



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

**PROJECT MEMORANDUM
SCE EL CASCO SYSTEM PROJECT**

To: Lynne Mosley, CPUC
From: Vida Strong, Aspen Project Manager
Date: June 7, 2010
Subject: Report 28: May 23 – June 5, 2010

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

CPUC EMs Lynn Stafford and Allison Roth were on site June 3rd, and Lynn Stafford was on site June 4th, 2010.

The SCE El Casco Project includes the following components:

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

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

EL CASCO SUBSTATION

During the subject period, the contractor for the construction of the substation, Professional Construction, Inc., continued preparing trenches for conduit placement, and constructing foundations for structures. Also, construction of steel structures for the 220 kV portion continued. Framing of the 200/115 kV MEER (see Figure 1), and construction of the foundation for the 12 kV MEER (see Figure 2) began during the subject period.

The pad for the three towers that will support incoming power has been built and lies immediately to the north of the substation pad. During the subject period, the pad began to be prepared for tower construction (see Figure 3).

Cattract, the contractor that conducted the terracing and grading for the substation pad and relocation of the access road, has completed all work, except periodic erosion control activity. Most equipment and materials have been removed from the site, with the exception of those required for future erosion control work. Also, Cattract has delayed removal of the water tower and tank near the entrance until the end of the bird nesting season.

BANNING SUBSTATION

Work continued during the subject period on relay wiring within the MEER. All work occurred within the perimeter fence of the existing substation.



ZANJA SUBSTATION

Construction activity at the substation has been mostly completed. Paving of the access road occurred on June 3rd during the subject period (see Figure 4). The new electrical system will be energized within a few weeks. After that event, the temporary mobile transformer will be removed. Next, the staging area will be cleared and dry season hydroseeding for erosion control will occur.

FIBER OPTIC CABLE (FOC) INSTALLATION

No Fiber Optic Cable installation occurred during the subject period.

115-kV SUB-TRANSMISSION LINE REPLACEMENT

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

NTPs for the remaining portions of the sub-transmission work are currently on hold pending finalization of the design of Segment 1, 2 and 4. Maps of the new pole locations have been prepared by SCE and have been distributed to CPUC/Aspen personnel for review. As site visit is scheduled for July 8th. An NTP for Segments 5–8 is under preparation.

CONSTRUCTION YARDS & OTHER WORKSPACE NEEDS

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

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

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE

- Biological and other mitigation monitoring continued to be provided by NRC and Chambers Group, respectively. During the subject period, neither cultural resource nor paleontology monitoring was required. NRC and Chambers monitors were continually present during mobilization/construction at the El Casco Substation and periodically at Zanja Substation. Two NRC Biological Monitors were present at El Substation because of the large area and the numbers of tasks involved; including, but not limited to, noise monitoring, nest monitoring, and checking of holes, trenches and V-ditches for animal entrapment. No environmental monitor was continually present at the Banning Substation site, because all work was contained within the substation and no environmental issues were involved.
- Equipment was continually checked for air pollution control compliance. The Chambers monitor continued to check equipment for leakage.
- Dust control, when necessary, was maintained by water trucks at the El Casco Substation and Zanja Substation work sites. On June 3rd the CPUC EM observed a concrete truck exceeding the ten mile per hour on the El Casco Substation access road and creating a plume of dust. It was determined that, although the road happened to be fairly dry at that time, no visible fugitive dust would have been produced by a vehicle adhering to the speed limit. The same truck also intentionally avoided the shaker plate at the entrance gate upon leaving the site. One of the site SCE inspectors was informed of the incident. In general, the El Casco Substation was well-watered and dust free.
- A concrete truck wash-out basin has been established and is in use at the El Casco Substation (see Figure 5). Concrete placement continued to occur at the substation site during the subject period.

- Security is now on duty at the entrance gate to the El Casco Substation site twenty-four hours, seven days per week. Temporary security cameras have also installed in the construction area, the trailers and storage yard.
- SCE has delayed the removal of the water tower and tank inside the entrance gate until after the current bird nesting season. The equipment is within 500 feet of riparian vegetation. Only normal traffic activity on the access road will be allowed during the season. The removal operation of the tower and tank would likely result in greater noise level.
- NRC Biological Monitors continued noise monitoring adjacent to the San Timoteo Creek riparian area at El Casco Substation and access road sites during the subject period. This noise monitoring is being done in accordance with the Noise Analysis/Management Plan for the El Casco Substation and Access Road sites prepared by Chambers Group. The results of the noise monitoring continued to be provided to CPUC on a weekly basis. Peaks of construction noise occasionally reached over 60 decibels, but mostly were well under that level. The loudest noise levels recorded were in the 60s decibel range from San Timoteo Road traffic, and in the 80 to 90s range from nearby train activity. One noise monitoring station has been abandoned because of proximity to an active least Bell's vireo nest. This decision was made after consultation with the Santa Ana Watershed Association (SAWA) vireo surveyor, who is coordinating with and sharing information with NRC Biologist Monitors.
- Nesting bird activities throughout the project area continued to be discovered and monitored by NRC Biological Monitors. Least Bell's vireo nesting activities was monitored by the SAWA biologist, who shared the information with NRC. The most recent table and maps were provided to CPUC on June 1, 2010. They continue to be provided on a bi-weekly basis. To date, approximately thirteen least Bell's vireo territories have been confirmed adjacent to the El Casco Substation and access road along San Timoteo Creek riparian belt. House finches continued to attempt nesting in Project structures, particularly at Zanja and El Casco Substations. Biologists continued to remove new nests before eggs could be laid. One house finch nest with eggs was abandoned by the birds at the El Casco Substation laydown yard during the prior subject period. A raven nest in a tower above the substation also was abandoned during the prior period. During the subject period, a western kingbird nest was abandoned at Zanja Substation. In all three cases, no Project activity had occurred in proximity of the nests during occupancy. The nests had previously been located by the Biological Monitors, and the areas placed off limits to construction activity, as has been done with active nests near construction activity. CDFG was informed of the above incidents.
- Temporary trenches and holes continue to be dug on the pad at the El Casco Substation site. These have the potential to trap animals. NRC Biological Monitors are inspecting the trenches each morning, using flashlights when necessary, for trapped individuals. In addition, it has been noted that permanent V-ditches that have been constructed on the periphery of the substation site may have the potential for entrapment. The issue with the V-ditches is being investigated further by SCE. The majority of the animals that have been trapped are tree frogs and western toads during cold weather, and meadow mice and rattlesnakes at other times. No special status species have been affected. Some of the V-ditches have been covered with plywood at intervals to provide cover for trapped animals.
- Fiber-Optic Cable construction had been halted in the vicinity of an active red-tailed hawk nest proximate to the route along Live Oak Canyon Road. During the subject period, the young hawks fledged and have left the nest site.
- The lower pad at the El Casco Substation site is in the process of being prepared for the construction of three towers providing upcoming power to the station (see Figure 3). The pad is adjacent to least Bell's vireo habitat along San Timoteo Creek. It has been arranged that construction of the foundations will be permitted during the remainder of the nesting season. The tower foundation which will be the greatest distance from the Creek will be constructed first. The other two foundations will be built later, probably after July 15. However, tower construction will not occur until after the season. The pad is surrounded by sound wall. The foundation construction activity will be monitored for during construction sound levels.

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

TABLE 1
NCRs, PROJECT MEMORANDUM, & OTHER INCIDENTS
 (Updated 06-07-10)

Type	Date Issued	Description
PM #1	03/16/09	Failure to comply with Mitigation Measure B-18 before, during and after vegetation clearing at the El Casco Substation site. Construction equipment went outside of approved Project boundaries.
	8/21/09	A SCE internal noncompliance at the Banning Substation was issued for mobilization of the site before environmental training and biological pre-construction sweep were conducted.
PM #2	8/27/09	The initiation of construction activity before CPUC authorization and validation of the biological survey at the site of the NTP #3, MOD #1 pole work in Banning.
PM #3	01/14/10	Use of an unapproved area for staging and parking at the Zanja Substation site.
PM #4	03/16/10	Riparian work during nesting bird season along El Casco Substation access road.
PM #5	04/16/10	Installation of a Section of Fiber Optic Cable without CPUC Notification of Route Change or Prior Biological Survey

NOTICE TO PROCEED (NTP) SUMMARY

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

TABLE 2
NOTICES TO PROCEED
 (Updated 06-07-10)

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

1. Compliance submittals pending.

VARIANCE & TEWS REQUEST SUMMARY

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

**TABLE 3
VARIANCE REQUESTS
(Updated 06-07-10)**

Variance #	Date Requested	Date Issued	Description
#1	04/01/09	04/16/09	Usage of an empty fenced lot immediately south of SCE's existing Maraschino Substation, Beaumont, Riverside County, as a laydown yard to support Project construction.
#2	10/01/09	10/09/09	Placement of two watertanks and above ground pipe to feed water needs at he El Casco Substation site.
#3	09/30/09	10/15/09	FOC Temporary Circuitry: Banning and Calimesa Shoo Flies.
#4	09/30/09	10/15/09	Alternate Access to the Banning Substation from John Street.
#5	09/22/09	10/23/09	SCE has asserted within the variance request that several Geo & Hydro Mitigation Measures should not be required for the 115 kV Subtransmission Line Element.
#6	10/23/09	10/27/09	Installation of a Portable Fuel Tank at the El Casco Substation site.
#7	10/27/09	10/29/09	Project Description change from underground to overhead installation for fiber optics circuitry along Colton Avenue in the vicinity of the Mentone Substation.
#8	10/29/09	10/29/09	Removal of five Fremont cottonwood trees that are impacted by the construction of the access road to the El Casco Substation site.
#9	01/11/10	01/12/10	Sunday work on FOC shoo-fly segment during scheduled line outage.
#10	01/14/10	01/19/10	Use of the area east of the Zanja Substation fence line for parking and staging purposes.

**TABLE 4
TEMPORARY EXTRA WORK SPACE REQUESTS
(Updated 06-07-10)**

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

PROJECT PHOTOGRAPHS



Figure 1: Framing of the 200/115 kV MEER (electrical control room) at the El Casco Substation site began during the subject period. The sound wall can be seen in the distance. The photograph faces northwards.



Figure 2: Construction of the foundation for the 12 kV MEER at the El Casco Substation site began during the subject period. The framing for the 200/115 kV MEER can be seen behind the storage trailers. The photograph faces northwestward.



Figure 3: The pad for the three towers that will support incoming power to El Casco Substation has been built. Construction of the tower foundations will begin shortly. San Timoteo Creek is to the left of the photograph, and the substation site is to the right. The photograph faces eastward.



Figure 4: The access road to Zanja Substation was paved during the subject period. The newly built structure and tower can be seen on the left side of the substation in the distance. The photograph faces westward.



Figure 5: A concrete wash out basin for concrete delivery trucks has been built at El Casco Substation and is currently in use. The photograph faces southward with the terraced hillside in the background.