

Memorandum

Date : January 31, 1989

FEB 15 1989

79-AFC-4C

Lloyd Dillon
California Energy Commission
1516 Ninth Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

DOCKET 79-AFC-4C
DATE: JAN 31 1989
REC'D FEB 15 1989

From : Department of Water Resources

Subject: Bottle Rock Powerplant Biennial Wildlife Controlled Burn Alternatives

The Department of Water Resources proposed in the Bottle Rock Powerplant Application for Certification (AFC) to mitigate adverse impacts to chaparral wildlife species through controlled burning. Controlled burning of 5 acres biennially on a rotating basis for the life of the project was specified in the AFC.

The first controlled burn was conducted during June 1982. Five acres of old growth chaparral were burned within the chaparral study area. Comparison of burned and unburned portions of the chaparral study area was conducted in 1983, 1985, and 1987. A second controlled burn was conducted during the fall of 1984.

During 1985, the Department, along with other steam developers and utilities operating in the Geysers KGRA, attempted to contract with the California Department of Forestry to conduct our required wildlife burning. The landowners of the Francisco Leasehold refused to assume liability for the burns. The landowner requested that we find alternative means to mitigate wildlife habitat losses on the leasehold other than controlled burning.

The Department proposed an alternative habitat improvement project in lieu of the scheduled 1986 controlled burn. The California Energy Commission accepted this alternative form of habitat improvement. This habitat improvement project involved installation of a water basin near each of the existing quail guzzlers. The basins were installed during April 1987. The watering basins have been extremely successful.

Another controlled burn is scheduled for 1988 (i.e., every other year). In lieu of a direct habitat improvement project, we are proposing additional wildlife population monitoring in the form of a ringtailed cat (Bassariscus astutus) telemetry study. Ringtailed cats are a fully protected, nocturnal furbearer indigenous to the Mayacamas Mountains. Through the use of telemetry data, we will determine home range, habitat utilization, and den site locations of up to five ringtailed cats. Trapping (100 trap nights per week) will be conducted on the Francisco Leasehold during April and May 1989.

Lloyd Dillon
Page 2
January 31, 1989

Any captured ringtails will be monitored for a period of 9-12 months (depending on transmitter life) at least 4 nights per month. The final product of this study will consist of a seasonal home range map, habitat use analysis, and den site descriptions for each captured ringtailed cat.

Due to the higher expenditures required for this study (Table 1) compared to the previously conducted control burns, we request that this study replace not only the scheduled 1988 burn, but also the 1990 burn as well.

Equipment procurement requires 45-60 days lead time, so a written response to this proposal is required as soon as possible. We have been unable to schedule a meeting with CEC staff to discuss this proposal (or develop a 10-year plan) due to Dick Anderson's unavailability. We need an immediate meeting to discuss this proposal and to present our 10-year plan of burn alternatives. Your prompt attention to this proposal will ensure that this study can be implemented this year. If you have any questions, please contact me at ATSS 446-2227.



Dave Bogener
Environmental Specialist III
Northern District

Attachment

cc: Dr. Jim Brownell
California Energy Commission
1516 Ninth Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dick Anderson
California Energy Commission
1516 Ninth Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Jim Snow
Operations and Maintenance
Department of Water Resources
1416 Ninth Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Table 1. Projected cost of the proposed study

Equipment

1 - LA12-DS telemetry receiver	\$ 1,449.00
1 - hand-held 3-element Yagi antenna	119.00
5 - radio collar/transmitters	1,275.00
30 - live traps	--
bait	20.00
miscellaneous	<u>100.00</u>
Subtotal	\$ 2,963.00

Manpower

1 - ES III supervision - report preparation (1 month)	\$ 6,248.00
1 - student assistant (2 months)	<u>4,004.00</u>
Subtotal	\$10,252.00
Total	\$13,215.00