INTRODUCTION

Salt River Project Agricultural Improvement and Power District (SRP) is applying for a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility (CEC) for the proposed relocation of a 115 kilovolt (kV) transmission line project (Superior to Silver King 115kV Transmission Line Segment Relocation Project).

PROJECT PURPOSE AND NEED

In response to a customer request, SRP plans to relocate a segment of its Superior-Silver King 115kV transmission line located on private property near the Town of Superior in Pinal County (see Figure IN-1). This will require SRP to move approximately 1 mile of the existing 115kV transmission line approximately 0.25 mile to the northwest, closer to another transmission line corridor. The customer and property owner, Resolution Copper Mining, LLC (Resolution), has requested this transmission line relocation.

PROPOSED ROUTE

The proposed route for the relocation is located on private property and includes replacing approximately 1 mile of 115kV transmission line and structures 0.25 mile to the northwest of the existing line segment's location. Approximately nine new structures are planned and, to the extent feasible, would match the spans of the existing transmission structures already in the area. The preference is for self-weathering single-shaft poles with an average height of 85 feet. Typical spans would range between 600 and 1,600 feet.

The existing Superior to Silver King 115kV line was placed in service prior to the promulgation of the siting statutes and as such, no CEC was required for the line. As a result, this application requests approval of a CEC for only the segment of the line to be relocated.

For the purposes of this CEC application, the requested corridor is defined as the centerline of the existing 230kV line (south of, and parallel to, the 500kV transmission line) to the centerline of the existing 115kV line, inclusive of only private property. At its widest points, the corridor is 1,520 feet wide and 6,500 feet long. This corridor provides for sufficient flexibility to accommodate final design and engineering. The specific right-of-way within this corridor will be determined following certification and in coordination with the property owner during the final design process.

The entire length of the relocated segment would remain on private property owned by Resolution and would allow for full and efficient use of the private property by the land owner. This location also would minimize visual impacts due to its proximity to current 500kV and 230kV transmission lines.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

Upon receiving the request from Resolution to relocate a segment of the 115kV line, SRP initiated the process to obtain a CEC for the project, including retaining an environmental consultant, URS Corporation. SRP provided briefings of local officials and stakeholders beginning in February 2012. Concurrently, data were collected and analyzed to determine potential effects on land uses and natural and cultural resources in the vicinity of the proposed relocation. In April 2012, SRP held public open houses on the project. From April through June, this CEC application was prepared and submitted.

Should this relocation be approved, SRP anticipates completing final design of the new transmission line segment in late 2012 and construction to occur in early to mid-2013.

PUBLIC AND AGENCY INVOLVEMENT PROCESS

Public and agency involvement activities included the following:

- Stakeholder briefings – Briefings were presented separately to the Pinal County Supervisor, Pinal County Manager, Town of Superior Interim Town Manager, and Superior Mayor and Town Council.
- Agency and tribal notification letters – Project information was provided via letter to the Superior School District Superintendent, the Governing Board of the Superior School District, the President of the Superior Chamber of Commerce, the Tonto National Forest, the Arizona State Historic Preservation Office, and 12 Native American tribes.
- Newsletter – In April 2012, SRP sent a one-page project introduction and call for public comment in the Superior sewer bills. A second newsletter, also to be distributed by way of the sewer bills, will announce the hearing dates for review of this CEC application.
- Open house meetings – On April 17, 2012, open house meetings were held at the Senior Center in the afternoon and at the Junior/Senior High School in the evening. Display boards containing information and maps detailing the project were available for review and comment at the open house meetings.
- Display advertisement – Meetings were advertised in the local newspaper.
- Project website – All public outreach materials and project information were made available on the SRP website, www.azpower.org/ssk115kVrelo/.

CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL COMPATIBILITY

Because the relocation will take place between an existing high-voltage transmission line corridor and an active operations area on Resolution's property, the impacts to the surrounding environment are expected to be minimal. The relocation would allow Resolution more efficient use of their property.

The process of evaluating the 115kV line segment relocation was conducted from January 2012 through June 2012. This process included an assessment of potential environmental impacts on land uses, visual resources, biological resources, and cultural resources. The following provides a summary of the environmental compatibility of the project:

- The project would have no significant or detrimental effects to fish, wildlife, plant life, and associated forms of life upon which they are dependent.
- The project would have no significant or detrimental effects associated with noise emission levels and interference with communication signals.
- The project would have no significant or detrimental effects on land use, cultural resources, visual resources, and recreation.
- SRP, the private landowner, and jurisdictional agencies have not identified any plans for future development of recreational facilities within the area or associated with the project.
- Project implementation would be consistent with safety considerations and regulations.
- The project is environmentally compatible with the total environment of the area.