



SPECIAL PUBLIC NOTICE

**U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
LOS ANGELES DISTRICT**

BUILDING STRONG®

DECISION TO ACCEPT AND EXPEND FUNDS FROM THE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA EDISON COMPANY

Public Notice No.: SPL-2016-00067-AJS

Project: Southern California Edison - WRDA Funding Agreement

Project Manager: Antal Szijj; 805-585-2147; Antal.J.Sziji@usace.army.mil

This Public Notice announces the decision of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District (Corps) to accept and expend funds from the Southern California Edison Company (SCE) to expedite processing of their Department of the Army (DA) permit applications, subject to a series of limitations. Accepted funds would also be made available to the Corps Sacramento District to expedite SCE permit processing within their district boundaries.

On March 2, 2016 the Corps circulated a public notice announcing our preliminary intent to accept funds from SCE accept and expend such funds, and stated that we had initiated funding discussions with the District. The March 2016 Special Public Notice also discussed the kind of activities for which funds would be expended, and the safeguarding procedures which would be used to ensure that the funds will not impact impartial decision making.

Those procedures include the following:

- (a) All final permit decisions for cases where these funds are used must be reviewed at least one level above the normal decision maker, unless the decision maker is the District Commander. For example, if the decision maker is the Chief of the Regulatory Division, then the decision would be made by the District Commander.
- (b) All final permit decisions for applications where these funds are expended will be made available on the Corps Headquarters' web page.
- (c) The Corps will not eliminate any procedures or decisions that would otherwise be required for the type of project and permit application under consideration.
- (d) The Corps will comply with all applicable laws and regulations.
- (e) Funds will only be expended to provide priority review of SCE's permit applications.

How the Corps Would Expend Funds: The Corps Regulatory Program is funded as a Congressionally-appropriated line item in the annual Federal budget. Additional funds received from SCE would be used to augment the budget of the Corps in accordance with the provisions of Section 1006 of WRRDA 2014. The Corps would establish a separate account to track the receipt and expenditure of the funds.

Activities for Which Funds Would be Expended: Funds would be expended primarily on the labor and overhead of Regulatory Division staff processing permit applications. Such permit processing activities could include but would not be limited to the following: application completeness review, jurisdictional determinations, site visits, preparation of public notices, preparation of correspondence, meetings, consultation with other agencies, public interest review, distribution of public notices, analysis of alternatives, compensatory mitigation proposal review, preparation of environmental assessments, preparation of permit decision documents and permit compliance. Funds may also be expended by other Corps divisions (e.g., Environmental Resources Branch, Engineering Division), or to hire contractors to perform select duties such as site visits, technical writing, copying, technical contracting for review of specific items such as biological assessments for endangered species, preparing regional general permits, Essential Fish Habitat determinations and other technical documents, including draft environmental documents, at the direction of the Regulatory Division.

Funds would not be expended for review of project managers' work by supervisors or other persons in the decision making chain of command. Funds would not be expended by Regulatory Division staff to complete enforcement actions, nor would the funds be used for public hearings (e.g., venue fees) and distribution of public notices (e.g., postage).

If SCE's funds are expended and are not renewed, SCE's remaining permit applications would be processed like those of any other non-participant, in a manner decided by the assigned Regulatory Division project manager and his or her supervisor.

Attached is the signed decision document authorizing acceptance of funds from the Southern California Edison Company. Copies of the relevant documents related to this decision to accept District funds, as well as any permit decisions in the future, which were evaluated by District-funded Corps staff, can be viewed at the Corps regulatory web page at: <http://www.spl.usace.army.mil/regulatory//WRDA-Section-214>.

For additional information please call Antal Szijj of my staff at 805-585-2147 or via e-mail at Antal.J.Szijj@usace.army.mil. This public notice is issued by the Chief, Regulatory Division.



Regulatory Program Goals:

- To provide strong protection of the nation's aquatic environment, including wetlands.
- To ensure the Corps provides the regulated public with fair and reasonable decisions.
- To enhance the efficiency of the Corps' administration of its regulatory program.

**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
LOS ANGELES DISTRICT, U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS**

Ventura Field Office
2151 Alessandro Drive, Suite 110
Ventura, CA 93001

WWW.SPL.USACE.ARMY.MIL/MISSIONS/REGULATORY