



Agenda Item XVI
WCCA
8/14/13

June 26, 2013

***Via Electronic Mail
and US Mail***

President Michael R. Peevey
Commissioner Michel Peter Florio
Commissioner Catherine J.K. Sandoval
Commissioner Mark J. Ferron
Commissioner Carla J. Peterman

California Public Utilities Commission
505 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, California 94102

Dear President Peevey and Commissioners Florio, Sandoval, Ferron, and Peterman:

Re: In re Tehachapi Renewable Transmission Project (A.07-06-031)

I write concerning the proceeding over the petition by Chino Hills to modify the portion of Decision 09-12-044 regarding Segment 8A of the Tehachapi Renewable Transmission Project (TRTP). Soon the Commission will vote on the Chino Hills application, and on competing proposed decisions by Administrative Law Judge Vieth, to deny the application, and President Peevey, to grant the application. State Parks does not take a position on the application. We do, however, urge the Commission to select an alternative for Segment 8A that will not result in renewed pressure to put transmission lines or related infrastructure in the Chino Hills State Park – an alternative for Segment 8A that the Commission previously determined is not feasible.¹ We are concerned that a single circuit option would have this effect.

State Parks became a party to the TRTP proceeding on January 18, 2012. In our oral motion to become a party, we explained that State Parks sought party status to protect its interest against the selection of a new route for the TRTP, or placement of related infrastructure, within the boundaries of the Chino Hills State Park or within its view shed. In general, as a statewide issue, State Parks is opposed to placing new utility infrastructure in state park units.

¹ *Decision Granting a Certificate of Public Convenience And Necessity for the Tehachapi Renewable Transmission Project (Segments 4-11)*, filed December 17, 2009, D.009-12-044, at p. 50, n.100.

We were pleased when the Assigned Commissioner removed from the proceeding any consideration of a route through the Chino Hills State Park. The Assigned Commissioner explained that he excluded a state park option because of infeasibility and because the City of Chino Hills no longer sought a route through the Park.² The scoping memo states:

I also have excluded all options through the Chino Hills State Park since construction in the park continues to be infeasible, for reasons discussed in D.09-12-044. Further, discussion at the prehearing conferences has confirmed no party actively supports such development. Not only does the California Department of Parks and Recreation's opposition continue (together with a number of other parties), but Chino Hills, which formerly was a primary proponent, no longer is advancing that result. (Scoping memo at 5.)

In keeping with the scoping memo, no evidence was presented on an alternative route through the Chino Hills State Park, and neither of the proposed decisions addresses such an alternative. We appreciate that the Commission recognized the infeasibility of a route through the Park, and that Chino Hills removed that option from the table. We are concerned, however, that modifying the current double circuit design to a single circuit is a short-term solution that would lead to renewed pressure to build a line through the Park.

In this regard, there is agreement in the both of the proposed decisions that a single circuit line is adequate to meet "short term energy and capacity demands for Segment 8A," but that, even under the most optimistic forecast, the single circuit could cause curtailment, and thus a need for additional infrastructure, as soon as 2021.³ Given how long it would take to design and obtain approvals for additional capacity, that could put this issue back before the Commission in five years or less. At that time, as explained by Southern California Edison (SCE) witness Jorge Chacon, there would be only two options for providing a second 500 kV circuit in the Chino Hills area: running a second circuit through the City of Chino Hills, or running it outside of Chino Hills, presumably through the Chino Hills State Park.⁴

As I indicated above, State Parks generally is opposed to placing new utility infrastructure in state park units anywhere in the State, which makes it likely we would not support any efforts to place a second circuit for Segment 8 of the TRTP through the

² *Scoping Memo and Ruling of Assigned Commissioner*, filed July 2, 2012 ("Scoping memo").

³ Proposed Decision of ALJ Vieth ("Proposed Decision"), June 11, 2013, at pp. 26, 38; Alternate Proposed Decision of Commissioner Peevey ("Alternate Proposed Decision"), June 11, 2013, at pp. 26, 38.

⁴ Exhibit SCE-104R, *SCE's Refined Underground Testimony in Response to Assigned Commissioner's Scoping Memos and Rulings on the TRTP* (Redacted Testimony of Jorge Chacon), at pp. 35:13 – 36:1.

Chino Hills State Park in the future. Moreover, as State Parks Planning Division Chief Steven Musillami explained in a letter to SCE last year, the Chino Hills State Park General Plan would need to be amended before allowing a line through the Park.⁵ This is a discretionary decision that would involve multiple state and federal agencies, and that could take several years.

For these reasons, while State Parks does not take a position on the current application for reconsideration by Chino Hills, or on the decision whether to use overhead or underground lines for Segment 8A, it is our view that the Commission should select an alternative that satisfies current *and future* capacity needs for the TRTP. It is undisputed that a single circuit design will not serve this purpose. We therefore urge the Commission to select a double circuit alternative now, to avoid having to consider placing a second circuit in the Chino Hills State Park in the not-very-distant future.

Sincerely,



Mat Fuzie, Deputy Director
Park Operations
California State Parks

cc: Service List in A.07-06-031 (via e-mail)

⁵ Exh. SCE-99, *SCE's Testimony in Response to Assigned Commissioner's Ruling on the TRTP*, Attachment C (Letter from Steven Musillami to Mark Murray, Jan. 6, 2012).