

1 1.0 INTRODUCTION

3 1.1 PROJECT OBJECTIVES, PURPOSE AND NEED

4 Southern California Edison Company (SCE, referred to as the Applicant in this
5 Environmental Impact Report [EIR]) is the owner and operator of San Onofre Nuclear
6 Generating Station (SONGS) Unit 1, which was one of the first commercial nuclear
7 power plants in the United States. SONGS Unit 1 was built from 1964 to 1967,
8 commenced commercial operation on January 1, 1968, and was permanently retired in
9 November 1992. The Applicant is currently decommissioning all of the onshore
10 components of the SONGS Unit 1 facility.

11 The Applicant is entitled to use the offshore area occupied by the SONGS Unit 1
12 offshore cooling water conduits under California State Lands Commission (CSLC)
13 Easement Agreement PRC 3193.1 (Agreement). This Agreement, which was executed
14 during the early 1960s, requires the Applicant to remove the offshore cooling water
15 conduits in their entirety at the end of the term of the Agreement, which is due to expire
16 in 2013. The disposition of these offshore conduits is the subject of this EIR, which
17 does not evaluate any of the onshore decommissioning activities at the retired power
18 plant. After discussions with the CSLC staff and completion of an engineering feasibility
19 study, the Applicant is proposing an amendment to the Agreement to allow a smaller
20 project, as described below, and subsequently terminate the Agreement.

21 This EIR has been prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality
22 Act (the CEQA) in order to evaluate the potential environmental effects of the proposed
23 Disposition of the Offshore Cooling Water Conduits at SONGS Unit 1 (Proposed
24 Project). The State CEQA Guidelines (Section 15126.6.a) require that, in addition to the
25 Proposed Project, alternatives be analyzed in the EIR that can feasibly attain the
26 majority of the basic objectives of the Proposed Project. Therefore, to explain the need
27 for the Proposed Project, and to guide in development and evaluation of alternatives,
28 the Applicant defined the following objectives for the Disposition of the Offshore Cooling
29 Water Conduits, SONGS Unit 1 Project:

- 30 • remove the vertical structures at the termini of the offshore cooling water
31 conduits to the seabed floor to eliminate their risk as navigation hazards, and
32 remove the associated marker buoys;
- 33 • remove 5 manhole risers on the intake conduit and 4 on the discharge conduit;

- 1 • allow the horizontal structures, which are buried an average of 4 feet (1.2 m)
2 beneath the ocean floor, to remain in a safe configuration that would prevent
3 entry by humans and other large mammals, while allowing the conduits to
4 continue as a habitat for marine flora and fauna until they eventually backfill with
5 seabed material;
- 6 • install barriers in the terminal structure and manhole riser openings; the barriers
7 would have open areas that would prevent entry by humans and marine
8 mammals, while allowing the conduits to continue as a habitat for marine flora
9 and fauna until the conduits eventually backfill with seabed material;
- 10 • install a “plug” of lean concrete grout between the mean lower low water (MLLW)
11 boundary and the tsunami gates located inland from the seawall to preserve the
12 integrity of the existing beach and seawall; and
- 13 • terminate the Lease Agreement and enter into a new Lease Termination/
14 Abandonment Agreement.

15 1.2 PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF EIR

16 Section 15124(d) of the State CEQA Guidelines requires that an EIR contain a
17 statement briefly describing the intended uses of the EIR within the project description.
18 Further guidance within the State CEQA Guidelines indicates that this statement should
19 identify the ways in which the Lead Agency and any responsible agencies would use
20 this document in their approval or permitting processes. The following paragraphs
21 summarize the roles of these agencies and their intended uses of the EIR.

22 The CSLC is serving as the Lead Agency responsible for preparing the CEQA
23 document in consultation with other agencies and the public. The EIR will be used by
24 the CSLC in determining whether to approve the Applicant’s proposal for disposition of
25 the offshore cooling water conduits. Responsible agencies under the CEQA include
26 other State and local agencies with discretionary approval over the Proposed Project.
27 The EIR will be used by these agencies to determine whether to issue permits or other
28 approvals. Trustee agencies are other agencies with resources affected by the project
29 that will review the EIR and comment on the findings. Responsible and Trustee
30 agencies include the California Coastal Commission (CCC); the California Department
31 of Parks and Recreation (CDPR); the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG);
32 the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC); the Regional Water Quality Control
33 Board, San Diego Region (RWQCB); the South Coast Air Quality Management District
34 (SCAQMD); and the San Diego Air Pollution Control District (SDAPCD).

1 The Proposed Project will also be approved or reviewed by a number of Federal
2 agencies including the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), San Diego Regulatory
3 Branch; the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Marine Resources Division; the
4 National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS); the Department of the Navy, Marine Corps
5 Base (MCB) Camp Pendleton; and the U.S. Coast Guard.

6 **1.3 PUBLIC REVIEW AND COMMENT**

7 **1.3.1 Scoping**

8 As the Lead Agency responsible for preparing the CEQA document, in consultation with
9 other agencies and the public, the CSLC filed a Notice of Preparation (NOP) with the
10 State Clearinghouse (SCH #2004061092) on June 17, 2004, and sent the NOP to State
11 and local agencies. The NOP described the Proposed Project; provided information on
12 the time, day, and place of the two public scoping meetings; and gave the closing date
13 for comments on the scope of the EIR. The public scoping meetings were also noticed
14 in local newspapers. The two public scoping meetings were held in San Clemente on
15 July 1, 2004, one in the afternoon and one in the evening. Several written comments
16 were received, and oral comments on the scope of the EIR were provided by agency
17 representatives. The San Diego County Water Authority (Water Authority) and the
18 Municipal Water District of Orange County (MWD) indicated that they are considering
19 the feasibility of a regional seawater desalination facility at MCB Camp Pendleton. MCB
20 Camp Pendleton commented during the NOP period that it was aware of the
21 consideration being given to a desalination facility at the base, and it supported the
22 Proposed Project and the retention of the offshore conduits in place. The California
23 Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) commented that the EIR should
24 evaluate issues associated with potential contamination of the site from previous
25 operations at SONGS Unit 1. The Native American Heritage Commission described its
26 recommended consultation process. All of the oral and written comments have been
27 considered in preparing this EIR (Appendix B).

28 In addition, informal discussions have been held with the known interested parties,
29 including local commercial fishing groups and agencies that have jurisdictional
30 responsibilities over the resources potentially affected by the Proposed Project. These
31 included the CCC, the CDFG, the CDPR, National Oceanic and Atmospheric
32 Administration (NOAA) Fisheries, the USACE, the SCAQMD, and the SDAPCD. These
33 discussions were also considered in developing the scope of the EIR.

34 The Draft EIR is being circulated for agency and public review on February 23, 2005,
35 and the formal comment period will end on April 8, 2005. Two Public Comment
36 Meetings will be held concerning the Draft EIR on March 30, 2005, at 4 and 6 p.m.

1 These meetings will be held in the San Clemente Community Center in San Clemente,
2 California. At the conclusion of the public review period, a Final EIR will be completed
3 in response to public and agency comments. The Final EIR will be used by the CSLC in
4 determining whether to approve the Proposed Project.

5 **1.3.2 Public Comment on the Draft EIR**

6 To be provided at the conclusion of the public review period.

7 **1.4 PERMITS, APPROVALS, AND REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS**

8 In addition to the proposed Agreement with CSLC, the Proposed Project would require
9 the following permits and approvals from reviewing authorities and regulatory agencies:

- 10 • Coastal Development Permit from the CCC;
- 11 • Anchoring Permit from the U.S. Coast Guard;
- 12 • Section 404 and Section 10 Permits from the USACE;
- 13 • Section 401 Water Quality Certification from the RWQCB;
- 14 • Section 7 Consultation with the USFWS;
- 15 • Consultation with the NOAA under the Marine Mammal Protection Act; and
- 16 • Agreement with MCB Camp Pendleton to place concrete plugs in the onshore
17 portions of the conduits.

18 **1.5 CONSISTENCY WITH REGIONAL AND LOCAL PLANS**

19 The Proposed Project would involve the disposition of two existing offshore cooling
20 water conduits that were installed in the mid-1960s in accordance with Easement
21 Agreement PRC 3193.1. The disposition is intended to be in accordance with
22 Paragraph 14 of the Agreement, which calls for the removal of structures erected by the
23 Lessee. The CSLC will determine whether to approve the proposed disposition in
24 conformance with PRC 3193.1. No regional or local plans address the conduits or the
25 disposition Agreement.

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