



April 15, 2012

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**Re: NOP California Pacific Electric Company 625 and 650 Electrical Line Upgrade Project**

The portion of this project that is within the Lake Tahoe Basin will have serious environmental impacts on the Lake Tahoe region. Please analyze and consider the following concerns and questions:

**Purpose and Need:** Is doubling the capacity necessary? Currently the Kings Beach Diesel station is backup; isn't that acceptable? \$18m was just spent to upgrade the station and it is only used for approx. 40 hours per year.

The NOP claims a major consideration is future growth load for the area. What is the currently expected normal growth (future load) Calpeco is considering or projecting for the area? Are you considering the expansion of the local ski areas such as Squaw and Northstar?

Why does the extra mile of the new 625 line jog up to Northstar ski area? Is it deemed necessary to provide power to Northstar's proposed cable car? Is there more development proposed for that area of Northstar?

**Transmission Poles:** New steel poles could be up to 64 feet high instead of the current 52 feet with bases up to 6 feet in diameter on concrete footings. What are the scenic consequences of this? What will it look like? What is the effect on wildlife? The area is a critical fawning habitat and golden eagle nesting area.

**Temporary Right of Way:** 221 acres are required.

Existing easements are 30' wide, new easements would be 40 feet wide. What are the scenic impacts?

Provide a contour map of the new proposed 625 line showing location of lines and proposed roads (six spur roads).

**Alternatives:** Provide an alternative which rebuilds the 625 line in its current location without a 40' wide easement or up to six foot at the base diameter poles. What is the current diameter base of the 625 poles?

### **Environmental Impacts**

**Scenic:** Show visual simulations of proposed poles and easements within the forest. Area is located near the Tahoe Rim Trail area. Analyze impacts to recreation, hiking, camping and day use. Provide a scenic evaluation of the power line (with trees removed to comply with state law) from the lake and various viewpoints, as per the TRPA scenic threshold standards.

**Forest Resources:** 365 acres of vegetation will be removed. How many trees will be removed? Is this really necessary? If so, why?

**Earth Resources:** What are the impacts on soil erosion and slope failure of grading and tree removal on 365 acres, especially since it will traverse mountain ridge-tops, riparian zones, two watersheds and several creeks?

**Transportation:** What are the impacts on the forest roadway network that is already heavily used?

Please incorporate the comments by the North Tahoe Citizens Action Alliance in their letter to the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency on April 14<sup>th</sup>, 2012, and add these issues to our list of concerns with the CALPECO Electrical Line Upgrade Project.

Sincerely,

Laurel Ames

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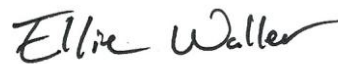


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