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ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

State Water Resources Control Board

CLEAN WATER ACT SECTION 401 WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION ORDER NO. WQ 2021-0039-DWQ AND NOTICE OF APPLICABILITY FOR ENROLLMENT UNDER STATE WATER BOARD GENERAL ORDER FOR THE CORPS' NATIONWIDE PERMITS (ORDER NO. [WQ] 2020-0039-EXEC)

Effective Date: September 13, 2021

Program Type: Fill/Excavation

Project Type: Overhead Utility

Project: TD1548884 Soda Springs Grid Resiliency Project
Regulatory Measure ID: 444565
WDID: SB210291N

Applicant: Southern California Edison
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For further assistance, please call State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) Staff listed above or (916) 341-5478 and ask to speak with the Wetlands Permitting and Enforcement II Unit Supervisor.

E. JOAQUIN ESQUIVEL, CHAIR | EILEEN SOBECK, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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I. Summary

This document serves as a Notice of Applicability (NOA) for enrollment under the State Water Board General Order for the Nationwide Permits (Order No. [WQ] 2020-0039-EXEC; SWRCB ID SB20031GN; hereafter referred to as the General Order) at the request of Southern California Edison (Applicant). The General Order can be accessed at [the Clean Water Act Section 401 - Certification and Wetlands Program, General Orders webpage](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/cwa401/generalorders.html#yr_2020) (https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/cwa401/generalorders.html#yr_2020). On August 11, 2021, the State Water Board received a complete Notice of Intent (NOI) requesting authorization for the Applicant's TD1548884 Soda Springs Grid Resiliency Project (Project). The Applicant submitted a certification request as defined by 40 CFR section 121.5 concurrently to the State Water Board and Corps on August 11, 2021. After reviewing the NOI, the State Water Board has determined that the Project meets General Order requirements for Nationwide Permit 57: Electric Utility Line and Telecommunications Activities.

This order also serves as an individual certification of the Corps Nationwide Permit 57 under the authority of Clean Water Act Section 401.

II. Project Description

As described in the Project NOI and supplemental information (hereafter referred to as the Application), which is incorporated herein by reference, the purpose of the Project is to maintain existing overhead utility facilities which involves pole replacement, pole removal, anchor installation, and/or overhead work on fifteen pole locations, four of which are in waters of the state.

III. Project Location

The Project is located within a pasture directly west of Balch Park Road and approximately 2000 feet south of Bear Creek Road, in Springville, Tulare County, California. The Project coordinates are 36.177551°N, 118.799810°W.

IV. Receiving Waters Information

The Project is located within the jurisdiction of the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board, Fresno Office. Receiving waters and groundwater potentially impacted by this Project are listed in Table 1. These waters are regulated in accordance with the applicable water quality control plan (Basin Plan) for the region and other plans and policies of the California Water Boards, which may be accessed online at [the State Water Boards' Plans and Policies webpage](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/plans_policies/) (http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/plans_policies/).

Table 1: Receiving Water Information

Impact Site ID	Waterbody Name	Impacted Aquatic Resource Type	Water Board Hydrologic Units	Receiving Waters	Receiving Waters Beneficial Uses	303(d) Listing Pollutants
Poles 4435990E, 4404870E, 4401112E	Unnamed Pasture Wetland	Wetland	55.11 North Fork Tule HSA	North Fork Tulare River	MUN, AGR, POW, REC1, REC2, WARM, COLD, RARE, SPWN, FRSH	N/A
Access Road	Unnamed Pasture Wetland	Wetland	55.11 North Fork Tule HSA	North Fork Tulare River	MUN, AGR, POW, REC1, REC2, WARM, COLD, RARE, SPWN, FRSH	N/A
Pole 4404867E	Unnamed Pasture Wetland	Non-Wetland Waters of the US	55.11 North Fork Tule HSA	North Fork Tulare River	MUN, AGR, POW, REC1, REC2, WARM, COLD, RARE, SPWN, FRSH	N/A

V. Direct Impacts to Waters of the State

Total Project fill/excavation quantities for all impacts are summarized in Table(s) 2 and 3.

Table 2: Total Project Fill/Excavation Quantity to Wetlands

Temporary Impact¹	Permanent Impact - Physical Loss of Area	Permanent Impact - Degradation of Ecological Condition Only
0.176 acres 0.0 cubic yards 325 linear feet	0.0 acres 0.0 cubic yards 0.0 linear feet	0.0 acres 0.0 cubic yards 0.0 linear feet

Table 3: Total Project Fill/Excavation Quantity to Stream Channels

Temporary Impact²	Permanent Impact - Physical Loss of Area	Permanent Impact - Degradation of Ecological Condition Only
0.044 acres 0.0 cubic yards 50 linear feet	0.0 acres 0.0 cubic yards 0.0 linear feet	0.0 acres 0.0 cubic yards 0.0 linear feet

VI. Description of Indirect Impacts to Waters of the State

The State Water Board recognizes the potential for indirect impacts to waters of the state associated with the Project. Potential indirect adverse effects include but are not limited to: increased sediment loading to streams from riparian and/or upland areas used for access or staging areas, possibility of introducing invasive species into the Project areas, and changing timing of runoff delivery to streams in the Project area. The Project, as designed, will not have significant indirect impacts to waters of the state.

¹ Includes only temporary direct impacts to waters of the state and does not include upland areas of temporary disturbance which could result in a discharge to waters of the state. Temporary impacts, by definition, are restored to pre-project conditions and therefore do not include a physical loss of area or degradation of ecological condition.

² Includes only temporary direct impacts to waters of the state and does not include upland areas of temporary disturbance which could result in a discharge to waters of the state. Temporary impacts, by definition, are restored to pre-project conditions and therefore do not include a physical loss of area or degradation of ecological condition.

VII. Conditions

A. Scope of Authorization

- i. The Project may proceed only as described in the Application submitted to the State Water Board by the Applicant and in accordance with the conditions in State Water Board General Order No. [WQ] 2020-0039-EXEC and this NOA. This Certification and coverage under the General Order is no longer valid if the Project (as described) is modified. A copy of the General Order and its attachments can be found on the State Water Resources Control Board's [General Order Website](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/cwa401/generalorders.html#yr_2020) (https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/cwa401/generalorders.html#yr_2020).

Compliance with 40 CFR § 121.7(d)(2) - This condition is necessary to assure that any discharge under this Order will comply with water quality requirements as described in the General Order. Water Code section 13264 prohibits any discharge that is not specifically authorized in an order. The conditions set forth in State Water Board Water Quality General Order No. [WQ] 2020-0039-EXEC are further justified in Attachment C of that General Order.

B. Standard Conditions (These conditions are also set forth in State Water Board General Order No. [WQ] 2020-0039-EXEC, in Section VI.A.1-A.3.)

- i. Every certification action is subject to modification or revocation upon administrative or judicial review, including review and amendment pursuant to Section 13330 of the Water Code and Article 6 (commencing with Section 3867) of this Chapter.
- ii. Certification is not intended and shall not be construed to apply to any activity involving a hydroelectric facility and requiring a FERC license or an amendment to a FERC license unless the pertinent certification application was filed pursuant to Subsection 3855(b) of this Chapter and that application specifically identified that a FERC license or amendment to a FERC license for a hydroelectric facility was being sought.
- iii. Certification is conditioned upon total payment of any fee required under this Chapter and owed by the applicant.

Compliance with 40 CFR § 121.7(d)(2) – Each standard condition in Section VI.B is necessary to assure that any discharge authorized under the general license or permit will comply with water quality requirements. Water quality requirements include state regulatory requirements for point source discharges into waters of the United States. California Code of Regulations, title 23, Chapter 28 sets forth regulations pertaining to water quality certifications for point source discharges to waters of the United States.

These conditions were included to comply with section 3860, which sets forth conditions that must be included in all water quality certifications.

C. Mitigation for Temporary and Permanent Impacts

- i. All temporarily affected areas will be restored to pre-construction contours and conditions upon completion of construction activities in compliance with the General Order and according to the restoration plan submitted by the Applicant in the Application.

Compliance with 40 CFR § 121.7(d)(2) – Mitigation is required to ensure compliance with Executive Order W-59-93 that requires no net loss of the structure or function of California’s wetland resources.

VIII. California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

The State Water Board has determined that the Project is exempt from review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to California Code of Regulations, title 14, section 15301. Additionally, the State Water Board finds that no exceptions to the exemptions apply to the activities approved by this NOA.

IX. Certification Fees

The Project is being implemented as part of the Applicant’s Wildfire Mitigation Plan, as required by the California Public Utilities Commission under Senate Bill 901. The fee amount was determined as required by California Code of Regulations, title 23, sections 3833(b)(3) and 2200(a)(3) and falls under Category H – Wildfire Mitigation by Electrical Corporations, Electric Utilities, and Electrical Cooperatives.

X. Public Notice

The State Water Board provided public notice of the Application pursuant to California Code of Regulations, title 23, section 3858 from August 11, 2021 to September 1, 2021. The State Water Board did not receive any comments during the comment period.

XI. Reporting and Notification Requirements

Notices and reporting shall be provided to the State Water Board according to section VI.E, “Application for Coverage and Termination,” of the General Order.

The Applicant shall submit Report Types 2 and 3, as described in Attachment B, “Report and Notification Requirements,” of the General Order. The Applicant must also submit Report Types 4 through 9 if the Project encounters the conditions described in these Report Types. The Applicant must submit all reports and information required under this Certification according to the Report Submittal Instructions found in Attachment B, “Report and Notification Requirements,” of the General Order.

Compliance with 40 CFR § 121.7(d)(2) – These reporting and notification requirements are necessary to confirm that the requirements set by this certification are satisfied, and that the requirements are sufficient to protect beneficial uses and water quality objectives. Monitoring and reporting requirements are authorized by Water Code sections 13267 and 13383.

XII. Water Quality Certification

I hereby issue this Notice of Applicability for the TD1548884 Soda Springs Grid Resiliency Project, certifying that as long as all of the conditions listed in the General Order are met, any discharge from the referenced Project will comply with the applicable provisions of Clean Water Act sections 301 (Effluent Limitations), 302 (Water Quality Related Effluent Limitations), 303 (Water Quality Standards and Implementation Plans), 306 (National Standards of Performance), and 307 (Toxic and Pretreatment Effluent Standards).

As a water quality certification and enrollment under State Water Board General Order No. [WQ] 2020-0039-EXEC, this Certification and Notice of Applicability serve as waste discharge requirements pursuant to the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act (Wat. Code, § 13000 et seq.). State Water Board Order No. [WQ] 2020-0039-EXEC serves as waste discharge requirements in accordance with State Water Board Water Quality General Order No. 2003-0017-DWQ. The State Water Board will file a Notice of Exemption (NOE) at the State Clearinghouse within five (5) working days of issuance of this NOA.

Except insofar as may be modified by any preceding conditions, all NOA actions are contingent on: (a) the discharge being limited and all proposed mitigation being completed in strict compliance with the conditions of the General Order and the attachments to the General Order; and, (b) compliance with all applicable requirements of Statewide Water Quality Control Plans and Policies, and the Regional Water Boards' Water Quality Control Plans and Policies.

 Digitally signed by Karen Mogus
Date: 2021.09.13 13:14:03 -07'00'

Date

Karen Mogus, Deputy Director
Division of Water Quality