

Southern California Edison
2026-WMPs – 2026-WMPs

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To: Energy Safety
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Received Date: 5/23/2025

Response Date: 5/29/2025

Question 01.a:

Regarding Discontinuing Heli-Saw Trimming as a Part of Integrated Vegetation Management:

On page 349 of its 2026-2028 WMP, SCE describes integrated vegetation management (IVM) practices it tested within its service territory between October 2021 and January 2024. These include a tree growth regulator (TGR) pilot program, goat grazing, a “Low Growth Pilot” that compared the effectiveness of mechanical, chemical, and biological controls, and bulk tree trimming using a heli-saw. “Based on research and experience” SCE chose not to include heli-saw trimming in its IVM plans.

a. Describe what research findings led SCE to exclude the heli-saw from its IVM plans (e.g., trimming effectiveness, cost, environmental considerations, safety, tree trimming quality, etc.).

Response to Question 01.a:

In 2022-2024, SCE solicited information from heli-saw vendors and also researched the experience of other utility companies¹ to evaluate the utilization for SCE’s Vegetation Management program. After further consideration and review, SCE decided not to move forward with this methodology due to various factors including, but not limited to, safety concerns such as falling material and increased potential fire hazards; limited scope of work within the service area; regulatory requirements (e.g., permitting); and potential environmental impacts such as cutting protected trees or disturbing wildlife habitats.

¹ See, e.g., <https://fireaviation.com/2022/03/02/pge-criticised-by-cal-fire-for-how-a-heli-saw-was-used/>