

**PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**505 VAN NESS AVENUE  
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94102-3298

# **Notice of Preparation/ Notice of Public Scoping Meetings**

for a joint

**Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement  
for the**

**Devers–Palo Verde No. 2 Transmission Line Project (DPV2)  
Proposed by Southern California Edison**

**Application No. A.05-04-015**

## **A. Introduction**

Southern California Edison (SCE) has filed an application for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN) with the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) for the proposed Devers–Palo Verde 500 kilovolt (kV) No. 2 Transmission Line project (DPV2), also referred to as the Proposed Project. The CPUC and the United States Department of Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) will direct the preparation of a joint Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) referred to as an EIR/EIS for DPV2 proposed by SCE. The CPUC as the lead agency under California law, and the BLM, as the federal lead agency will prepare a Draft and Final EIR/EIS to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

As required by CEQA, this Notice of Preparation (NOP) is being sent to interested agencies and members of the public. The purpose of the NOP is to inform recipients that the CPUC is beginning preparation of the DPV2 EIR/EIS and to solicit information that will be helpful in the environmental review process. **This notice includes a description of the project that SCE proposes to construct, a summary of potential project impacts, the times and locations of public scoping meetings, and information on how to provide comments to the CPUC and BLM.**

As required by NEPA, the BLM will publish in the Federal Register a Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare a joint EIR/EIS for DPV2. Similar to this NOP, the intent of the NOI will be to initiate the public scoping for the EIR/EIS, provide information about the Proposed Project, and also serve as an invitation for other cooperating agencies to provide comments on the scope and content of the EIR/EIS. This NOP and the NOI (after its publication in the Federal Register) can be viewed on the project web site at the following link:

<http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/environment/info/asp/dpv2/dpv2.htm>

## **B. Project Description**

### **Project Purpose**

According to SCE, the Proposed Project is needed to create supply reliability and cost stabilization for electricity throughout California. SCE's four central objectives for building DPV2 include:

1. Increase California's access to low-cost energy by adding 1,200 MW of transmission import capability into California from the Southwest. This is expected to substantially benefit California by reducing energy costs.
2. Enhance competition among generating companies supplying energy to California.
3. Provide additional transmission infrastructure to support and provide an incentive for the development of future energy suppliers selling energy into the California energy market.
4. Provide increased reliability of supply, insurance value against extreme events, and flexibility in operating California's transmission grid.

## Project Components

SCE is proposing to construct a new 230-mile, 500 kV electric transmission line between California and Arizona and replace 48.2 miles of 230 kV transmission lines in California (the upgraded lines would connect directly to the new line). The entire project would span a total of 278 miles (installation and upgrades). The proposed line and transmission facility upgrades are known as "DPV2."

### Devers Substation to Harquahala Substation

The Proposed Project would be constructed from SCE's Devers Substation (Devers) located near Palm Springs, California to the Harquahala Generating Station switchyard (Harquahala), located near the Palo Verde Nuclear Generating Station (PVNGS) west of Phoenix, Arizona. Two maps illustrating this segment are provided at the end of this NOP: one for the Arizona portion and one for the California portion. The Devers-Harquahala portion of the Proposed Project would extend for 230 miles, of which 102 miles are located in Arizona and 128 miles are located in California. For the most part, this portion of the Proposed Project route would parallel SCE's existing Devers-Palo Verde No. 1 (DPV1) 500 kV transmission line; construction of this line was completed in 1978.

Construction of DPV2 would utilize the same four types of structures as SCE's existing DPV1 and Harquahala-Hassayampa 500 kV transmission lines. Of the estimated 784 structures required, 709 would be four-legged, single-circuit lattice steel towers. In addition, 39 two-legged (or H-frame) single-circuit towers would be used in the Palo Verde Valley south of Blythe, California. Where feasible, new structures would be constructed adjacent to the existing DPV1 towers; each new tower would be 300 feet away from the existing tower. In anticipation of the eventual construction of DPV2, conductors for a 3-mile portion of the DPV2 line were installed on 13 double-circuit towers constructed for the DPV1 line during construction of DPV1, in order to minimize impact to bighorn sheep habitat in the Copper Bottom Pass of the Dome Rock Mountains in Arizona. An estimated 23 new tubular steel poles would be constructed parallel to the existing Harquahala-Hassayampa 500 kV line east of Harquahala, in Arizona.

The Midpoint Substation is considered as an optional component that could be constructed in conjunction with the proposed DPV2 Project in the Devers-Harquahala segment. The purpose of the Midpoint Substation would be to connect with the Desert Southwest Transmission Project (DSWTP), which has been undergoing environmental review for several years. The proposed location for the Midpoint Substation is about 10 miles southwest of Blythe, California, adjacent to SCE's DPV1 right-of-way on BLM land. The site is immediately west of Imperial Irrigation District's Blythe-Niland 161kV transmission line and Western Area Power Administration's Blythe-Knob 161kV transmission line. The 500 kV switching station would include buses, circuit breakers, and disconnect switches. The switchyard would be equipped with 108-foot-high dead-end structures.

Construction of new main access roads would not be needed in most locations for DPV2 because the majority of the Devers-Harquahala line would be constructed within the utility corridor that contains the existing DPV1 line. DPV2 would also utilize the same access for line maintenance that is currently

established for DPV1. Spur roads would be extended from the existing DPV1 main access roads to provide construction access for the proposed Devers-Harquahala 500 kV line.

Construction of new support facilities would include:

- A new Optical Repeater facility located 3 miles west of Blythe, within the DPV2 right-of-way;
- A proposed California series capacitor bank located just north of and adjacent to the existing DPV1 series capacitor bank, 64 miles east of Devers and 0.4 miles south of I-10; and
- A 500 kV shunt line reactor bank and associated disconnect switches within Devers Substation. A 500 kV Static VAR Compensation (SVC) would terminate into the 500 kV switchrack.

### Upgrades West of Devers Substation

SCE has an existing 230 kV transmission line system west of Devers Substation (WOD) consisting of one set of double-circuit tower lines and two separate sets of single-circuit lines, which run between Devers Substation and San Bernardino Junction<sup>1</sup>. The location of the existing WOD system is illustrated on a map (at the end of this notice). The system currently consists of two electric circuits between the Devers and San Bernardino Substations, and two circuits between the Devers and Vista Substations. These lines would be upgraded as follows:

- Removal of an existing 40-mile, single-circuit 230 kV line (approximately 63 percent of structures are wood H-frame and 37 percent are single-circuit lattice steel).
- Removal of an existing 40-mile, single-circuit 230 kV line with lattice steel structures.
- Construction of a new 40-mile, double-circuit 230 kV transmission line between Devers and San Bernardino Junction within the existing ROW, which includes approximately 157 new structures.
- Reconductoring<sup>2</sup> of the existing 40-mile, double-circuit 230 kV lattice steel tower between Devers Substation and San Bernardino Junction, including one new structure and raising four structures.
- Upgrade of 4.8 miles of double-circuit 230 kV transmission line between San Bernardino Junction and Vista Substation, also located in San Bernardino County, California. Reconductoring will require the replacement of approximately 14 structures and one inter-set structure.
- Upgrade of 6.8 total miles of 230 kV transmission line between San Bernardino Junction and San Bernardino Substation located in San Bernardino County, California (reconductoring only, one circuit on each of two existing double-circuit transmission lines).

Intersetting structures, or raising existing structures, would be necessary at some locations. Existing access roads would be utilized wherever possible for construction and line maintenance.

The single conductors on the WOD tower lines would also be replaced with double-bundled conductors (resulting in two conductors being installed in place of each existing conductor). The WOD upgrades would result in four 230 kV circuits with double-bundled conductors on two double-circuit tower lines. Minor modifications would be required on additional towers. These upgrades would more than double the capacity of the four 230 kV transmission lines west of the Devers Substation, thereby protecting the transmission lines from overloading in the case of an outage.

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1 San Bernardino Junction is the intersection of 230 kV transmission line corridors located 3.4 miles south of the San Bernardino Substation just outside of the city limits of Loma Linda.

2 Reconductoring involves removal of the existing conductors on an existing tower, and installation of new, larger capacity conductors. This is generally done with no change to the tower itself, although in some cases towers need to be strengthened or replaced.

Within the cities of Loma Linda, Grand Terrace, and Redlands, the WOD upgrades would consist almost exclusively of reconductoring, which is installing new conductor wires on existing transmission towers.

## C. Project Location and Affected Jurisdictions

The proposed route between Harquahala and Devers would generally parallel SCE's existing DPV1 500 kV transmission line, of which roughly 102 miles are located in Arizona and 128 miles are located in California. The proposed 230 kV modifications west of Devers would occur within 45 miles of existing rights-of-way between SCE's Devers and Vista substations, and interconnect with the San Bernardino Substation using another existing 3.4-mile right-of-way.

In 1989, the BLM granted in perpetuity a 130-foot-wide right-of-way on public land for the DPV2 route. The majority of the Devers-Harquahala 500 kV transmission line would be constructed within this right-of-way, which was granted for a total of 149.9 linear miles of public land between Devers and PVNGS. The right-of-way covers 57.2 miles in California and 92.7 miles in Arizona, including land managed by the BLM, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), U.S. Department of Defense (DOD), and U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (USBR). The proposed Devers-Harquahala 500 kV transmission line route would require a total of 136.6 miles of public land, out of BLM's previously designated 149.9 miles. The route for DPV2 is within utility corridors as designated in the BLM Resource Management Plans (RMPs) for each of the respective BLM planning areas in Arizona and California.

Additional right-of-way requirements include Arizona State Trust Land (10.8 miles), California State Land (0.6 miles), Agua Caliente Indian Reservation (0.1 miles), and private land (81.6 miles). Some portions of the right-of-way were previously acquired from private owners by SCE. The Devers-Harquahala 500 kV right-of-way acquired on private land, adjacent to the DPV1 right-of-way, would be a minimum of 130 feet wide.

### Arizona

The Arizona segment of the proposed 500 kV transmission line would terminate at the Harquahala Generation Station Switchyard, located in Maricopa County, 17 miles northwest of the PVNGS and 60 miles west of Phoenix. The Harquahala Switchyard is in Section 31, Township 2 North, Range 8 West; Gila and Salt River Base and Meridian. While the proposed transmission line would physically terminate at the Harquahala Switchyard, SCE would utilize the existing Harquahala-Hassayampa 500 kV transmission line and the existing 500 kV interconnection from Hassayampa to PVNGS to provide a path to the PVNGS Switchyard. In Arizona, the Proposed Project would traverse unincorporated areas of Maricopa County and La Paz County, including primarily BLM land but also lands owned by private parties and the State of Arizona.

### California

The California segment of the Proposed Project would terminate at Devers Substation in Riverside County, north of Palm Springs. Devers Substation occupies portions of Sections 4 and 5 in Township 3 South, Range 4 East, San Bernardino Base and Meridian. The WOD upgrades would terminate where the existing 230 kV lines currently terminate at Vista and San Bernardino substations. Vista Substation is located on Newport Avenue in the City of Grand Terrace, San Bernardino County, California in Section 32, Township 1 South, Range 4 West. San Bernardino Substation is located in the City of Redlands on West San Bernardino Avenue in Section 18, Township 1 South, Range 3 West.

In California, the Proposed Project (including the WOD upgrades) would traverse Riverside County and San Bernardino County, including the following cities: Grand Terrace (Vista Substation), Colton, Loma Linda, Redlands, Calimesa, Beaumont, Banning, Palm Springs (Devers Substation), Cathedral

City, and Coachella. Other lands that would be traversed by the Proposed Project are primarily comprised of unincorporated areas and wilderness areas.

## D. Potential Environmental Effects

In accordance with CEQA and NEPA guidelines, the CPUC and BLM intend to prepare a joint EIR/EIS to evaluate potential environmental effects of the Proposed Project, and to propose mitigation measures to reduce any significant effects identified. The EIR/EIS will also study the environmental impacts of the alternatives to the Proposed Project, and propose mitigation to reduce these effects.

Based on preliminary analysis of the Proposed Project and review of documents submitted by SCE and other parties to the CPUC's CPCN proceeding, completion of the Proposed Project may have a number of environmental effects. Potential issues and impacts to the existing environment include those listed in Attachment 1. No determinations have yet been made as to the significance of these potential impacts; such determinations will be made in the environmental analysis conducted in the EIR/EIS after the issues are considered thoroughly. Attachment 2 includes CEQA Checklist questions that typically would be evaluated in an EIR to provide the reader with guidance on issues that would be covered in the environmental analysis. In addition to analysis of the issues listed in Attachment 1 and other issues raised in the scoping process, the EIR/EIS will evaluate the cumulative impacts of the project in combination with other present and planned projects in the area.

## Mitigation Measures

SCE has proposed measures that could reduce or eliminate potential impacts of the Proposed Project. The effectiveness of these measures (called "applicant proposed measures") will be evaluated in the EIR/EIS, and additional measures ("mitigation measures") will be developed to further reduce impacts, if required. When the CPUC and BLM make their final decision on the Proposed Project, they will define the mitigation measures to be adopted as a condition of project approval, and the CPUC will require implementation of a mitigation monitoring program.

## E. Alternatives

In addition to mitigation measures, the EIR/EIS will evaluate alternatives to the Proposed Project that could potentially reduce, eliminate, or avoid impacts of the Proposed Project. Alternatives may include different routes for the transmission line or alternative methods of providing electric power to the SCE area. In compliance with CEQA and NEPA, a Draft EIR/EIS must describe a reasonable range of alternatives to the project or project location that could meet the project's purpose and need, feasibly attain most of the basic project objectives, and avoid or lessen any of the significant environmental impacts of the Proposed Project. Additionally, the No Project/No Action Alternative must also be analyzed in the Draft EIR/EIS. The No Project/No Action Alternative will describe the situation that would likely occur in the absence of Proposed Project implementation. Further, the EIR/EIS must evaluate the comparative merits of the alternatives.

In the Proponent's Environmental Assessment (PEA) for DPV2, SCE evaluated a variety of project alternatives that may be able to achieve the same objectives as DPV2, including alternative routes, alternative transmission projects, and non-transmission alternatives, which are briefly described below. As part of the environmental review process for DPV2, the CPUC and BLM will evaluate the feasibility of the alternatives described below and whether or not they meet CEQA and NEPA requirements. In addition, the CPUC and BLM will likely develop other alternatives for evaluation in the EIR/EIS. New alternatives developed during the environmental review process for DPV2 could potentially be based on the input received during the scoping process, and the Proposed Project impacts identified during analysis.

## Alternatives Considered by SCE

In its April 2005 PEA, SCE included an analysis of alternative routes considered and eliminated as well as considered and evaluated from the DPV1<sup>3</sup> Project, the 1985<sup>4</sup> DPV2 Project documents, as well as the 2005 PEA. These routes will be considered in the EIR/EIS, but the alternatives listed here will not necessarily be carried forward and fully evaluated in the EIR/EIS. Additional alternatives not listed here, developed in response to agency or public comments or by the EIR/EIS team, may be considered in the EIR/EIS. **Following is a summary of the alternatives presented by SCE in its PEA, along with SCE's rationale for retaining or eliminating each alternative. This information will be independently reviewed in the EIR/EIS.**

### Devers-Harquahala Alternative Routes Considered and Eliminated by SCE

- **Subalternate Route 1** would avoid crossing Kofa NWR lands and agricultural lands in the Palo Verde Valley, and instead it would cross BLM land located north of the Kofa NWR boundaries (as delineated at the time of the previous studies). However, the route would cross the New Water Mountains Wilderness Study Area (WSA), on BLM land, as well as a contemplated expansion area of the Kofa NWR along the southern side of I-10. This subalternate route would be 3.4 miles longer than the route for DPV2, and would result in 82 acres of permanent ground disturbance, compared to 9 acres for the DPV2 route.
- **Subalternate Route 2** would pass north of the city of Blythe. It would cross less agricultural land in the Palo Verde Valley, but would cross agricultural land on the Colorado River Indian Tribe (CRIT) Reservation, and would be 3.3 miles longer than the proposed route. This route would result in 135 acres of permanent ground disturbance compared to 9 acres for the DPV2 route. The CRIT Tribal Council previously denied SCE a right-of-way for the DPV1 line in 1977, indicating that it would adversely impact the CRIT Reservation. At the time of SCE's 1988 amended PEA, the CRIT indicated that a right-of-way would not be approved for the proposed DPV2 project.
- **Subalternate Route 3** would cross the Palo Verde Valley in California, about 10 miles south of the DPV1 route (and south of Blythe), crossing through a portion of Imperial County, thereby avoiding agricultural impacts in the Blythe area. Subalternate Route 3 would be 11.5 miles longer than the Proposed Project. The subalternate route would cross 3.8 miles of agricultural lands, which would be less than the 9.8 miles of agricultural lands on the DPV2 route. Because Subalternate Route 3 is 11.6 miles longer than the proposed Devers-Harquahala 500 kV transmission line, the resultant area of permanent ground disturbance would be 62 acres, or 53 acres greater than the Proposed Project.
- **Subalternate Route 4** is a modification of Subalternate Route 1, in which the route would follow a portion of the All American Pipeline corridor north of I-10 in Arizona, crossing I-10 twice and U.S. Highway 60 once. Impacts would be comparable to Subalternate Route 1, with the addition of

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- 3 SCE submitted an Application for a CPCN and PEA to the CPUC for the DPV1 project in 1978. The CPUC prepared a Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) for the DPV1 project and issued a CPCN for DPV1 in 1979. A ROD also was issued by the BLM and U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), which approved the DPV1 project. SCE completed construction of the DPV1 transmission line in 1982.
  - 4 SCE initially applied to the CPUC for a CPCN for DPV2 in 1985. Following reviews of SCE's PEA (1985) and the CPUC EIR (1987) in compliance with CEQA and subsequent filing and review of the 1988 Amended Application and PEA (SCE 1988), the CPUC issued an Interim Order in December 1988 that granted a CPCN to SCE allowing construction of the DPV2 project. The approval contained several conditions including compliance with an environmental mitigation program specified in the CPUC EIR (1987). In 1997, intervening events, including electric industry restructuring, led SCE to request abandonment of construction of the DPV2 project, and the CPUC granted SCE's request.

potentially significant impacts to Bighorn Sheep north of I-10, as well as significant visual impacts where the line runs parallel to I-10.

### **Devers-Harquahala Alternatives Considered and Evaluated by SCE**

- **Harquahala West Subalternate Route** would exit the Harquahala Switchyard directly to the west for 12 miles, then follow the El Paso Natural Gas pipeline corridor northwest for 9 miles to its intersection with the existing DPV1 corridor. On BLM lands, the route would be located in a designated BLM Utility Corridor. New right-of-way would need to be acquired across private, state, and BLM land. The Harquahala-West Subalternate Route would be 14 miles shorter than the proposed route, and would require about 48 fewer 500 kV towers than the proposed route.
- **Palo Verde Subalternate Route** would provide an alternative termination point in Arizona at the PVNGS Switchyard. The proposed route for this alternative would be generally parallel to SCE's existing 500 kV DPV1, as shown on Exhibit 1a. This would require the construction of an additional 10 miles of 500 kV line, paralleling the DPV1 line, to the PVNGS switchyard. Although environmental impacts of construction and operation of the Palo Verde Subalternate Route would not be substantially more adverse than the environmental impacts resulting from the proposed Devers-Harquahala route, SCE's preference is to construct the proposed Devers-Harquahala route.
- **Alternatives to Midpoint Substation.** A review of several potential siting areas for the Midpoint Substation was conducted by SCE in February 2004. The review considered engineering, environmental, and land availability criteria. Based on this review, the Midpoint Substation (described above as an optional component of the Proposed Project) was found to be preferable, but two alternative sites, the Mesa Verde and Wiley Well Alternatives, were also identified.

### **West of Devers Alternatives Considered but Eliminated by SCE**

SCE considered three potential alternatives to the West of Devers 230 kV Upgrades as proposed in the PEA, but found that none of the three would meet the project objectives.

- **Operating Procedures.** If the DPV2 project is constructed without upgrading the transmission system west of Devers, the existing 230 kV transmission lines would be overloaded when all lines are in-service and when any line is out of service. In the absence of the Proposed Project upgrade, SCE would have to develop an operating plan that would reduce the loading on the existing lines to below their loading capability. This would limit the amount of power imported on the 500 kV line. This type of mitigation is not desirable because it would reduce the 500 kV DPV2 power flow to its present capacity, making the upgrades essentially useless.
- **New Devers-Mira Loma 500 kV Transmission Line.** Adding a new 500 kV transmission line between Devers and the Mira Loma substations would resolve the potential overload problem on the 230 kV WOD system. However, building a new 500 kV line would cost more than the proposed 230 kV replacement west of Devers. Additionally, adding a new 500 kV line would not improve the capacity of the WOD 230 kV system because the small conductor line would still be there and it is the limiting element to achieve the full 1200 MW transfer capability for the DPV2 Project. Therefore, if a new Devers-Mira Loma 500 kV line were built and it failed, the 230 kV lines would overload and an operating procedure would be required that would eliminate the import capability of DPV2.
- **New 230 kV Transmission Line.** Constructing a new and separate 230 kV transmission line west of Devers would increase the carrying capacity of the 230 kV transmission system west of Devers. However, it would not increase the overload capability on the existing west of Devers 230 kV transmission lines because the small conductor in the lines would still be there and the full 1200 MW transfer capability for the DPV2 project could not be achieved. Also, a separate 230 kV

transmission line cannot be constructed in the existing west of Devers 230 kV right-of-way without removal of an existing line, due to the lack of available space.

**Transmission Project Alternatives**

SCE considered alternative transmission projects in addition to the subalternate transmission line routes described above. The alternative transmission projects include the following: Second Southwest Power Link 500 kV Transmission Line, Path 49 Upgrade Project, New Imperial Valley-Devers 500 kV Transmission Line, and Combination of Imperial Valley-Devers and Path 49 Upgrade.

**Non-Transmission Alternatives**

In addition to the alternative transmission projects listed above, the EIR/EIS will evaluate non-transmission alternatives. These will include: New Generation (conventional gas-fired power plants and/or renewable power sources such as wind or geothermal power), Demand-Response (providing price feedback to consumers in order to reduce demand), Energy Efficiency, and Distributed Generation (installation of small generation units at locations where energy is used). In addition, the No Project Alternative will be evaluated.

**F. Public Scoping Meetings**

The CPUC and BLM will initially conduct public Scoping Meetings in three locations in the project area, as shown in Table 1. One or more additional meetings, including one in Arizona, will be held after the Federal Register publication of the NOI. Those meetings will be noticed in a separate mailing and on the project website. The purpose of the scoping meetings is to present information about the Proposed Project and the CPUC and BLM’s decision-making processes, and to listen to the views of the public on the range of issues relevant to the scope and content of the EIR/EIS.

Location	Blythe, CA	Beaumont, CA	Palm Desert, CA
Day, Date	Tuesday, November 1, 2005	Wednesday, November 2, 2005	Thursday, November 3, 2005
Time	6 to 8 p.m.	3 to 5 p.m. and 7 to 9 p.m.	3 to 5 p.m. and 7 to 9 p.m.
Address Phone No.	City of Blythe Multipurpose Room 235 N. Broadway Blythe, CA 92225	City of Beaumont Civic Center Council Chambers 550 E. 6 <sup>th</sup> Street Beaumont, CA 92223	CSUSB Palm Desert Campus Oliphant Auditorium (Room 117) 37-500 Cook Street Palm Desert, CA 92211
Area Covered	Easternmost California and western Arizona	San Gorgonio Pass area; San Timoteo Canyon; Beaumont, Banning, Calimesa	Coachella Valley (Coachella, Indio, Cathedral City, Palm Springs)
Directions	Exit I-10 at Lovekin Boulevard and turn north for 2 blocks to Hobsonway. Turn right (east); continue for 7 blocks and turn left (north) on Broadway.	Exit I-10 at Beaumont Avenue and turn north for 2 blocks to East 6 <sup>th</sup> Street. Turn right (east) for 2 blocks to the Civic Center.	Exit I-10 at Cook Street and turn south on Cook Street. The CSUSB campus is on the left just south of Gerald Ford Drive. Parking charges will be underwritten for this meeting.

## G. Scoping Comments

At this time, the CPUC and BLM are soliciting information regarding the topics and alternatives that should be included in the EIR/EIS. Suggestions for submitting scoping comments are presented at the end of this section. **All comments for the CPUC's CEQA scoping period must be received by November 28, 2005.** Upon publication of the NOI in the Federal Register, there will be a 30-day public scoping period in accordance with NEPA during which comments on the scope and content of the EIR/EIS can be provided. You may submit comments in a variety of ways: (1) by U.S. mail, (2) by electronic mail, (3) by fax, or (4) by attending a Public Scoping Meeting (see times and locations in Table 1 above) and making a verbal statement or handing in a written comment at the scoping meetings.

**By Mail:** If you send comments by U.S. mail, please use first-class mail and be sure to include your name and a return address. Please send written comments on the scope and content of the EIR/EIS to:

**Billie Blanchard / John Kalish**  
**California Public Utilities Commission & Bureau of Land Management**  
c/o Aspen Environmental Group  
235 Montgomery Street, Suite 935  
San Francisco, CA 94104-3002  
Fax and Voicemail: (800) 886-1888

**By Electronic Mail:** E-mail communications are welcome; however, please remember to include your name and return address in the e-mail message. E-mail messages should be sent to [dpv2@aspeneq.com](mailto:dpv2@aspeneq.com).

**By Fax:** You may fax your comment letter to our information line at (800) 886-1888. Please remember to include your name and return address in the fax, to write legibly, and use black or blue ink.

A **Scoping Report** will be prepared, summarizing all comments received (including oral comments made at the Scoping Meetings). This report will be posted on the project website at: <http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/environment/info/aspen/dpv2/dpv2.htm>, and copies will be placed in local document repository sites listed in Table 2 below. In addition, a limited number of copies will be available upon request to the CPUC.

### Suggestions for Effective Participation in Scoping

Following are some suggestions for preparing and providing the most useful information for the EIR/EIS scoping process.

1. **Review the description of the project** (see Section B of this Notice of Preparation and the maps provided). Additional detail on the project description is available on the project website where SCE's Proponent's Environmental Assessment may be viewed.
2. **Review the CEQA impact assessment questions** (see Attachment 2).
3. **Attend the scoping meetings** to get more information on the project and the environmental review process (see times and dates in Table 1 above).
4. **Submit written comments** or attend the scoping meetings and **make oral comments**. Explain important issues that the EIR/EIS should cover.
5. **Suggest mitigation measures** that could reduce the potential impacts associated with SCE's Proposed Project.
6. **Suggest alternatives** to SCE's Proposed Project that could avoid or reduce the impacts of the Proposed Project.

## H. For Additional Project Information

**Internet Website.** Information about this application and the environmental review process will be posted on the Internet at: <http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/environment/info/asp/dpv2/dpv2.htm>. This site will be used to post all public documents during the environmental review process and to announce upcoming public meetings. In addition, a copy of SCE's PEA may be found at this site, and the Draft EIR/EIS will be posted at the site after it is published.

**Project Information Hotline.** You may request project information by leaving a voice message at (800) 886-1888 or sending a fax, using the same telephone number.

**Document Repositories.** Documents related to the DPV2 Project and the EIR/EIS will be made available at the sites listed in Table 2.

Table 2. Repository Sites

### Devers to Harquahala - Library Sites

Desert Hot Springs City Public Library	11691 West Drive, Desert Hot Springs, CA 92240	(760) 329-5926
City of Palm Springs Library	300 S. Sunrise Way, Palm Springs, CA 92262	(760) 323-8298
Cathedral City Branch Library	33520 Date Palm Drive, Cathedral City, CA 92234	(760) 328-4262
Rancho Mirage City Library	42520 Bob Hope Drive, Rancho Mirage, CA 92270	(760) 341-7323
Palm Desert City Library	73300 Fred Waring Drive, Palm Desert, CA 92260	(760) 346-6552
Indio Public Library	200 Civic Center Mall, Indio, CA 92201	(760) 342-0185
Coachella Branch Library	1538 7th Street, Coachella, CA 92236	(760) 398-5148
Palo Verde Valley Library District	125 W. Chanslorway, Blythe, CA 92225	(760) 922-5371
Quartzsite Public Library	465 N. Plymouth Ave, Quartzsite, AZ 85346	(928) 927-6593
Buckeye Public Library	312 N. 6th St, Buckeye, AZ 85326	(623) 386-2778

### Devers to Harquahala - U.S Bureau of Land Management Offices

Palm Springs/South Coast Field Office	690 W. Garnet Avenue, N. Palm Springs, CA 92258	(760) 251-4800
Phoenix Field Office	21605 N. 7th Avenue, Phoenix, AZ 85027-2099	(623) 580-5500
Yuma Field Office	2555 East Gila Ridge Road, Yuma, AZ 85365-2240	(928) 317-3200

### West of Devers - Library Sites

City of Riverside Library	5505 Dewey Avenue, Riverside, CA 92504	(951) 359-3906
San Bernardino County Library	104 W. Fourth Street, San Bernardino, CA 92415	(909) 387-5723
Colton Public Library	656 N. Ninth Street, Colton, CA 92324	(909) 370-5083
Grand Terrace Library	22795 Barton Road, Grand Terrace, CA 92313	(909) 783-0147
City of Loma Linda Library	25581 Barton Road, Loma Linda, CA 92354	(909) 796-8621
A.K. Smiley Public Library	125 West Vine Street, Redlands, CA 92373	(909) 798-7565
Mentone County Library	1870 Mentone Boulevard, Mentone, CA 92359	(909) 794-2657
Yucaipa Branch Library	12040 5th Street, Yucaipa, CA 92399	(909) 790-3146
Calimesa City Library	974 Calimesa Boulevard, Calimesa, CA 92320	(909) 795-9807
Beaumont Library District	125 East 8th Street, Beaumont, CA 92223	(951) 845-1357
Banning Public Library	21 W Nicolet Street, Banning, CA 92220	(951) 849-3192
Morongo Community Library	11581 Potrero Road, Banning, CA 92220	(951) 849-5937

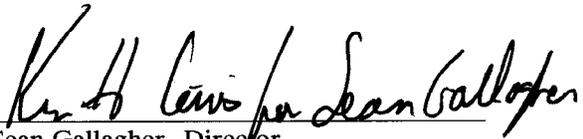
### West of Devers - U.S Bureau of Land Management Office

California Desert District Office	22835 Calle San Juan Del Los Lagos, Moreno Valley, CA 92553	(951) 697-5200
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\*Copies of material from these documents may be made at these locations at the requester's expense.

## I. Issuance of NOP

The California Public Utilities Commission hereby issues this Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report.

  
Sean Gallagher, Director  
Energy Division  
California Public Utilities Commission

Date: 10/18/05

## Attachment 1. Summary of Potential Issues or Impacts: Devers Palo-Verde No. 2 Transmission Line Project

Environmental Issue Area	Potential Issues or Impacts
<b>Aesthetics / Visual</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impacts to residential areas in Arizona and California, including agricultural communities in the Harquahala Valley and north of the Eagletail Mountains, isolated residents adjacent to the Kofa NWR, dispersed locations south of Blythe and near Indio and Palm Desert, and residences west of Devers.</li> <li>• Visual impacts to residents in the vicinity of the Devers Substation, who would have immediate foreground views of the proposed transmission line.</li> <li>• Visual impact would occur to residential units immediately adjacent to the proposed 230 kV transmission upgrade WOD, where newly located towers could be situated in the unobstructed immediate foreground distance zone of individual residences.</li> <li>• Potential visual impacts of short duration to travelway viewers located where the proposed transmission line crosses or runs parallel to the following roadways (some of which are designated "scenic"): I-10, Salome-Tonopah Road, SR 95, CA 111, SR 74, and CA 62.</li> <li>• Impacts to scenic quality would occur in areas of Class A scenery and where construction and operation of DPV2 would result in strong contrast with the natural setting, including but not limited to the locations where the proposed transmission line corridor traverses the Dome Rock Mountains and the Colorado River.</li> <li>• Visual impacts would occur to sensitive viewpoints from which the proposed transmission line would be visible, including: residences, park and recreation areas, and travel routes and highways.</li> <li>• Visual impacts would occur to recreational users of the Colorado River, and park and recreation areas near the river.</li> <li>• Visual impacts would occur to recreational users of Kofa NWR where the proposed transmission line crosses through the valley and foothill area south of the Plomosa Mountains.</li> <li>• Visual impacts would occur to recreational uses of the La Posa Visitor Area and views from the Big Horn and Eagletail mountains.</li> <li>• Potential visual impacts to open space views associated with cemeteries and parkland adjacent to the 230 kV Upgrades WOD.</li> </ul>
<b>Agricultural Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential impacts during the construction phase of DPV2 from the removal of cropland from production, interference with tilling and irrigation patterns, and/or potential conflict with agricultural aviators (crop dusters) due to temporary laydown areas, tensioning, and pulling sites.</li> <li>• Possible impacts on zoning for agricultural use, Williamson Act contracts, or conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use.</li> <li>• Between Harquahala Generating Station and PVNGS, two miles of agricultural land would be temporarily impacted by the installation of 11 tubular steel pole towers during the construction phase of DPV2.</li> <li>• Between Harquahala Generating Station and PVNGS, potential long-term impacts from tubular steel pole foundations, which would take 950 square feet of active agricultural land out of production and may interfere with tilling and irrigation patterns.</li> <li>• Ten miles west of the California/Arizona border, potential impacts to prime irrigated farmland in the Palo Verde Valley would result from the installation of 39 transmission structures along 10.5 miles of farmland.</li> <li>• Ten miles west of the California/Arizona border, long-term operational impacts would occur where structure foundations would permanently remove active agricultural land from production and may interfere with tilling and irrigation patterns.</li> <li>• WOD, temporary impacts to agricultural lands would occur where construction activities during the 230 kV Upgrades would result in the removal of cropland from production and interfere with tilling/irrigation patterns, conflict with agricultural aviators, and restrict agricultural vehicular access</li> <li>• WOD, long-term operational impacts would occur where transmission line structure foundations would permanently remove active agricultural land out of production and interfere with tilling and irrigation patterns. Additional impacts would occur if towers are placed within an orchard.</li> </ul>

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Attachment 1.

Summary of Potential Issues or Impacts: Devers Palo-Verde No. 2 Transmission Line Project

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**Air Quality**

- Impacts during construction would occur when heavy equipment, support vehicles, and internal combustion equipment creates fugitive dust and/or generates exhaust containing: carbon monoxide (CO), reactive organic compounds (ROC), nitrogen oxide (NOx), sulfur oxides (SOx), and particulate matter (PM10).
- Impacts would result from fugitive dust generated from ground clearing, grading, vehicle traffic on the access roads, and vehicle traffic at the construction site, which generate PM10.
- Potential ongoing impacts from emissions and fugitive dust produced during operation and maintenance of proposed transmission line.
- Potential ongoing impacts from the production of ozone due to corona discharge at the hardware/insulator assemblies.
- Potential air quality impacts from importing power to California from Arizona (versus generating power in California).
- Potential impacts resulting from violation of the Federal Air Quality Conformity Rule in nonattainment areas for one or more air pollutants.
- Potential impacts to human and environmental health from non-attainment of the EPA's National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS).
- Potential temporary and long-term impacts from toxic air contaminants that have localized effects, possibly violating SCAQMD Localized Significance Criteria and Toxic Air Contaminant Significance Thresholds.
- Riverside County is identified as non-attainment for particulate matter based on California Air Resources Board Standards.
- The Federal EPA identifies the Coachella Basin and South Coast Air Basin as non-attainment for particulate matter.
- Total fugitive dust and PM10 (lbs/day) generated from construction activities would exceed the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) threshold and the Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District (MDAQMD) threshold, for the portions of the proposed transmission line that traverse the respective districts.
- Estimated daily exhaust emissions would exceed SCAQMD thresholds for CO, ROC, and NOx and the MDAQMD threshold for NOx.
- Annual exhaust emissions would exceed the SCAQMD thresholds for ROC and NOx and the MDAQMD threshold for NOx.

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**Biological Resources**

- Possible impacts to three types of areas designated for habitat protection: Kofa National Wildlife Refuge, three BLM Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (Chuckwalla Valley Dune Thicket, Alligator Rock, and Coachella Valley Fringe-toed Lizard), and the Coachella Valley NWR and Preserve.

***Vegetation***

- In the proposed corridor for DPV2 in California and Arizona, direct and temporary impacts from construction would affect the following species of vegetation, estimated in acres: creosote bush scrub (237), creosote bush-bursage scrub (574.8), mixed paloverde-creosote bush scrub (39.4), paloverde-ironwood/smoketree wash (127.8), mesquite scrub dominated wash (7.8), mesquite and salt cedar riparian (1.4), sand dune community (5.5), agricultural (65.7).
  - In the proposed corridor WOD, construction of the 230 kV Upgrades would have direct and temporary impacts on 73 acres of vegetated land.
  - In the California portion of the DPV2 corridor, potential impacts to the following federally-listed plant species: Coachella Valley milkvetch (Endangered) and cushion foxtail cactus (Species of Concern).
  - In the Arizona portion of the DPV2 corridor, potential impacts to the following sensitive plant species: Death Valley Mormon tea and straw-top cholla.
  - Impacts from an increase in non-native weed establishment and recruitment, particularly at tower sites, crane pads, material stockpile yards, and concrete batch plant sites.
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**Attachment 1.**  
**Summary of Potential Issues or Impacts: Devers Palo-Verde No. 2 Transmission Line Project**


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**Wildlife**

- Potential direct, permanent impacts to wildlife, which may be accidentally run over by vehicles during construction, operations, and maintenance procedures.
- Potential direct and indirect impacts to reptile species listed in the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB), including: chuckwalla, Mojave fringe-toes lizard, and desert rosy boa.
- In the Arizona portion of the DPV2 corridor, potential direct, permanent impacts to the following sensitive wildlife species: desert tortoise (Sonoran population), Arizona chuckwalla, Mojave fringe-toes lizard, banded Gila monster, and desert rosy boa.
- In the California portion of the DPV2 corridor, potential direct, permanent impacts to the following sensitive wildlife species: flat-tailed horned lizard (Proposed Threatened), desert tortoise (Threatened / California Threatened), Coachella Valley fringe-toes lizard (Threatened / California Endangered), Palm Springs round-tailed ground squirrel (Candidate / California Species of Concern).
- In the WOD corridor (230 kV Upgrade), potential direct, permanent impacts to the following sensitive wildlife species: desert tortoise, coastal California gnatcatcher, Least Bells vireo, and Stephens' kangaroo rat.

**Birds**

- Potential direct, permanent impacts to birds nesting in cacti, shrubs, trees, or on the ground, if their nests are destroyed.
- Potential ongoing impacts to bird and bat species, which may collide with conductors or static lines during flight.
- In the Arizona portion of the DPV2 corridor, potential direct, permanent impacts to the following sensitive bird species: western least bittern, great egret, white-faced ibis, and western burrowing owl.
- Potential impacts to the Yuma clapper rail (bird) population, which is federally listed as an endangered species. Yuma clapper rails are known to cross the Colorado River during migration at the same location where the transmission line would cross the river.
- Potential direct and indirect impacts to California wildlife species of concern, including: southern bald eagle, Yuma clapper rail, western snowy plover, mountain plover, western yellow-billed cuckoo, and southwestern willow flycatcher.
- Potential direct and indirect impacts to bird species listed in the CNDDDB, including: western least bittern, snowy egret, white-faced ibis, ferruginous hawk, Swainson's hawk, California black rail, elf owl, western burrowing owl, Gila woodpecker, loggerhead shrike, and LeConte's thrasher.

**Mammals**

- Potential direct, permanent impacts to fossorial species, which may be inadvertently killed when burrows are collapsed by heavy machinery.
- In the Arizona portion of the DPV2 corridor, potential direct, permanent impacts to the following sensitive mammals: California leaf-nosed bat, western yellow bat, pale big-eared bat, and desert bighorn sheep.
- In the California portion of the DPV2 corridor, potential direct and indirect impacts to mammalian species listed in the California Natural Diversity Database, including: California leaf-nosed bat, pale big-eared bat, pallid bat, and western yellow bat.

**Cultural Resources****Archaeological Sites**

- In Arizona, potential impacts to three archaeological sites, of which one has been determined to be eligible for the National Register of Historical Places (NRHP).
- In the California portion of DPV2 construction, potential impacts to archaeological sites, including eighteen NRHP eligible or potentially eligible archaeological resources that have been identified within the Proposed Project Area of Potential Effect (APE).
- In the WOD portion of construction (230 kV Upgrades), potential impacts to two archaeological sites.

**Traditional Culture Properties**

- Potential impacts to Traditional Culture Properties (TCPs) or potential TCPs from the construction, operations, and maintenance of the proposed transmission line.
  - Potential cultural impacts to Edom Hill in California, which forms the northwestern end of the Indio Hills and is considered sacred to the Agua Caliente Indian Tribe.
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Attachment 1.

Summary of Potential Issues or Impacts: Devers Palo-Verde No. 2 Transmission Line Project

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- Potential ethnographic impacts where the WOD corridor (230 kV Upgrade) crosses the Morongo Indian Reservation.

*Historical Sites*

- In Arizona, potential impacts to historical sites, including one archaeological site, which is a historic-era artifact scatter.
- In the California portion of DPV2 construction, potential impacts to historical sites, including 13 NRHP eligible or potentially eligible historic-era resources.
- In the WOD portion of construction (230 kV Upgrade), potential impacts to nine historic-era sites. Three of these resources are assessed potentially eligible for listing on the NRHP.

*Paleontological Sites*

- In Arizona, potential impacts to paleontological resources during excavation of tower footings and grading of access spur roads on the transmission line corridor, of which 88.7 miles are high or undetermined areas of paleontological sensitivity.
- In the California portion of DPV2 construction, potential impacts to paleontological resources during excavation of tower footings and grading of access spur roads on the transmission line corridor, of which 31 miles are high or undetermined areas of paleontological sensitivity, including: Pleistocene older alluvium; Eocene Maniobra Formation rocks; and Ocotillo Conglomerate and Pliocene non-marine sediments between the California/Arizona border and the Devers Substation.
- In the WOD portion of construction (230 kV Upgrade), potential impacts to paleontological resources between Devers and Vista Substations, where the west of Devers corridor (230 kV Upgrade) would traverse 26 miles of high or undetermined areas of paleontological sensitivity, including: Pleistocene older alluvium, Canabrake Conglomerate or Palm Springs Formation, and San Timoteo Formation.

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**Geology and Soils**

- Potential impacts from grading access roads, spur roads, and tower pads within the utility ROW.
- Potential impacts through soil compaction along new spur roads in soft fluvial soils, which would create localized shallow depressions of the ground surface.
- Potential impacts to desert pavement, which is considered a unique geologic feature, from the installment and use of spur roads and tower pads.
- Potential impacts from localized soil erosion on low fill slopes and steeply graded areas.
- Potential impacts from seismic activity in the Banning Fault and the Mission Creek fault, which are known to be active, as well as the Mecca hills Fault, which is potentially active. The towers along the alignment in this area would be subject to severe seismic shaking within the lifetime of the Proposed Project.
- Possible impacts from ground surface rupture where the proposed transmission line would cross active fault lines.
- Possible impacts from landslides, mudslides, or other related ground failures from seismic activity, particularly where the proposed transmission line would cross active fault lines.

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**Hazards and Hazardous Materials**

- Potential impacts from the improper storage or handling of hazardous materials and/or hazardous wastes during project construction, operations, or maintenance.
- Potential impacts from the leaking or spilling of petroleum or hydraulic fluids from construction equipment or other vehicles during project construction, operation, or maintenance.
- Potential impacts from the inadvertent uncovering of hazardous materials during excavation activities, causing toxic releases to the environment.

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**Hydrology and Water Quality**

- Possible impacts from increased surface water runoff, erosion, siltation, and sedimentation.
- Possible impacts to streams or washes from violation of water quality standards or waste discharge requirements.

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**Land Use**

- Possible conflicts with applicable land use plans, policies, or regulations adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.
  - The project has the potential to impact residential land uses along the route.
  - 20 miles east of the Devers Substation DPV2 would cross the Granite Construction Company sand and gravel mine, resulting in potential impacts if mining operations are impeded during construction and operations.
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**Attachment 1.  
Summary of Potential Issues or Impacts: Devers Palo-Verde No. 2 Transmission Line Project**

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WOD (West of Devers 230 kV Transmission Upgrade), in Banning), potential impacts at a cemetery.</li> <li>• Potential temporary impacts WOD where construction activities during the 230 kV Upgrades may impede mining operations at two existing material extraction mines.</li> <li>• Long-term operational impacts would occur in the vicinity of the two extraction mines located WOD.</li> </ul>
<b>Noise</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• During construction, impacts from noise generated by equipment operation. Volume range would be 80 to 100 dBA at a range of 50 feet from the active construction site.</li> <li>• During operation of proposed transmission line, potential impacts from noise generated during the operation of the proposed transmission line, which would increase ambient noise levels surrounding the corridor.</li> <li>• Potential impacts from noise on isolated residential areas that are located within 350 feet of proposed construction activities.</li> <li>• Potential impacts from noise in residential areas along the proposed transmission corridor, if construction activities violate local noise ordinances (for volume and hours of operation) in order to take advantage of low electrical draw periods.</li> </ul>
<b>Socioeconomics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential impacts from the employment of 205 construction personnel during construction of the Proposed Project (in Arizona and California combined).</li> <li>• Potential impacts to the town of Quartzsite in La Paz County and the towns of Tonopah and Buckey in Maricopa County from the possible influx of construction labor, if housing is required during construction of the proposed transmission line.</li> <li>• Potential positive fiscal impacts in property-taxing jurisdictions, which would receive tax revenues from the proposed transmission line.</li> <li>• Potential for project impacts to disproportionately affect low-income or minority populations (environmental justice).</li> </ul>
<b>Public Services and Utilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possible impacts during construction activities from increased usage of public resources, services, and utilities.</li> <li>• Possible impacts during construction activities from increased generation of waste and disposal needs.</li> </ul>
<b>Recreational Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possible impacts upon established or pending conservation plans.</li> <li>• During construction, potential impacts may occur where DPV2 crosses the Colorado River, disrupting the recreational opportunities on the river in the vicinity of the proposed line.</li> <li>• Possible impacts to recreational land uses where the proposed transmission line would cross the Kofa National Wildlife Refuge in the Crystal Hill-Coyote Peak Exclusion</li> <li>• In Riverside County near Joshua Tree National Park, possible impacts to land use where the proposed transmission line would cross three BLM Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (Chuckwalla Valley Dune Thicket, Alligator Rock, and Coachella Valley Fringe-toed Lizard), a California State Park (Indio Hills Palms), and the Coachella Valley NWR and Preserve.</li> <li>• Impacts during construction for the 230 kV Upgrades WOD would result in a temporary disruption of recreational activities and occur in the following recreational areas: Noble Creek Regional Park, Oak Valley Golf Course, and the Pacific Crest Trail.</li> <li>• Potential impacts from road closures and increased traffic during construction activities, which may impede access to recreational areas.</li> </ul>
<b>Transportation and Traffic</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional traffic in the vicinity of the proposed transmission line.</li> <li>• Potential road closures during construction activities, which may impede access to areas along the transmission line corridor, including impediment of access for fire fighting and police response.</li> <li>• Potential increased traffic during operation and maintenance of the proposed transmission line.</li> </ul>
<b>Other Issues</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cumulative Impacts (including other proposed transmission lines in or near the DPV2 corridor)</li> <li>• Growth-Inducing Effects</li> </ul>

Source: SCE: DPV2 PEA (April 5, 2005).

# Attachment 2

## Environmental Checklist

Following are the questions included in the California Environmental Quality Act's (CEQA) Appendix G, Environmental Checklist Form. These are issues that may be evaluated in an Environmental Impact Report, if they are determined to be relevant to the project. This list is provided only to provide the reader with a general idea of the types of impacts that will be considered in the EIR/EIS.

**I. AESTHETICS.** Would the project:

- Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?
- Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?
- Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?
- Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

**II. AGRICULTURE RESOURCES.** In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. Would the project:

- Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?
- Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?
- Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use?

**III. AIR QUALITY.** Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:

- Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?
- Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projects air quality violation?
- Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?
- Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?
- Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?

**IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES.** Would the project:

- Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

- Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service?
- Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?
- Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?
- Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?
- Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?

**V. CULTURAL RESOURCES.** Would the project:

- Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5?
- Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?
- Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site unique geologic feature?
- Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?

**VI. GEOLOGY AND SOILS.** Would the project:

- Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:
  - Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? (Refer to the California Division of Mines and Geology Spec. Pub. 42)
  - Strong seismic ground shaking?
  - Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?
  - Landslides?
- Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?
- Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?
- Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?
- Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?

**VII. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS.** Would the project:

- Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?
- Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?
- Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous material, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?

- Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?
- For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?
- For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?
- Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?
- Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?

**VIII. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY.** Would the project:

- Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?
- Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?
- Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?
- Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?
- Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?
- Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?
- Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?
- Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?
- Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?
- Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?

**IX. LAND USE AND PLANNING.** Would the project:

- Physically divide an established community?
- Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?
- Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?
- Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?

- Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan?

**X. NOISE.** Would the project result in:

- Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?
- Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?
- A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?
- A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?
- For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?
- For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

**XI. POPULATION AND HOUSING.** Would the project:

- Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (e.g., by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (e.g., through extensions of roads or other infrastructure)?
- Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?
- Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

**XII. PUBLIC SERVICES AND UTILITIES.**

- Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:
  - Fire protection?
  - Police Protection?
  - Schools?
  - Parks?
  - Other public facilities?
- Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?
- Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?
- Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?
- Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?
- Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?

- Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?
- Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

**XIII. RECREATION.** Would the project:

- Increase the use of existing neighborhood, and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?
- Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

**XIV. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC.** Would the project:

- Cause an increase in traffic which is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system (i.e., result in a substantial increase in either the number of vehicle trips, the volume to capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections)?
- Exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?
- Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?
- Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses?
- Result in inadequate emergency access?
- Result in inadequate parking capacity?
- Conflict with adopted policies supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks)?

**GENERAL ISSUES:**

- Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?
- Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)
- Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?

**Three maps follow this page:**

- **Devers-Harquahala, Arizona Portion: Palo Verde to Colorado River**
- **Devers-Harquahala, California Portion: Colorado River to Devers Substation**
- **West of Devers: Devers Substation to Vista and San Bernardino Substations**