



Colorado River Basin Regional Water Quality Control Board

Certified Mail: **7022 0410 0001 5745 0516**

October 30, 2023

Southern California Edison (SCE)
Hazem Gabr, Water Quality Manager
2244 Walnut Grove Avenue
Rosemead, CA 91770
Hazem.Gabr@sce.com

SUBJECT: NOTICE OF APPLICABILITY FOR COVERAGE UNDER ORDER NO. 2004-0004-DWQ, STATEWIDE GENERAL WASTE DISCHARGE REQUIREMENTS FOR DREDGED OR FILL DISCHARGES TO WATERS DEEMED BY THE U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS TO BE OUTSIDE OF FEDERAL JURISDICTION, TD1817371, TD1817372, AND TD1882154 YUCCA VALLEY PIONEERTOWN POLE REPLACEMENT PROJECT (WDID NO. 7A363047001), SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY

Dear Mr. Gabr,

On March 10, 2023, Southern California Edison (SCE or Discharger) submitted a Notice of Intent (NOI) to enroll under and comply with State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) Order No. 2004-0004-DWQ, *Statewide General Waste Discharge Requirements for Dredged or Fill Discharges to Waters Deemed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to be Outside of Federal Jurisdiction*.

The California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Colorado River Basin Region (Colorado River Basin Water Board) has reviewed your enrollment materials and finds that the dredge/fill discharges associated with the TD1817371, TD1817372, and TD1882154 Yucca Valley Pioneertown Pole Replacement (Project) meet the requirements for enrollment. You are hereby enrolled under Order No. 2004-0004-DWQ and may proceed with the Project in accordance with the Order.

A copy of [Order 2004-0004-DWQ](#) (https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/board_decisions/adopted_orders/water_quality/2004/wqo/wqo2004-0004.pdf) is attached and it can be found on the State Water Board's Adopted Orders webpage.

Please familiarize yourself with the requirements of Order No. 2004-0004-DWQ. You are responsible for complying with all applicable Order requirements. Failure to comply with

EDWARD MUZIK, CHAIR | PAULA RASMUSSEN, EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Order No. 2004-0004-DWQ constitutes a violation of the California Water Code and may result in enforcement action or termination of enrollment under the Order.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION, IMPACTS, AND MITIGATION

SCE is continually repairing, maintaining, upgrading, and replacing distribution facilities throughout its service territory. Ongoing operation and maintenance activities are necessary to ensure reliable service, as mandated by the California Public Utilities Commission. The Project objectives are replacement and maintenance of deteriorated utility poles located northeast of Yucca Valley near the non-census designated town of Pioneertown.

The Project will result in 0.027 acres and 126 linear feet of temporary impacts to the Colorado River Basin Water Board jurisdictional waters of the state, within an isolated watershed not under the jurisdiction of the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). The area of soil disturbance (i.e., excavation, side casting and backfill) will be limited to general 25-foot buffers around 5 of the new poles (Poles 2009911E, 2009913E, 2009914E, 2009915E, and 2009916E) which will serve as temporary work areas for the staging and operation of construction equipment. Direct ground disturbing temporary impacts from excavation and side casting around these poles would be limited to approximately 10 feet around the poles within the general 25-foot work areas. To reduce jurisdictional impacts, the area of soil disturbance (i.e., excavation, side casting and backfill) will be limited generally to 10-foot buffers around 8 of the pole replacements (poles 2009912E, 4636134E, 4661208E, 4661209E, 2009932E, 2009934E, 2009935E, and 1779586E). For these poles, the temporary work areas for the staging and operation of construction equipment will be restricted to a 10-foot work area buffer associated with the direct ground disturbances of temporary impacts from excavation and side casting.

For the Project, all poles will be accessed by truck. All existing poles will be removed by truck and all new poles will be set by truck. All new pole holes will be dug by truck-mounted mechanical auger and will be installed with an associated sono tube. The truck-mounted mechanical auger and associated sono tube will reach over the berm from the east to remove existing pole 1779586E and install new pole 1779586E. Some of the poles can be accessed from bare ground dirt roads, whereas other poles will require some overland travel. Rubber-wheeled vehicles will be used to facilitate overland travel to poles that cannot be accessed by bare ground dirt access roads. No vegetation trimming is proposed in the scope of work at all Project pole locations. Upon Project completion, the disturbed area will be returned to pre-existing contours.

PROJECT LOCATION

The Project's location ranges from approximately 0.35 miles to 2.52 miles from Yucca Valley in San Bernardino County. The Project occurs within Sections 17, 20, 21, and 28, Township 1 North, Range 5 East of the United States Geological Survey Yucca Valley North, California 7.5-minute quadrangle map.

The latitude and longitude of the impacted area is listed below. Maps showing the Project location are found in Attachment A of this Order.

Site	Latitude	Longitude
Project Center Point	34.1387871°N	-116.4688055°W

USGS 7.5 Minute Quadrangle Map Name	Township	Range	Sections
Yucca Valley North	1 N	5 E	17, 20, 21, and 28

APPLICATION FEE RECEIVED

No application fee was assessed for the Project. The fee amounts were determined as required by California Code of Regulations, title 23, sections 3833(b)(3) and 2200(a)(3) and were calculated as Category H - "Wildfire Mitigation by Electrical Corporations, Electric Utilities, and Electrical Cooperatives" (fee code 19) with the dredge and fill fee calculator. For Category H fees no application or project fee is due, however, an annual fee of \$40.00 per mile of overhead electrical lines identified as high risk or high threat in the wildfire mitigation plan will be assessed for the Project. This annual fee covers all dredge or fill activities conducted by the electrical corporations, electrical utilities, and electrical cooperatives pursuant to a wildfire mitigation plan, and is in lieu of the project-specific dredge or fill fees in section 2200(a)(3)(A)-(G) for dredge or fill activities conducted pursuant to a wildfire mitigation plan.

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA)

The Colorado River Basin Water Board has determined that the enrollment of this Project under Order 2004-0004-DWQ, which prescribes waste discharge requirements for the Project, is categorically exempt from the procedural requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Public Resources Code section 21000 et seq. Specifically, the issuance of this Order and the Project described herein meet the criteria for a Class 1 exemption (§ 15301, Existing Facilities) under the CEQA Guidelines (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15000 et seq.). Additionally, no exceptions to the CEQA exemption listed above apply.

Pursuant to CEQA, the Colorado River Basin Water Board has made Findings of Facts (Findings) which support the issuance of this Order and they are included in Attachment B.

AVOIDANCE AND MINIMIZATION MEASURES

The Discharger must implement the measures identified in the Temporary Impact Restoration Plan submitted with the Project application, as well as comply with all applicable requirements in Order No. 2004-0004-DWQ.

TERMINATION OF COVERAGE

Upon completion of the Project, SCE shall submit a complete Notice of Termination (NOT) requesting to be disenrolled under Order No. 2004-0004-DWQ. Attachment 2 to Order No. 2004-0004-DWQ contains the NOT form.

If you have questions concerning this matter, please contact Logan Raub, 401 Water Quality Certification Program Manager, at (760) 776-8966 or at Logan.Raub@waterboards.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Original Signed By

Paula Rasmussen
Executive Officer
Colorado River Basin
Regional Water Quality Control Board

Enclosures: 1) Attachment A Project Maps
2) Attachment B CEQA Findings
3) Order No. 2004-0004-DWQ

LR/

File: WDID: 7A363047001, RM: 454388, Place ID: 890406, TD1817371, TD1817372, and TD1882154 Yucca Valley Pioneertown Pole Replacement Project, Order 2004-0004-DWQ

cc: [via email only] (with enclosures):

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San Bernardino County Planning Department: tom.hudson@lus.sbcounty.gov

San Bernardino County Flood Control District: kblakeslee@dpw.sbcounty.gov

U.S. Bureau of Land Management: jkalish@blm.gov

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service: jenness_mcbride@fws.gov

CA Department of Fish and Wildlife Region 6: Heather.Pert@wildlife.ca.gov

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CA Department of Toxic Substances: Maria.Soria@dtsc.ca.gov

CA Department of Transportation – District 8: john.chisholm@dot.ca.gov

CA Department of Water Resources: bob.pierotti@water.ca.gov

401 Program, DWQ, State Water Resources Control Board:

StateBoard401@waterboards.ca.gov

CA Department of Resources Recycling & Recovery: WPCMDivision@Calrecycle.ca.gov

Attachment A Project Maps



Figure 1. REGIONAL MAP
TD1817371
TD1817372
TD1882154

★ Project Location

San Bernardino County, CA
USGS Quad: Yucca Valley North, CA
T01N, R05E, section 17, 20, 21, 28
NAD 1983 UTM Zone 11North

Base Map: ESRI ArcGIS Online,
accessed April 2022

Updated: 04/26/2022
File: TD1817372_JD_02222022

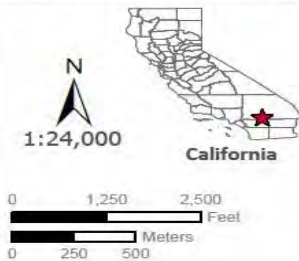


Figure 1: Regional Location Map¹

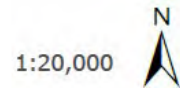
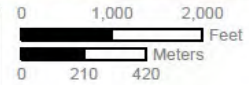
¹Southern California Edison, March 2023. Notice of Intent (NOI) for the Southern California Edison TD1817371, TD1817372, and TD1882154 Yucca Valley Pioneertown Pole Replacement Project.



REGIONAL MAP
 TD1817371
 TD1817372
 TD1882154

● Pole Location

San Bernardino County, CA
 NAD 1983 UTM Zone 11North



Base Map: ESRI ArcGIS Online,
 accessed April 2022

Updated: 04/26/2022
 Project No.
 File: TD1817372_JD_02222022

Figure 2: Vicinity Map



Figure 3B. MAPPED JURISDICTION
 TD1817372

- Pole Location
- Survey Area
- Access
- CDFW Streambed
- Non-Wetland Waters of the State (RWQCB/CDFW)

San Bernardino County, CA
 NAD 1983 UTM Zone 11North



1:2,431



Base Map: ESRI ArcGIS Online,
 accessed April 2022

Updated: 04/26/2022
 Project No.
 File: TD1817372_JD_02222022

Figure 3: Mapped Jurisdiction

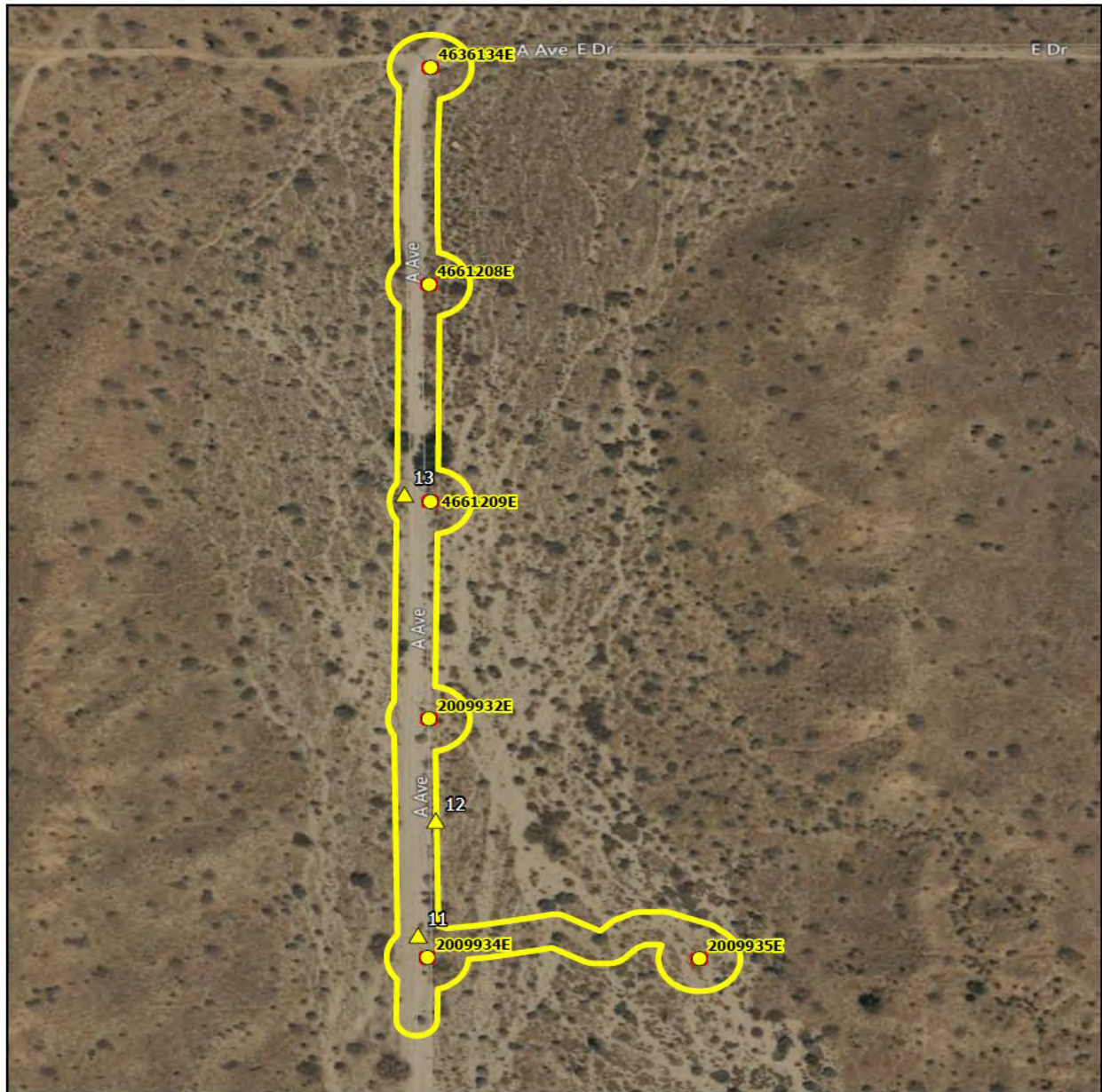


Figure 5B. PHOTO LOCATIONS
 TD1817372

- Pole Location
- ▲ Photo Point
- Survey Area
- Work Area

San Bernardino County, CA
 NAD 1983 UTM Zone 11North



1:2,344



Base Map: ESRI ArcGIS Online,
 accessed April 2022

Updated: 04/26/2022
 Project No.
 File: TD1817372_JD_02222022

Figure 4: Photo Locations



Photo 1. Pole 2009911E, Overview Facing Southeast



Photo 2. Pole 2009916E, Overview Facing East

Attachment B CEQA Findings

A. Introduction

The Colorado River Basin Water Board has determined that the Project is exempt from review under CEQA pursuant to California Code of Regulations, title 14, section 15061. Specifically, the issuance of this Order and the Project described herein meet the exemptions criteria under California Code of Regulations, title 14, section 15301 (Existing Facilities).

B. Findings

1. Applicable Categorical Exemption

Under title 14, section 15301 of the California Code of Regulations, there is a “Class 1” categorical exemption where the proposed project “consists of the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features, involving negligible or no expansion of use beyond that existing at the time of the lead agency’s determination” such as “(b) [e]xisting facilities of both investor and publicly-owned utilities used to provide electric power, natural gas, sewerage, or other public utility services.”; and “(d) [r]estoration or rehabilitation of deteriorated or damaged structures, facilities, or mechanical equipment to meet current standards of public health and safety, unless it is determined that the damage was substantial and resulted from an environmental hazard such as earthquake, landslide, or flood.”

The Project falls within the exemption per section 15301 (Existing Facilities), because the Project involves the replacement of a deteriorating power pole with a similar pole. The Project will not result in an expansion of use.

2. No Exceptions to the Categorical Exemption Apply

There is no substantial evidence that any exceptions to the CEQA categorical exemption listed above apply. Analysis of the relevant exceptions pursuant to section 15300.2 of the State CEQA Guidelines are as follows:

- a. *Location. Class 4 is qualified by consideration of where the project is to be located—a project that is ordinarily insignificant in its impact on the environment may in a particularly sensitive environment be significant. Therefore, this class is considered to apply in all instances, except where the project may have an impact on an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern where designated, precisely mapped, and officially adopted pursuant to law by federal, state, or local agencies.*

The Project would involve temporary impacts to Colorado River Basin Water Board jurisdictional waters of the State, within an isolated watershed not under the jurisdiction of the USACE. The work area will be restored to pre-construction conditions following Project completion. The impacts are

anticipated to be short-term and/or less than significant. Furthermore, the Project falls within the exemption found in Section 15301 (Class 1, Existing Facilities), which is not qualified by consideration of location.

- b. Cumulative Impact. All exemptions for these classes are inapplicable when the cumulative impact of successive projects of the same type in the same place, over time is significant.*

No significant cumulative impacts over time are anticipated. This Project is not a part of a larger project.

- c. Significant Effect. A categorical exemption shall not be used for an activity where there is a reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.*

There are no “unusual circumstances” that would create a reasonable possibility of significant environmental impacts. All construction will be performed under “no flow” conditions in the washes to preclude potential impacts to water quality. Best Management Practices (BMPs) that will be used are appropriate for this type of project activity.

- d. Scenic Highway. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may result in damage to scenic resources, including but not limited to trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or similar resources, within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway.*

The Project is located approximately 4 miles north of Highway 62 and 4 miles west of Highway 247, both identified as eligible for designation as scenic highways. However, the Project will not damage the scenic resources within these highways as it will be a temporary project. Once work is completed, the area will be restored to pre-construction conditions.

- e. Hazardous Waste Sites. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project located on a site which is included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of Government Code.*

The Project site is not included on any list compiled pursuant to section 65962.5 of the Government Code.

- f. Historical Resources. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.*

There is no anticipated substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource. The Project is simply replacing existing poles that have deteriorated.

C. Determination

The issuance of this Order and the activities described herein meet the exemption criteria under California Code of Regulations, title 14, section 15301 (Existing Facilities).

The Colorado River Basin Water Board concludes that no exceptions to the CEQA exemption listed above apply to the activities approved by this Order.

The Colorado River Basin Water Board will file a Notice of Exemption with the State Clearinghouse within five (5) working days from the issuance of this Order. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15062.)

Order No. 2004-0004-DWQ

A copy of Order No. 2004-004-DWQ can be found at:

https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/cwa401/generalorders.html