



Agenda Report

20-483

Agenda Date: 6/9/2020

REPORT TO COUNCIL

SUBJECT

Consideration of the City of Santa Clara Electric Department, dba Silicon Valley Power (SVP), Wildfire Mitigation Plan Update 2020 [Council Pillar: Deliver and Enhance High Quality Efficient Services and Infrastructure]

BACKGROUND

On October 9, 2018 the City of Santa Clara City Council took action on the initial determination of wildfire risk on the remote transmission assets for the City of Santa Clara dba Silicon Valley Power (SVP). This action directed SVP staff to create a formal wildfire mitigation plan for remote transmission assets owned by SVP as required by California Public Utilities Code Section 8387, as amended by Senate Bill 901 in 2018.

On June 25, 2019 the City of Santa Clara City Council took action approving SVP's 2019 Wildfire Mitigation Plan. In accordance with State law the plan has undergone its annual review, minor clarifications and updates have been incorporated as identified in the Discussion section.

SVP's service territory is contiguous with the City of Santa Clara city limits with limited exceptions in neighboring jurisdictions. The City is an urban environment and is surrounded on all sides by urban environments in other cities. Based on historical fire data and local conditions, and in consultation with the fire departments or other entities responsible for controlling fires within SVP's geographical service area where the utility's overhead electrical lines and equipment are located, there is no significant risk of catastrophic wildfire resulting from those electrical lines and equipment. Therefore, the plan focuses on the management of five transmission assets outside of SVP's service territory.

SVP owns remote transmission assets, including, but not limited to, the wires, the poles, and other equipment needed to safely maintain and deliver power generated from generation assets located outside the City limits as follows:

- SVP owns and operates the Grizzly Hydroelectric Project (Grizzly), a part of the Bucks Creek Project, FERC No. 619, located in Plumas County, California, as set forth in the Grizzly Development and Mokelumne Settlement Agreement by and between Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) and Santa Clara, dated March 8, 1990, as amended (Grizzly Agreement). Through the project, SVP owns approximately 3.4 miles of a 115 kV transmission line, extending from the Grizzly powerhouse to, and including the end structure and disconnect switch, near Bucks Creek Powerhouse and all other facilities necessary for interconnection with PG&E's transmission system. PG&E maintains the transmission line.
- SVP owns and operates the Black Butte Hydroelectric Project (Black Butte), FERC No. 3190

dated May 5, 1983 and amended June 5, 1987. Through this project, SVP owns a 9.5 mile long 60 kV transmission line interconnecting the project to PG&E's existing 60 kV line near the City of Orland, California. SVP maintains the transmission line.

- SVP owns the Stoney Gorge Hydroelectric Project (Stoney Gorge), FERC No. 3193 dated July 15, 1983. Through this project, SVP owns a one mile-long, 60 kV transmission line connecting the project with PG&E's Elk Creek Substation north of the powerhouse. SVP maintains the transmission line.
- SVP owns the High Line Canal Hydroelectric Project (High Line), FERC No. 7252 dated July 17, 1984. Through this project, SVP owns an approximately 75 foot long 12 kV three phase transmission line that interconnects with existing PG&E lines. SVP maintains the transmission line.
- SVP owns a 4.98 percent ownership interest in a 230 kV double circuit transmission line between Castle Rock Junction and Lakeville Substation in the Geysers, as set forth in the Agreement of Co-tenancy in the Castle Rock Junction-Lakeville 230 kV Transmission Line, dated June 1, 1984. This line supports SVP's share of the Geothermal Generation Project with the Northern California Power Agency (NCPA). PG&E maintains the transmission line.

SVP utilized the 2018 California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) Fire Threat map (Attachment 3) and data and historical fire map data to determine the level of wildfire risk. The CPUC fire map has two tiers; Tier 2 fire-threat areas depict areas where there is an elevated risk (including likelihood and potential impact on people and property) from utility associated wildfires; and Tier 3 fire-threat areas depict areas where there is an extreme risk (including likelihood and potential impact on people and property) from utility associated wildfires.

DISCUSSION

During the annual review of the Wildfire Mitigation Plan (WMP), several areas for clarification and updates were identified. Those changes are identified in the attached Wildfire Mitigation Plan 2019-2020 Redline Comparison. Specifically, the following updates were implemented:

Page 5: Added language to verify "with the caller" that 911 has been notified, if a fire is identified in the Black Butte, Highline and Stoney Gorge area.

Page 6: Added same language as on Page 5, removed the action of "immediately notify PG&E operations, and changed "enhance" to "enhanced" focus.

Page 8: Clarified that SVP "regionally" monitors current and forecasted weather and updated the sources utilized for monitoring.

Page 13: Added "distribution or" transmission conductor falls to the ground.

Page 15: Clarified when the original WMP was submitted and when the independent evaluator will be selected.

The law requires that the WMP be independently reviewed by a qualified independent evaluator and

the review be posted on the City's website and presented to Council in a public meeting. The California Public Utilities Commission has a proceeding in process to determine a list of independent evaluators. Because the timing of this process is unclear and the summer fire season is beginning, proactive adoption of the WMP ahead of the independent review is appropriate. Staff will return to Council with the independent evaluator's report and for consideration of a modified WMP incorporating the independent evaluator's comments, if necessary. The WMP will also be presented to the City Council on an annual basis thereafter. Updates to the WMP may occur as needed to ensure the safe operation of SVP assets as determined by a qualified independent evaluator, as laws change, and/or as industry best practices evolve.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The action being considered does not constitute a "project" within the meaning of the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15378(a) as it has no potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment

FISCAL IMPACT

The creation of a SVP Wildfire Mitigation Plan consolidates and formalizes established SVP preventive maintenance procedures and practices. Related expenses have been included in the Generation and Transmission and Distribution programs within Utility Operations Division's operating budgets.

COORDINATION

This report has been coordinated with the Finance Department and City Attorney's Office.

PUBLIC CONTACT

Public contact was made by posting the Council agenda on the City's official-notice bulletin board outside City Hall Council Chambers. A complete agenda packet is available on the City's website and in the City Clerk's Office at least 72 hours prior to a Regular Meeting and 24 hours prior to a Special Meeting. A hard copy of any agenda report may be requested by contacting the City Clerk's Office at (408) 615-2220, email clerk@santaclaraca.gov <<mailto:clerk@santaclaraca.gov>>.

RECOMMENDATION

Note and file Silicon Valley Power's Wildfire Mitigation Plan April 2020.

Reviewed by: Manuel Pineda, Chief Electric Utility Officer

Approved by: Deanna J. Santana, City Manager

ATTACHMENTS

1. SVP Wildfire Mitigation Plan April 2020
2. SVP Wildfire Mitigation Plan 2019-2020 Redline Comparison
3. High Fire-Threat District Map