance.</p>	<p>Submit final plan to Nevada County and the CPUC at least 30 days prior to start of construction activities.</p> <p>At least once per week during all phases of construction.</p>

TABLE 5-1 (continued)
MITIGATION MONITORING, REPORTING AND COMPLIANCE PROGRAM FOR HIRSCHDALE POWER LINE PROJECT

Environmental Impact	Mitigation Measures Proposed in this MND	Implementing Actions	Monitoring/Reporting Requirements	Timing
<p>2.15-2: Project construction activities could increase potential traffic safety hazards for vehicles, bicyclists and pedestrians on public roadways.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include plans to coordinate all construction activities with emergency service providers in the area, consistent with Mitigation Measure 2.13-2 (see Section 2.13, Public Services). Emergency service providers would be notified of the timing, location, and duration of construction activities. All roads would remain passable to emergency service vehicles at all times. 	See Mitigation Measure 2.15-1b.	See Mitigation Measure 2.15-1b.	See Mitigation Measure 2.15-1b.
<p>2.15-3: Project construction activities could result in delays for emergency vehicles on roadways in the Proposed Project area.</p>	Implement Mitigation Measure 2.15-1b.	See Mitigation Measure 2.15-1b.	See Mitigation Measure 2.15-1b.	See Mitigation Measure 2.15-1b.
Utilities and Services				
<p>2.16-1: Construction activities could inadvertently contact underground utility lines and/or facilities during excavation and other ground disturbance, possibly leading to short-term utility service interruptions.</p>	<p>2.16-1: Sierra Pacific shall ensure that Underground Service Alert is notified at least 10 days prior to initiation of construction activities that require ground disturbance. Underground Service Alert verifies the location of all existing underground facilities and alerts the other utilities to mark their facilities in the area of anticipated construction activities.</p>	Sierra Pacific and its contractor(s) to implement measure as defined.	Sierra Pacific to submit written evidence of notification to Underground Service Alert of construction activities requiring ground disturbance to the CPUC.	<p>Sierra Pacific to notify Underground Service Alert at least 10 days prior to ground-disturbing construction activities.</p> <p>Sierra Pacific to provide evidence of such notification to the CPUC at least 5 days prior the start of any ground-disturbing construction activities.</p>
Mandatory Findings of Significance				
<p>2.17-1: Proposed Project construction emissions of NO_x could be cumulatively considerable if proposed skycrane helicopter activities occur on one or more of the same days as construction activities associated with the Line 621 Relocation Project.</p>	<p>2.17-1: Sierra Pacific shall ensure that the skycrane helicopter (or any other heavy-duty helicopter designed to lift heavy loads) would not be operated on any of the same days that construction equipment associated with the Line 621 Relocation Project would be operated.</p>	Sierra Pacific and/or its contractor(s) to implement measure as defined.	CPUC mitigation monitor to inspect compliance.	At least once per week during all phases of construction.