Reading File

UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION IX
75 Hawthorne Street
San Francisco, CA 94105-3901

March 17, 2008

Steve Tuggle
Natural Resources Manager
Western Area Power Administration
Sierra Nevada Region
114 Parkshore Drive
Folsom, CA 95630-4710

Subject: Supplemental Final Environmental Impact Statement (SFEIS) for Sacramento Area Voltage Support Project, California (CEQ Number: 20080046).

Dear Mr. Tuggle:

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the above-referenced document pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508), and our NEPA review authority under Section 309 of the Clean Air Act.

EPA reviewed the Supplemental Draft EIS (SDEIS) for the proposed Sacramento Area Voltage Support Project, and provided comments to the Western Area Power Administration (WAPA) on August 27, 2007. We rated the SDEIS as "EC-2: Environmental Concerns, Insufficient Information," due to concerns with potential impacts to air quality, water resources and biological resources. We recommended that the SFEIS include a table of aquatic resource impacts, include a commitment from WAPA to conduct wetland surveys and delineations upon selection of the preferred alternative, and also implement limited operating periods and fencing for sensitive resources. We also requested that the SFEIS contain a discussion of the compliance implications of the amended $PM_{2.5}$ standards with respect to the execution of this project and make the appropriate project changes to ensure compliance with the National Ambient Air Quality Standards $PM_{2.5}$ regulation and its new 24 hour standard.

EPA is pleased that many of the issues identified in our review of the SDEIS have been adequately addressed in the SFEIS. In response to our comments, WAPA provided additional information on measures taken or planned to address air quality, wetlands, and threatened and endangered species impacts. The SFEIS also clarifies the coordination that will occur between WAPA and appropriate agencies in both planning and construction phases to assure environmental impacts are minimized.

We appreciate the opportunity to review this SFEIS. When the Record of Decision is signed, please send one copy to the address above (mail code: CED-2). If you have any questions, please contact me at 415-972-3846, or Laura Fujii, the lead reviewer for this project. Laura can be reached at 415-972-3852 or fujii.laura@epa.gov.

Sincerely,

Nova Blazej, Manager
Environmental Review Office
Communities and Ecosystems Division