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

Notice of Preparation

Environmental Impact Report / Environmental Impact Statement

for the
Antelope-Pardee 500-kV Transmission Project
Proposed by Southern California Edison Company

Application No. A.04-12-007

RECEIVED
JUN 27 2005

To: All Interested Parties

Si usted necesita una copia de este documento en español u otra información por favor llame a (661) 215-5152.

A. Subject

The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) and the USDA Forest Service, Angeles National Forest (ANF), will direct the preparation of a joint Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), referred to as an EIR/EIS, for the Antelope-Pardee 500-kV Transmission Project proposed by Southern California Edison (SCE). Under the direction of the CPUC as the lead California State agency, and the ANF as the lead federal agency, a draft and final EIS/EIR will be prepared to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

B. Summary of the Proposed Project

The Antelope-Pardee 500-kV Transmission Project (proposed project) would involve the construction of a new 25.6-mile 500-kV transmission line between the existing Antelope and Pardee substations. The Antelope Substation is located in the City of Lancaster and the Pardee Substation is located in the City of Santa Clarita, both of which are located in northern Los Angeles County (see the attached General Location Map). To accommodate construction, certain 66-kV and 500-kV facilities would be removed and certain 66-kV and 12-kV facilities would be relocated. The proposed project route would be constructed within an existing right-of-way (ROW) for 22.8 miles, of which 17.5 miles would be widened. Approximately 13 miles of the proposed project would be located in an existing ROW within ANF, which would be widened from 100 feet to 160 feet. Construction of a new ROW would be required for 2.8 miles of the proposed project route.

The proposed project would help to accommodate up to 4,400 megawatts (MW) of potential proposed wind generation north of Antelope, including a proposed 201-MW wind project to be located 8.5 miles northwest of the Antelope Substation. The 500-kV transmission line would initially operate at 220 kV, and would serve to reduce the existing loading on the Antelope-Mesa 220-kV transmission line to 330 MW, which is within the allowable line conductor thermal limits. By increasing the transfer capability of the Antelope Substation, the project would allow the proposed 201-MW wind generation to be safely transferred to serve system load.

The proposed project would include a 1,145 feet by 1,185 feet expansion of the Antelope Substation, an upgrade of the Antelope Substation from 220 kV to 500 kV, and the relocation of several existing

The proposed project would include a 1,145 feet by 1,185 feet expansion of the Antelope Substation, an upgrade of the Antelope Substation from 220 kV to 500 kV, and the relocation of several existing 66-kV subtransmission lines near the Antelope Substation. Prior to the expansion of the substation, three 1,000-foot, double-circuit 66-kV line sections currently located southwest of the substation would be relocated within a new 200-foot-wide ROW. The proposed project would also include the construction of two telecommunication paths between the Antelope and Pardee substations. The primary path would use the existing SCE infrastructure, while the secondary path would be provided by Optical Ground Wire that is installed on all new transmission lines.

C. Project Alternatives

Possible alternatives to the project would include:

No Project Alternative:

- Under the No Project Alternative, the proposed 500-kV transmission line would not be constructed and no expansion activities would occur at the Antelope Substation.

500-kV Route Alternatives:

- LADWP Transmission Line Route Alternative that would construct the 500-kV transmission line along a 22.8-mile alternative route between the Antelope and Pardee substations. The route would travel within portions of the existing Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) ROW, and would traverse ANF for 14.4 miles.
- Non-Forest Service Land Alternative that would avoid National Forest System lands. This alternative will be developed during the environmental review process.

Construction Alternatives:

- Underground Alternative that would construct the 500-kV transmission line underground along the proposed project route.
- Tower, Conductor, and Voltage Alternative that would use single-circuit, 500-kV towers along the entire project route in place of the double-circuit, 500-kV towers that have been proposed along portions of the route.

In addition to the alternatives listed above, additional alternatives may be evaluated in the Draft EIS/EIR based on input from agencies and the public and additional independent analysis by the CPUC and the Forest Service.

D. Available Information

Because of the known potential for significant impacts on the environment, an initial study was not prepared. Note that this Notice of Preparation (NOP) and all future project-related documents are available for review at the following locations:

Santa Clarita/Mojave Rivers Ranger Station
30800 Bouquet Canyon Road
Saugus, CA 91390
(661) 296-9710
Hours: Mon. to Fri. 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Angeles National Forest Supervisor's Office
701 N. Santa Anita Avenue
Arcadia, CA 91006
(626) 574-1613
Hours: Mon. to Fri. 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

City of Santa Clarita City Hall
23920 Valencia Boulevard
Santa Clarita, CA 91355
(661) 259-2489
Hours: Mon. to Thurs. 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.; Fri. 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Santa Clarita Community Center
24406 San Fernando Road
Santa Clarita, CA 91321
(661) 284-1476
Hours: Mon. to Fri. 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.; Sat. 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Canyon Country JoAnn Darcy Library
18601 Soledad Canyon Road
Canyon Country, CA 91351
(661) 251-2720
Hours: Mon. to Wed. 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.; Thurs to Fri. 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.; Sat. 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Newhall Library
22704 W. 9th Street
Newhall, CA 91321
(661) 259-0750
Hours: Mon. to Wed. 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.; Thurs. to Fri. 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.; Sat. 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Valencia Library
23743 W. Valencia Boulevard
Valencia, CA 91355
(661) 259-8942
Hours: Mon. to Thurs. 10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.; Fri. 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.; Sat. 10 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Internet Website: Information about this application and the environmental review process will be posted on the Internet at:

http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/environment/info/aspen/antelopepardee/antelopepardee.htm.

This site will be used to post all public documents during the environmental review process and to announce upcoming public meetings.

SCE's Proponent's Environmental Assessment (PEA) is available for review in electronic format at the website. The PEA includes a detailed description of the project that SCE proposes to undertake, and it evaluates potential impacts of the project from SCE's perspective.

Project Information Hotline. You may request project information by leaving a voice message or sending a fax to (661) 215-5152.

E. The EIR/EIS Process

As indicated in the summary of the proposed project, the proposed 500-kV transmission line would traverse National Forest land administered by the ANF. Thus, SCE will require ROW authorization and special use permits from the Forest Service. In order to consider the issuance of these permits, and based on potential impacts identified in SCE's PEA, the Forest Service will prepare an EIS pursuant to NEPA requirements.

CEQA requires the CPUC to take into account the environmental impacts that could result from the proposed project, necessitating preparation of an EIR. Based on these requirements by both the State and federal agencies, a joint EIR/EIS will be prepared under the direction of both agencies to satisfy their permitting and decision-making requirements whenever the application before each agency is considered. CEQA and NEPA also require that the EIS/EIR development process include public notice of the proposed project and address concerns that the public may have regarding the proposed project.

The Draft EIR/EIS will include an objective analysis of the potential environmental impacts of the proposed project and alternatives. When completed, the Draft EIR/EIS will be distributed for a 45-day

public comment period. A notice of availability of the Draft EIR/EIS will be sent to the State Clearinghouse by the CPUC and published in the Federal Register by the Forest Service. The CPUC and the Forest Service will consider all comments on the Draft EIS/EIR and revise the document, as necessary, before issuing a Final EIS/EIR. The Final EIS/EIR will include responses to each comment received on the Draft EIR/EIS.

F. Proposed Scope of the EIR/EIS

The EIR/EIS will present the analysis of the environmental impacts of the proposed project and comparative environmental effects of the alternatives, and will identify mitigation measures for potentially significant impacts. The EIR/EIS will address all issue areas for which potential significant impacts are anticipated. These issue areas include:

- **Air Quality.** Construction and operation emissions and effects.
- **Biological Resources.** Effects on native habitats that support rare, threatened, or endangered species; impacts on sensitive habitats or species downslope from the ROW as a result of sedimentation or erosion; damage to native plant habitats due to construction or widening of the ROW; loss of habitat due to vegetation removal; and effects of noise disturbance on nesting and foraging of wildlife species.
- **Cultural Resources.** Construction effects on prehistoric sites, structures, regional districts or other physical evidence associated with human activity; disturbance during grading and excavation, illicit artifact collection by transmission line workers and construction equipment encroachment in sensitive areas.
- **Hazards and Public Safety.** Potential for encountering previously contaminated soils during construction; potential for introducing contaminants into the environment during construction or operation; health effects associated with electric and magnetic fields from transmission lines.
- **Geology and Soils.** Slope stability and seismic impacts associated with fault rupture and liquefaction/lateral spreading; damage to above ground structures from earthquake-induced ground shaking; potential for landslides and erosion in areas disturbed by construction.
- **Hydrology and Water Quality.** Potential construction impacts resulting in sedimentation, effects on water quality, altered drainage patterns, and flooding.
- **Land Use and Public Recreation.** Construction effects on agricultural and recreational uses; potential for long-term safety risks to existing or planned uses in project vicinity.
- **Noise.** Construction and operation effects on sensitive receptors.
- **Public Services and Utilities.** Effects of project construction and population growth on public services; disruption to utilities.
- **Socioeconomics and Environmental Justice.** Potential impacts on minority and/or low-income populations; effects on employment and population growth.
- **Transportation and Traffic.** Construction effects on project area's transportation system, traffic congestion, pedestrian circulation and emergency access.
- **Visual Resources.** Construction and operation effects on visual resources resulting from presence of equipment, materials, workers, and above-ground facilities, especially in visually sensitive areas.
- **Cumulative and Growth-Inducing Impacts.**

G. Project Scoping Process and Scoping Meetings

The EIR/EIS for the Antelope-Pardee 500-kV Transmission Project will focus on significant environmental effects. The process of determining the focus and content of the EIR/EIS is known as scoping. Scoping helps to identify the range of actions, alternatives, environmental effects, and mitigation measures to be analyzed in depth, and eliminates from detailed study those issues that are not pertinent to the final decision on the proposed project. Scoping is also an effective way to bring together and address the concerns of the public, affected agencies, and other interested parties. Significant issues may be identified through public and agency comments.

Scoping, however, is not conducted to resolve differences concerning the merits of the project or to anticipate the ultimate decision on the proposal. Rather, the purpose of scoping is to help ensure that a comprehensive and focused EIR/EIS will be prepared that provides a firm basis for the decision-making process. Members of the public, affected federal, State, and local agencies, the proponent of the action, interest groups, and other interested parties may participate in the scoping process for this project by providing written and verbal comments or recommendations concerning the issues to be analyzed in the EIR/EIS. Comments can be given by attending the scheduled scoping meetings listed below and/or sending written comments to the address listed below.

The CPUC and the Forest Service will conduct two public scoping meetings. The purpose of these meetings is to present information regarding the proposed project and the CPUC and Forest Service decision-making processes, and to listen to the views of the public on the range of issues relevant to the preparation of the Draft EIR/EIS.

Public Scoping Meetings

Date	June 29, 2005	July 14, 2005
Time	6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.	6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
Location	Desert Inn Hotel 44219 Sierra Highway Lancaster, CA 93534 (661) 942-8401	City of Santa Clarita Activities Center 20880 Centre Point Parkway Santa Clarita, CA 91350 (661) 250-3703

The meeting locations are wheelchair accessible. However, if other accommodations for the handicapped are required (e.g., sign language interpreters), you must call (562) 947-5259. Attendees requiring language interpretation services must also call the EIR/EIS public involvement manager at (562) 947-5259.

Send in written comments by July 29, 2005, to:

John Boccio/ Marian Kadota
California Public Utilities Commission/ Angeles National Forest
c/o Aspen Environmental Group
30423 Canwood Street, Suite 215
Agoura Hills, CA 91301

By Electronic Mail: E-mail communications are welcome; however, please remember to include your name and return address in the email message. E-mail messages should be sent to antelope-pardee@aspeneg.com.

By Fax: You may fax your comment letter to (661) 215-5152. Please remember to include your name and return address in the fax.

A **Scoping Report** will be prepared, summarizing all comments received (including oral comments made at the scoping meetings). This report will be posted on the project website (http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/environment/info/aspen/antelopepardee/antelopepardee.htm). In addition, a limited number of copies will be available upon request to the CPUC.

H. Agency Comments

This NOP has been sent to State responsible and trustee agencies, cooperating federal agencies, the State Clearinghouse, and the Federal Register. We need to know the views of your agency as to the scope and content of the environmental information which reflects your agency' s statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. Once again, responses should identify the issues to be considered in the Draft EIR/EIS, including significant environmental issues, alternatives, mitigation measures, and whether the responding agency will be a responsible State or federal agency or a State trustee agency. Due to the time limits mandated by State and federal laws, your response must be sent at the earliest possible date but no later than 30 days (July 29, 2005) after receipt of this notice. Please send your response to:

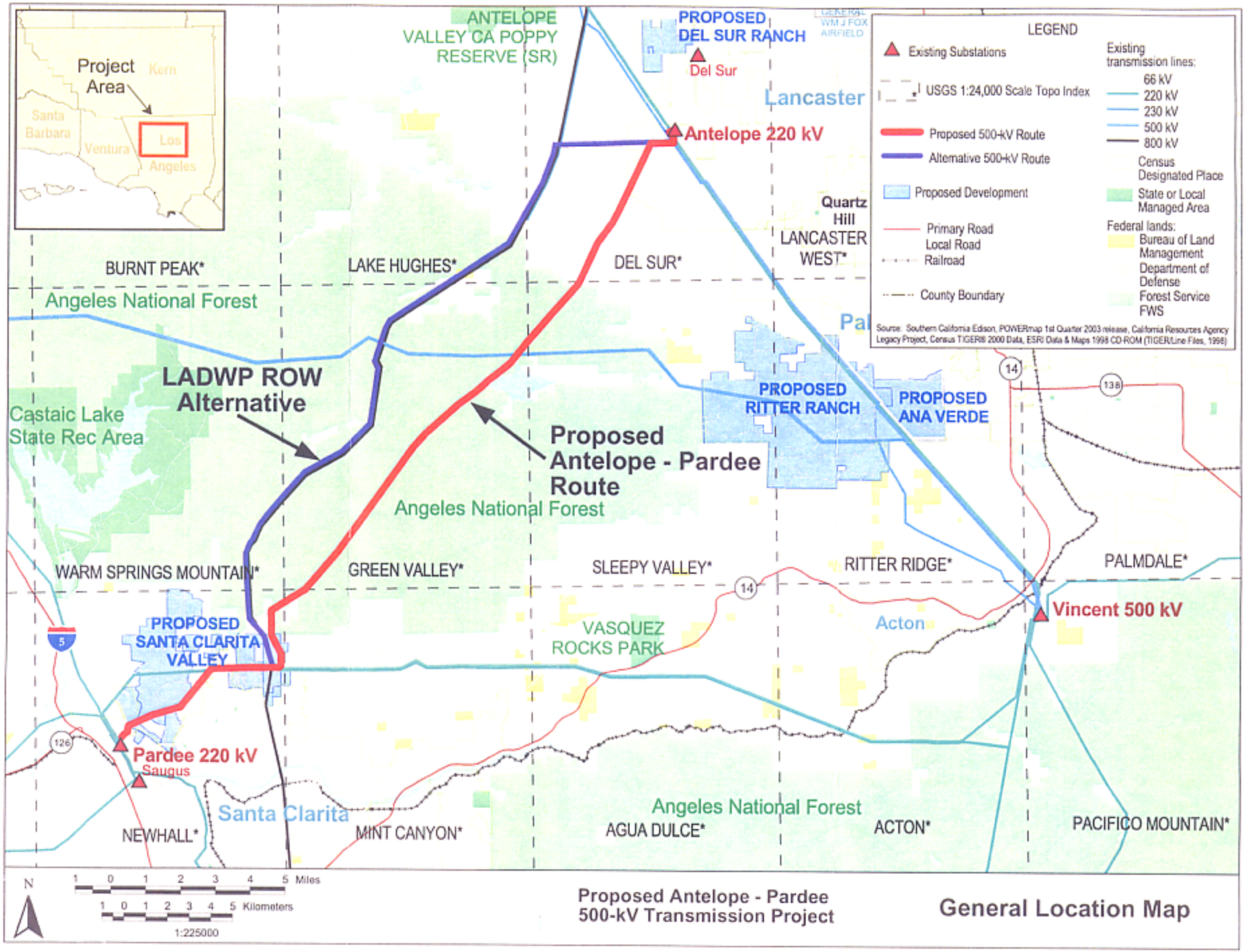
John Boccio/ Marian Kadota
California Public Utilities Commission/ Angeles National Forest
c/o Aspen Environmental Group
30423 Canwood Street, Suite 215
Agoura Hills, CA 91301

The California Public Utilities Commission and the USDA Forest Service hereby issue this Notice of Preparation of a joint Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement.

John Boccio
California Public Utilities Commission
(415) 703-2641

Marian Kadota
USDA Forest Service
(805) 961-5732

June 24, 2005


Project Area
Kern
Santa Barbara
Ventura
Los Angeles
ANTELOPE VALLEY CA POPPY RESERVE (SR)
PROPOSED DEL SUR RANCH
Del Sur
Lancaster
Antelope 220 kV
Quartz Hill
LANCASTER WEST*
BURNT PEAK*
LAKE HUGHES*
DEL SUR*
Angeles National Forest
LADWP ROW Alternative
Proposed Antelope - Pardee Route
Castaic Lake State Rec Area
PROPOSED RITTER RANCH
PROPOSED ANA VERDE
Angeles National Forest
WARM SPRINGS MOUNTAIN*
GREEN VALLEY*
SLEEPY VALLEY*
RITTER RIDGE*
PALMDALE*
Vincent 500 kV
Acton
PROPOSED SANTA CLARITA VALLEY
VASQUEZ ROCKS PARK
Pardee 220 kV
Saugus
Santa Clarita
NEWHALL*
MINT CANYON*
AGUA DULCE*
ACTON*
PACIFICO MOUNTAIN*
Angeles National Forest
LEGEND
Existing Substations
USGS 1:24,000 Scale Topo Index
Proposed 500-kV Route
Alternative 500-kV Route
Proposed Development
Primary Road
Local Road
Railroad
County Boundary
Existing transmission lines:
66 kV
220 kV
230 kV
500 kV
800 kV
Census Designated Place
State or Local Managed Area
Federal lands:
Bureau of Land Management
Department of Defense
Forest Service
FWS
Source: Southern California Edison, POWERmap 1st Quarter 2003 release, California Resources Agency Legacy Project, Census TIGER® 2000 Data, ESRI Data & Maps 1998 CD-ROM (TIGER/Line Files, 1998)
N
1 0 1 2 3 4 5 Miles
1 0 1 2 3 4 5 Kilometers
1:225000
Proposed Antelope - Pardee 500-kV Transmission Project
General Location Map