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STATE OF CALIFORNIA
ENERGY RESOURCES
CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

In the Matter of:) Docket No. 15-AFC-01
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APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATION FOR) APPLICANT'S STATUS CONFERENCE
THE PUENTE POWER PROJECT) STATEMENT
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As requested in the Notice of Committee Status Conference issued on September 9, 2016, Applicant hereby submits its Status Conference Statement identifying topics Applicant would like to discuss with the Committee at the Status Conference. Applicant would like to discuss:

- Removal of Existing Ocean Discharge
- Transmission Interconnection Refinement
- Schedule

Removal of Existing Ocean Discharge

On June 20, 2016 California Energy Commission (CEC) staff issued its revised Preliminary Staff Assessment (PSA) concluding that the Puente Power Project (Project) as proposed, with implementation of the proposed Conditions of Certification, would comply with all applicable laws, ordinances, regulations and standards (LORS), and would not result in any unmitigated significant environmental impacts. Notwithstanding CEC staff's highly favorable assessment of the Project, Applicant has nevertheless agreed to further improve the Project by making minor modifications to the proposed wastewater and stormwater systems which will eliminate ocean discharges from the Project, as well as from existing Mandalay Generating Station (MGS) Unit

3, and allow for the permanent removal of the existing beach outfall structure, which Applicant has committed to do as part of the Project.

Applicant's decision was prompted by:

- The report approved by the California Coastal Commission on September 9, 2016 containing recommendations for consideration by the CEC in connection with its review of the Project, which included a recommendation to evaluate continued use of the existing ocean outfall. (TN #213667)
- Comments on the PSA from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) dated August 18, 2016, which expressed concerns about the proposed use of the existing ocean outfall for the Project. (TN #212915).
- Comments on the PSA from intervenor City of Oxnard submitted on September 15, 2016 (TN #213681), intervenors Environmental Coalition, Sierra Club and Environmental Defense Center submitted on September 13, 2016 (TN #213685), and others submitted on or about the PSA comment deadline of September 15, 2016, expressing concerns related to biological resources and public access to the beach as a result of the proposal to utilize the existing outfall for the Project.

In response to these recent developments, Applicant promptly redesigned the wastewater and stormwater systems for the Project and analyzed the implications of redirecting discharges to the Edison Canal and removing the existing ocean outfall structure. Applicant plans to submit a complete description and analysis of these Project improvements to the CEC on September 26, 2016, and will provide an overview at the Committee Status Conference.

Transmission Interconnection Refinement

As a result of further engineering refinements and ongoing discussions with Southern California Edison (SCE) regarding the facilities interconnection for the Project, Applicant filed a minor change to the transmission interconnection on August 26, 2016. The 220-kilovolt (kV) transmission interconnection for the Project will now consist of a single gen-tie connection, which will require one mono-pole structure and one take-off structure, providing a direct connection to SCE's transmission system and bypassing the existing Mandalay Switchyard. Applicant will provide an overview of this project enhancement at the Committee Status Conference.

Schedule

The Project has been the subject of repeated and ongoing requests to extend the CEC review schedule, most of which have been granted. Among the extensions that have been granted are the following:

- The period for propounding data requests was extended by 90 days (TN # 207182).
- The period for commenting on the Preliminary Determination of Compliance (PDOC) was extended by 30 days (TN #212003).
- The period for commenting on the PSA was extended by 45 days (TN #212398)

Additional formal and informal requests to extend the CEC review schedule continue to be made by the parties and members of the public, and will undoubtedly be made at the Committee Status Conference. Applicant opposes any further extensions of the CEC review schedule.

While Applicant acknowledges the number of parties who have commented on the PDOC and the PSA, and the need for agency staff to take such comments into consideration, the issues raised in these comments are not new. They have been raised previously in data requests, status reports, status conferences and public workshops, and most if not all of them have been responded to previously by Applicant and/or agency staff. These repeated comments do not justify further extension of the schedule. Additional time is highly unlikely to lead to resolution of long-standing differences of opinion regarding the Project, and the best course for resolution is to proceed expeditiously to evidentiary hearings.

The improvements to the Project described above, while important and far-reaching in terms of their implications for the Project's impacts on the environment, are straight-forward in nature and will not require extensive additional analysis by the staff, the parties or the public. Applicant will provide a detailed and comprehensive assessment of the improvements that will facilitate prompt review. Applicant should not be penalized with additional schedule delays for responding promptly to comments from the parties and the public and making improvements to the Project.

DATED: September 23, 2016

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Michael J. Carroll

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