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## Colorado River Basin Regional Water Quality Control Board

Certified Mail: **7021 1970 0002 0497 8746**

January 18, 2023

Hazem Gabr, Water Quality Section Manager  
Southern California Edison (SCE)  
2244 Walnut Grove Avenue  
Rosemead, CA 91770  
[Hazem.Gabr@sce.com](mailto: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, TD1418565 JOSHUA DRIVE DETERIORATED POLE REPLACEMENT PROJECT (WDID NO. 7B363054001), SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY**

Dear Mr. Gabr,

On November 8, 2022, 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 TD1418565 Joshua Drive Deteriorated Pole Replacement Project (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](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

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JAYNE POWELL, 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 involves the removal and replacement of one existing 75-foot wood pole (Pole 1883368E) with an 80-foot wood pole with caisson (36-inch by 20-foot steel caisson). The existing pole does not have a caisson. The Pole can be accessed by driving overland approximately 175 feet through upland habitat northwest from a private residence with entry from Joshua Drive, using rubber-wheeled and tracked vehicles and equipment. The access route to the Pole will avoid the nearby Joshua Trees.

The new pole will be set by a truck and a crane. A telehandler forklift, a tracked low drill rig, and a rubber-tired cement truck will be used to dig and install a new caisson in a location approximately 11.5 feet south of the old pole. Standard excavation depths for this caisson will be 20 feet with a final diameter of 36 inches, plus 1 foot for construction-related backfill. The hole will be backfilled with cement, pea gravel, crushed rock, and/or native dirt.

The Project will impact 0.07016 acre (0.00016 permanent/0.07 temporary)/105 linear feet of ephemeral drainages. Temporary impacts associated with the Project include equipment staging, excavation, side casting, and general work activities within the 50-foot radius of the structures. Temporary impacts potentially associated with overland travel include access for vehicles and/or equipment within a 40-foot-wide corridor (20 feet on either side of the route centerline). Temporarily impacted areas will be restored to pre-existing contours. The small permanent impacts associated with this Project would result from the installation of new pole structure and new caisson.

Because rubber-wheeled vehicles will be used on previously disturbed overland travel routes within the jurisdictional areas, no alterations would be made to streambed elevations, streambeds, and/or banks. Additionally, no staging within the road prism would occur outside the designated Work Area.

### **PROJECT LOCATION**

The Project is located at a dry wash approximately 1.5 miles south of Yucca Valley in San Bernardino County, California. The survey area is approximately one mile south of Twenty-nine Palms Highway, State Route 62. The Project occurs in Section 1, Township 1 South, Range 5 East of the Yucca Valley South, US Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute quadrangle map. The overland travel will occur along previously disturbed overland travel routes.

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 No.	Latitude	Longitude
Pole 1883368E (Existing Pole)	34.105521° N	-116.422774° W
New Pole	34.105486° N	-116.422775° W

USGS 7.5 Minute Quadrangle Map Name	Township	Range	Section
Yucca Valley South	1S	5E	1

### **APPLICATION FEE RECEIVED**

A fee of \$ 2,417 was received on November 1, 2022.

The fee amount was determined as required by California Code of Regulations, title 23, sections 3833(b)(3) and 2200(a)(3) and was calculated as Category A - Fill & Excavation Discharges (fee code 84) with the dredge and fill fee calculator.

### **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, Southern California Edison 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.

Southern California Edison  
TD1418565 Joshua Drive  
Deteriorated Pole Replacement Project

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January 18, 2023

If you have questions concerning this matter, please contact Kai Dunn, 401 Water Quality Certification Program Manager, at (760) 776-8986 or at [Kai.Dunn@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:Kai.Dunn@waterboards.ca.gov).

Sincerely,

*Original Signed By*

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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

KD/

File: WDID: 7B363054001, RM: 450023, Place ID: 884313, SCE TD1418565 Joshua Drive Deteriorated Pole Replacement Project (Project), Order 2004-0004-DWQ

cc via email (with enclosures):

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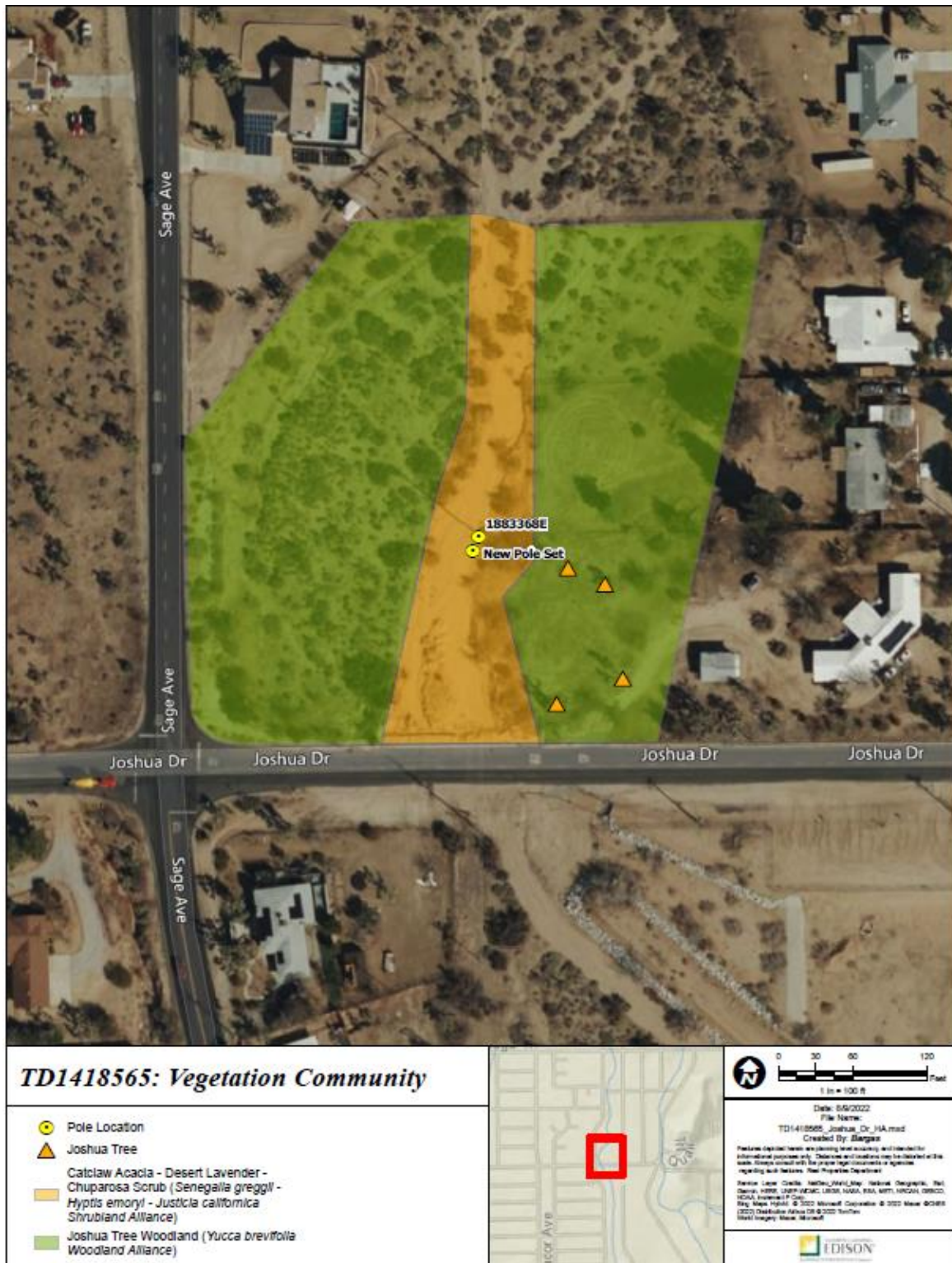
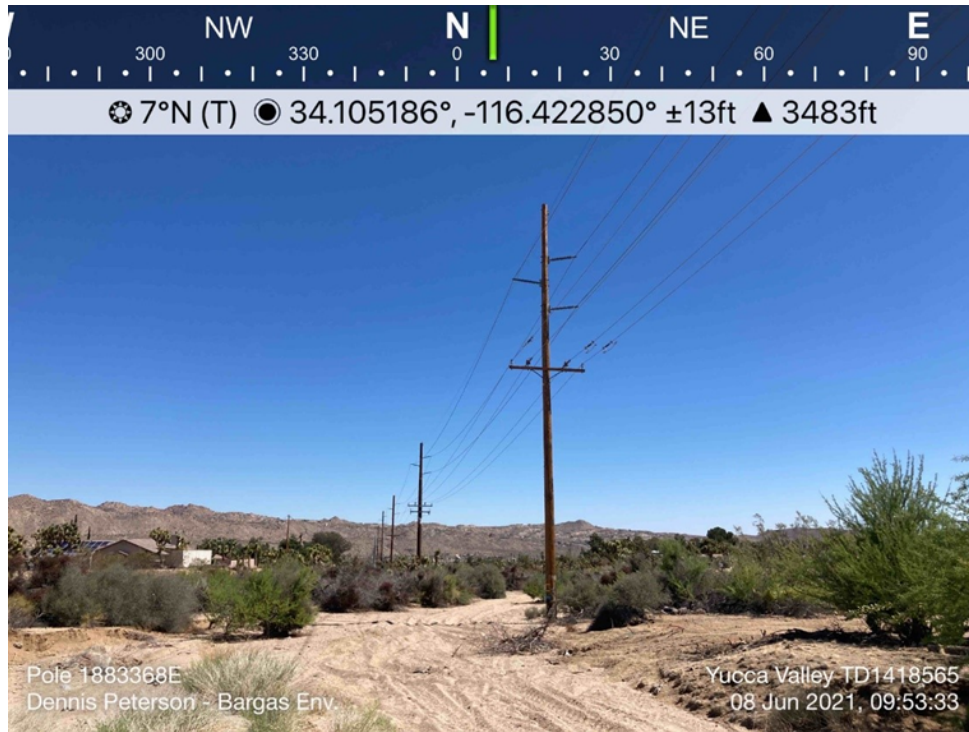


Figure 4: Vegetation Community



**Photo 1.** Pole 1883368E: Overview Looking North



**Photo 2.** Pole 1883368E: Overland Travel Route Looking Northwest

## **Attachment B CEQA Findings**

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### **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 exemptions 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 is located at a dry wash approximately 1.5 miles south of Yucca Valley in San Bernardino County, California. The survey area is approximately one mile south of Twenty-nine Palms Highway, State Route 62. The Project occurs in Section 1, Township 1 South, Range 5 East of the



Yucca Valley South, US Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute quadrangle map. The Project would involve permanent and temporary impacts within an unnamed ephemeral stream. 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 at a dry wash approximately 1.5 miles south of Yucca Valley in San Bernardino County, California. The survey area is approximately one mile south of Twenty-nine Palms Highway, State Route 62. The Project occurs in Section 1, Township 1 South, Range 5 East of the Yucca Valley South, US Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute quadrangle map. State Route 62 may be eligible or officially designated as a state scenic highway; however, the Project will not damage the scenic resources within the state scenic highway 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 an existing pole that has 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.)