

July 21, 2009

Mr. Jensen Uchida  
San Joaquin Cross Valley Loop Transmission Project  
Environmental Science Associates  
225 Bush Street, Suite 1700  
San Francisco, CA 94104-4207

Dear Mr. Uchida:

The Southern California Edison power line for alternate route 2, the Elderwood Gap line, would affect the ability of my family to run a profitable citrus business. During these uncertain economic times, the profitability of all businesses should be protected and encouraged. Instead, we find ourselves at risk of losing vital acreage and having our profits cut by the intrusion of the power line across our property.

The SCE power line will cross a 70-acre section of our citrus property. Over the past 5 years we have worked to improve this property by replacing an older grove with new trees. These trees are just beginning to come into production and will take another 5 years to be in full production. As a result, we have already limited the profits from this section in order to plan for the future. The power line will remove many of our new trees and put us back to square one. As with any business, improvements are made at a cost and in citrus production that cost is not just in the taking out and replanting a grove but also in the loss of production. These costs are then projected over 10 years in order to ensure that the farm is able to absorb the costs. With the additional loss of trees to the power line, the projections we had assumed for this project are now incorrect. The economy in general is already unstable and additional losses will make it even more difficult to operate in the "black".

In addition, farming under the power lines is not a liability we wish to assume. We will be losing the acreage under the power line because our current farming practices would require equipment with spray booms, etc. to operate under the lines. We are not willing to put our employees at risk of injury from working under the lines so we feel we cannot farm under the power line. That will mean a loss of acreage extending across the 70 acres in the path of the power line. The loss of acreage stated in the draft environmental impact report is much lower than the actual loss of acres.

Finally, we would hope that the SCE and CPUC would select a route that would not impact the farmer at a time when the economy makes it more difficult to sustain such a loss. Select the route that will not impact permanent crops and put the family farmer at risk of failure. That route appears to be alternate route 3. Thank you.

Sincerely,

John Meling, partner  
Meling Bros.  
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