

FINAL

# Special-status Small Mammals Avoidance and Minimization Plan

West of Devers Upgrade Project  
Riverside and San Bernardino Counties, California

*Prepared for*

Southern California Edison

January 2018

*Prepared by*

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# Special-Status Small Mammal Avoidance and Minimization Measures Checklist

## Applicable Agencies:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bureau of Indian Affairs                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Coachella Valley Conservation Commission         |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bureau of Land Management                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Morongo Band of Mission Indians                  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> California Department of Fish and Wildlife | <input type="checkbox"/> Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> California Public Utilities Commission     | <input type="checkbox"/> U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service                   |

## Applies in the Following Areas:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BLM Lands             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CV-MSHCP (if not Covered Species) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Morongo Reservation              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> WR-MSHCP (if not Covered Species) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> San Bernardino County |   |

## Applies to the Following Project Components (as described in this document):

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transmission Line  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Subtransmission | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Telecom |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Substations        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Distribution    |   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Construction Yards |   |   |

## Addresses the Following Measures:

- |                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| FEIR/FEIS WIL-2j | Conduct Surveys and Avoidance for Special-status Small Mammals |
|------------------|--|

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# Acronyms and Abbreviations

AMEC	AMEC Foster Wheeler Environment and Infrastructure, Inc.
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
CAISO	California Independent System Operator
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CESA	California Endangered Species Act
CH2M	CH2M HILL Engineers, Inc.
CPUC	California Public Utilities Commission
CVCC	Coachella Valley Conservation Commission
CV-MSHCP	Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan
FEIR	Final Environmental Impact Report
FEIS	Final Environmental Impact Statement
FESA	Federal Endangered Species Act
GPS	global positioning system
HRRP	Habitat Restoration and Revegetation Plan
kV	kilovolt
LAPM	Los Angeles pocket mouse
LSA	LSA Associates, Inc.
Measures	Small Mammal Avoidance and Minimization Measures
MM	mitigation measure
Morongo Reservation	Reservation Trust Lands of the Morongo Band of Mission Indians
MSHCP	Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
Project	West of Devers Upgrade Project
PSE	Participating Special Entity
PSPM	Palm Springs Pocket Mouse
RCA	Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority
ROD	record of decision
ROW	right-of-way
SBKR	San Bernardino kangaroo rat
SCE	Southern California Edison
SKR	Stephens' kangaroo rat
SSC	Species of Special Concern

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

U.S.C.	United States Code
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
WOD	West of Devers
WR-MSHCP	Western Riverside Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan

# Introduction

Southern California Edison (SCE) proposes to construct the West of Devers (WOD) Upgrade Project (Project) to increase the power transfer capability of the WOD 220-kilovolt (kV) transmission lines between Devers, El Casco, Vista, and San Bernardino substations. The Project is needed to facilitate the full deliverability of new electric generation resources being developed in eastern Riverside County, in an area designated by the California Independent System Operator (CAISO) for planning purposes as the Blythe and Desert Center areas. The Project, planned to be operational by 2021, would upgrade the existing WOD transmission line system by replacing the existing WOD 220-kV transmission lines and associated structures with higher-capacity transmission lines and structures, and making telecommunication improvements.

The purpose of this Special-status Small Mammal Avoidance and Minimization Plan (Plan) is to comply with mitigation measure (MM) WIL-2j from the Final Environmental Impact Report<sup>1</sup> (FEIR) and Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) (BLM, 2016a) as presented in the Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPUC, 2016b) and Record of Decision (ROD) (BLM, 2016b), respectively. This Plan describes avoidance and minimization measures for non-listed<sup>2</sup> special-status small mammals occurring or potentially occurring in the Project area and, therefore, potentially impacted by Project activities.

## 1.1 Project Overview

The Project would upgrade the existing WOD system by replacing existing 220-kV transmission lines and associated structures with new, higher-capacity 220-kV transmission lines and structures, modifying existing substation facilities, removing and relocating existing subtransmission (66-kV) lines, removing and relocating existing distribution (12-kV) lines, and making various telecommunication improvements. In particular, the Project would:

- Upgrade substation equipment within SCE’s existing Devers, El Casco, Etiwanda, San Bernardino, and Vista substations in order to accommodate continuous and emergency power on the upgraded WOD 220-kV transmission lines. Activities related to substation upgrades will take place within the existing, disturbed fence lines of the substations and are not addressed further in these Measures.
- Remove and upgrade the existing 220-kV transmission lines and structures primarily within the existing WOD corridor as follows:
  - Segment 1 would be approximately 3.5 miles long and extend south from San Bernardino Substation to the San Bernardino Junction. It would include the following existing 220-kV transmission lines: Devers–San Bernardino, Etiwanda–San Bernardino, San Bernardino–Vista, and El Casco–San Bernardino.
  - Segment 2 would be approximately 5 miles long and extend west from the San Bernardino Junction to Vista Substation. It would include the following existing 220-kV transmission lines: Devers–Vista No. 1 and Devers–Vista No. 2.

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<sup>1</sup> For the purpose of this Plan, “FEIR” refers to the FEIR (CPUC, 2015) and Addendum to the FEIR Addendum (CPUC, 2016a).

<sup>2</sup> “listed” refers to species listed as threatened, endangered, sensitive, candidate species, and species proposed for listing under the federal Endangered Species Act of 1973 (FESA), as amended (16 *United States Code* [U.S.C.] 1531 et seq.), and/or California Endangered Species Act (CESA) (California Fish and Game Code § 2050–2089).

- Segment 3 would be approximately 10 miles long and extend east from the San Bernardino Junction to El Casco Substation. It would include the following existing 220-kV transmission lines: Devers–Vista No. 1, Devers–Vista No. 2, El Casco–San Bernardino, and Devers–San Bernardino.
- Segment 4 would be approximately 12 miles long and extend east from El Casco Substation to San Gorgonio Avenue in the City of Banning. It would include the following existing 220-kV transmission lines: Devers–Vista No. 1, Devers–Vista No. 2, Devers–El Casco, and Devers–San Bernardino.
- Segment 5 would be approximately 9 miles long and extend east from San Gorgonio Avenue in the City of Banning to the eastern limit of the Reservation Trust Lands of the Morongo Band of Mission Indians (Morongo Reservation) at Rushmore Avenue. It would include the following existing 220-kV transmission lines: Devers–Vista No. 1, Devers–Vista No. 2, Devers–El Casco, and Devers–San Bernardino.
- Segment 6 would be approximately 8 miles long and extend east from the eastern boundary of the Morongo Reservation to Devers Substation. It would include the following existing 220-kV transmission lines: Devers–Vista No. 1, Devers–Vista No. 2, Devers–El Casco, and Devers–San Bernardino.
- Remove a portion (approximately 2 miles) of the existing San Bernardino–Redlands–Timoteo and San Bernardino–Redlands–Tennessee 66-kV Subtransmission Lines from within the existing WOD right-of-way (ROW) and reconstruct as follows:
  - The relocated San Bernardino–Redlands–Timoteo 66-kV Subtransmission Line would be approximately 2 miles long and would reconnect to the San Bernardino–Redlands–Timoteo 66-kV Subtransmission Line inside Timoteo Substation.
  - The relocated San Bernardino–Redlands–Tennessee 66-kV Subtransmission Line would be approximately 3.5 miles long and would reconnect to the San Bernardino–Redlands–Tennessee 66-kV Subtransmission Line at Barton Road.
- Remove a portion of the existing Dental and Intern 12-kV distribution circuits within the WOD ROW and relocate the circuits as follows:
  - The relocated Dental 12-kV Distribution Circuit would be approximately 1.5 miles long and would reconnect to the existing Dental 12-kV circuit.
  - The relocated Intern 12-kV Distribution Circuit would be approximately 2.25 miles long and would reconnect to the Intern 12-kV circuit.
- Install telecommunication lines and equipment for the protection, monitoring, and control of transmission lines and substation equipment.

## 1.2 Project Location

The Project crosses the cities of Banning, Beaumont, Calimesa, Colton, Grand Terrace, Loma Linda, Palm Springs, Rancho Cucamonga, Redlands, San Bernardino, and Yucaipa, as well as unincorporated areas of Riverside and San Bernardino counties. The transmission corridor passes over Interstate 215 in San Bernardino County, as well as State Route (SR)-60, SR-79, SR-243, and SR-62 in Riverside County, and runs approximately parallel to the majority of the Interstate 10 corridor in both San Bernardino and Riverside counties.

The Project is located largely within an existing utility corridor in incorporated and unincorporated areas of Riverside and San Bernardino counties, within the San Bernardino Valley. The San Bernardino Valley region is bounded by the San Gabriel and San Bernardino Mountains to the north, San Jacinto

Mountains to the east, and the Santa Ana Mountains and Pomona Valley to the south and west, respectively. The terrain of the Project area varies between gently sloping plains to steep ridges and drainages in the foothills. Elevations within the Project area range from approximately 1,050 to 3,000 feet above mean sea level with mountainous topography, lowlands and foothills, and relatively flat urban areas.

The Project, which is divided into six segments for ease of discussion, traverses areas of various land uses and is subject to several federal, state, and local jurisdictions. Segment 1, Segment 2, and the western portion of Segment 3 are located in incorporated and unincorporated portions of San Bernardino County. The eastern portion of Segment 3, all of Segment 4, and very small areas of Segment 5 are located in the Western Riverside Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (WR-MSHCP) area. Portions of Segment 5, excluding lands held in trust by the Bureau of Indian Affairs for the Morongo Reservation, and most of Segment 6, excluding small parcels of lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), are located in the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CV-MSHCP) area. Figure 1-1 shows an overview of the Project Study Area.

## 1.3 Relevant Laws, Regulations, and Management Policies

The regulations and permits applicable to these Measures are summarized in this section. The federal and state regulations, along with the Project-specific requirements, provide the regulatory framework for these Measures.

### 1.3.1 National Environmental Policy Act

BLM prepared the FEIS (BLM, 2016a) in accordance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), 42 United States Code (U.S.C.) Sections 4321 to 4370d as implemented by the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations, Title 40 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* Parts 1500 to 1508, and BLM's NEPA guidance handbook (H-1790-1) (BLM, 2008). The MM to be implemented during the Project for the protection of environmental resources was presented in the FEIS.

### 1.3.2 State and Local Laws and Regulations

#### 1.3.2.1 California Environmental Quality Act

The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) prepared the FEIR (CPUC, 2015) pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) guidelines outlined in Title 14 *California Code of Regulations* section 15000 et seq. as amended. The MM to be implemented during the Project for the protection of environmental resources was also presented in the FEIR.

#### 1.3.2.2 California Fish and Game Code

The California Fish and Game Code details regulatory settings mandated for persons in the state who tamper with, affect, or alter environmental resources, including wildlife species.

A Species of Special Concern (SSC) is a species, subspecies, or distinct population of an animal native to California that currently satisfies one or more of the following (not necessarily mutually exclusive) criteria:

- Extirpated from the state or, in the case of birds, is extirpated in its primary season or breeding role
- Listed as federally, but not state-, threatened or endangered; meets the state definition of threatened or endangered but has not formally been listed
- Experiencing, or formerly experienced, serious (noncyclical) population declines or range retractions (not reversed) that, if continued or resumed, could qualify it for state-threatened or endangered status

- Naturally small populations exhibiting high susceptibility to risk from any factor(s), that if realized, could lead to declines that would qualify it for state-threatened or endangered status

CEQA requires state agencies, local governments, and special districts to evaluate and disclose impacts from “projects” in the state. Section 15380 of the CEQA Guidelines clearly indicates that SSCs should be included in an analysis of project impacts if they can be shown to meet the criteria of sensitivity outlined therein.

The species listed in FEIR/FEIS MM WIL-2j are SSC, an administrative designation. However, these species have no legal listing status and, therefore, are not protected pursuant to the FESA and/or CESA.

### 1.3.3 Regional Habitat Conservation Plans

The WR-MSHCP and CV-MSHCP serve as comprehensive, multijurisdictional habitat conservation plans pursuant to both Section 10(a)(1)(B) of FESA and the California Natural Communities Conservation Planning Act, which focuses on the conservation of species and their associated habitats in their respective plan areas. According to their respective Implementing Agreements, any regional public facility provider (e.g., a utility company or a public district or agency) that operates and/or owns land within the plan areas, such as SCE, may request to participate in the MSHCP as a Participating Special Entity (PSE). The MSHCPs allows PSEs to obtain authorization for “take” of both federal and/or state-listed species for activities covered by the plans.

PSE activities must comply with the terms and requirements of each MSHCP and its Implementing agreement and permits. The PSE application is reviewed by the Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority (RCA) for the WR-MSHCP and the Coachella Valley Conservation Commission (CVCC) for the CV-MSHCP followed by a concurrence review by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). For regional utility projects, PSEs will pay a fee or take such other actions as may be agreed to by RCA/CVCC and USFWS and CDFW.

The portion of the Project in the WR-MSHCP includes the eastern part of Segment 2, Segment 3, and Segment 4, excluding San Bernardino County and the Morongo Reservation. The portion of the Project in the CV-MSHCP includes the portions of Segments 5 and 6 not located on the Morongo Reservation or BLM lands. SCE applied for PSE status for the portions of the Project in each MSHCP. In doing so, documents demonstrating consistency with the MSHCPs were prepared for review by RCA and CVCC. The application materials included avoidance, minimization, and MMs intended to ensure biologically equivalent or superior preservation of the MSHCP resources. Those measures were included in the PSE application materials, and additional conditions are included in the Certificates of Inclusion (COIs) issued March 2017 for the WR-MSHCP, and May 2017 for the CV-MSHCP.

As mentioned above, the MSHCPs focus on the conservation of species and their associated habitats in their respective plan areas. Several of the species addressed by FEIR/FEIS MM WIL-2j are Covered Species in the WR-MSHCP or CV-MSHCP (Table 2-1). SCE has demonstrated consistency with the MSHCPs for the Project, as evidenced by the PSE COIs. As such, it is assumed that Covered Species and the habitats for Covered Species, including all components thereof, are or will be adequately conserved in the MSHCP areas through implementation of each MSHCP.

## 1.4 Mitigation Measure WIL-2j

This Plan was prepared in compliance with FEIR/FEIS MM WIL-2j, which states:<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> To avoid redundancy, the FEIR/FEIS MM language was copied from the Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPUC, 2016b). While subtle differences in MM language were noted upon review of the ROD (BLM, 2016b), the requirements are ultimately the same.

**Conduct surveys and avoidance for special-status small mammals.** SCE shall implement pre-construction surveys for special-status small mammals including San Diego black-tailed jackrabbit (*Lepus californicus bennettii*), northwestern San Diego pocket mouse (*Chaetodipus fallax fallax*), pallid San Diego pocket mouse (*Chaetodipus fallax pallidus*), Palm Springs pocket mouse (*Perognathus longimembris bangsi*), Los Angeles pocket mouse (*Perognathus longimembris brevinasus*), Palm Springs round-tailed ground squirrel (*Xerospermophilus tereticaudus chlorus*), and San Diego desert woodrat (*Neotoma lepida intermedia*) in suitable habitats. SCE shall submit documentation providing pre-construction survey results to the CPUC and BLM for review and approval in consultation with CDFW and USFWS. Prior to initiating construction-related activities, SCE shall prepare and implement construction minimization measures and habitat conservation measures for review and approval by CPUC and BLM in consultation with USFWS and CDFW to minimize habitat loss and potential take.

Active woodrat nests that may be occupied by *Neotoma lepida* shall be flagged and ground-disturbing activities shall be avoided within a minimum of 10 feet surrounding each active nest unless otherwise authorized by the CDFW and CPUC. If avoidance is not possible, SCE shall take the following sequential steps: (1) all understory vegetation will be cleared in the area immediately surrounding active nests followed by a period of one night without further disturbance to allow woodrats to vacate the nest, (2) each occupied nest will then be disturbed by a qualified wildlife biologist until all woodrats leave the nest and seek refuge off-site, and (3) the nest sticks shall be removed from the project site and piled at the base of a nearby shrub or tree. Relocated nests shall not be spaced closer than 100 feet apart, unless a qualified wildlife biologist has determined that a specific habitat can support a higher density of nests. SCE shall document all woodrat nests moved in weekly monitoring reports, and will include a written summary in each annual report to the CPUC, BLM, and CDFW. The resumes of the qualified biologists shall be provided to the CPUC and BLM (as appropriate) for concurrence.

**Implementation locations:** This mitigation measure shall apply within San Bernardino County, on BLM lands, within the WR-MSHCP and CV-MSHCP areas (regardless of SCE's PSE status), and is recommended within Morongo Tribal Lands.

## 1.5 Lead Agencies

Lead agencies have discretionary approval over the Project and are responsible for reviewing aspects of this Plan. CPUC is the state lead agency responsible for compliance with CEQA. BLM is the federal lead agency responsible for compliance with NEPA. In addition to CPUC and BLM review and approval, MM WIL-2j requires that CDFW and USFWS are consulted on the development of the measures included in this Plan. Both agencies subsequently reviewed and approved this Plan.

## 1.6 Goals and Objectives

This Plan addresses avoidance and minimization of potential impacts to non-listed special-status small mammal species, including San Diego black-tailed jackrabbit, northwestern San Diego pocket mouse, pallid San Diego pocket mouse, Palm Springs pocket mouse (PSPM), Los Angeles pocket mouse (LAPM), Palm Springs round-tailed ground squirrel, and San Diego desert woodrat. Listed species such as Stephens' kangaroo rat (SKR) (*Dipodomys stephensi*) are addressed by separate FEIR/FEIS MMs, the USFWS's Biological Opinion (BO) for the Project, and additional measures generally consistent with the BO are anticipated to be included in CDFW's Incidental Take Permit for the Project.

## 1.7 Implementation Locations

MM WIL-2j applies within San Bernardino County, on BLM lands, and within the WR-MSHCP and CV-MSHCP areas (regardless of SCE's PSE status). However, the avoidance and minimization measures in this Plan have been tailored to address MSHCP Covered Species in each MSHCP area in accordance with the conditions associated with the PSE COIs issued by RCA and CVCC for the WR-MSHCP and CV-MSHCP, respectively. For species not covered by the MSHCPs or for the portions of the Project outside the MSHCPs, measures unique to this Plan will be implemented. The measures for each species and their applicability based on location, are detailed in Section 3 of this Plan. With approval by USFWS, CDFW, BLM, and CPUC, this Plan and the measures herein are in compliance with MM WIL-2j.

## 1.8 Timing

FEIR/FEIS MM WIL-2j is applicable during the preconstruction, construction, and post-construction/restoration phases of the Project.

# Focused Small Mammal Surveys

Focused special-status small mammal surveys were conducted for the Project in 2012-2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, and 2017. The target species for each survey varied. Although focused small mammal trapping efforts were targeted for SKR, San Bernardino kangaroo rat (SBKR) (*Dipodomys merriami parvus*), LAPM, and PSPM, additional special-status small mammals were incidentally caught and identified or observed during these efforts. The cumulative data were used to determine which of the species addressed by MM WIL-2j have the potential to occur or are known to occur in the project area. The results of surveys conducted prior to 2013 are also summarized in the Biological Resources Technical Report for the Project (LSA, 2013a). Additional relevant surveys targeting special-status small mammal species are listed below.

- LSA Associates, Inc. (LSA). 2013b. *Summary Report for Special-Status Rodent Trapping: Southern California Edison West of Devers Upgrade Project, Riverside and San Bernardino Counties, California; March–September 2012* (LSA Project No. SCE1110). Submitted to Southern California Edison. March 14.
- LSA Associates, Inc. (LSA). 2013c. *Summary Report for Special-Status Rodent Trapping: Southern California Edison West of Devers Upgrade Project, Riverside and San Bernardino Counties, California; April–May 2013* (LSA Project No. SCE1110). Submitted to Southern California Edison. August 28.
- AMEC Foster Wheeler Environment and Infrastructure, Inc. (AMEC). 2014a. Assessment of Potential SBKR Habitat in San Bernardino County. Memorandum prepared for CH2M HILL Engineers, Inc. (CH2M) and Southern California Edison. November 20.
- AMEC Foster Wheeler Environment and Infrastructure, Inc. (AMEC). 2014b. Results of SKR Pedestrian Surveys in San Bernardino County and Trapping Recommendations. Memorandum prepared for CH2M and Southern California Edison. November 12.
- AMEC Foster Wheeler Environment and Infrastructure, Inc. (AMEC). 2014c. SKR Habitat Assessment and Survey Recommendations. Memorandum prepared for CH2M and SCE. August 29.
- AMEC Foster Wheeler Environment and Infrastructure, Inc. (AMEC). 2015a. *Focused Surveys for the San Bernardino Kangaroo Rat in San Bernardino County*. Memorandum prepared for SCE and CH2M. March 18.
- AMEC Foster Wheeler Environment and Infrastructure, Inc. (AMEC). 2015b. *Focused Surveys for the Stephens' Kangaroo Rat in San Bernardino County*. Memorandum prepared for CH2M and SCE. May 11.
- AMEC Foster Wheeler Environment and Infrastructure, Inc. (AMEC). 2015c. *Southern California Edison West of Devers Upgrade Project Focused Survey Report for the Los Angeles Pocket Mouse*. Riverside County, California. Submitted to Southern California Edison. July.
- AMEC Foster Wheeler Environment and Infrastructure, Inc. (AMEC). 2016a. *Southern California Edison West of Devers Upgrade Project 2016 Focused Surveys for the Stephens' Kangaroo Rat*. San Bernardino and Riverside Counties, California. Submitted to Southern California Edison. July.
- AMEC Foster Wheeler Environment and Infrastructure, Inc. (AMEC). 2016b. *Southern California Edison West of Devers Upgrade Project Focused Survey Report for the Los Angeles Pocket Mouse*. Riverside County, California. Submitted to Southern California Edison. November.
- AMEC Foster Wheeler Environmental and Infrastructure, Inc. (AMEC). 2017a. *Habitat Assessment and Survey Recommendations for Los Angeles Pocket Mouse and Palm Springs Pocket Mouse (East of*

*the City of Banning*). West of Devers Upgrade Project. Submitted to Southern California Edison. April.

Focused trapping surveys for pocket mice and incidental species are underway in 2017 in Segments 5 and 6. The survey results will be provided upon completion of the surveys (see Section 3.1.2)

## 2.1 Summary of Methods

Trapping surveys were conducted by qualified biologists holding USFWS Section 10(a)(1)(A) recovery permits or CDFW memoranda of understanding, as appropriate, for the targeted species. Trapping was conducted according to the conditions of those permits and using conventional agency protocols and industry standards, as appropriate. Habitat assessments were conducted first and focused surveys and trapping were then conducted based on the locations of suitable habitat.

Focused surveys generally consisted of five consecutive nights of trapping at each location. All traps were 12-inch-long folding Sherman live traps. Traps were usually arranged in one to several lines placed in the most appropriate microhabitats for the target species. Each trap was opened and baited at dusk, checked near midnight, and checked and closed at dawn. Traps were typically baited with rolled oats, bird seed, and peanut butter. All animals were identified and released unharmed where they were captured. Generally, trapping was not conducted if ambient temperatures were below 40-50 degrees Fahrenheit, or as appropriate for each target species.

## 2.2 Summary of Results

Non-listed special-status small mammal species observed within the Project area during focused surveys include Northwestern San Diego pocket mouse, pallid San Diego pocket mouse, San Diego black-tailed jackrabbit, San Diego desert [Bryant's] woodrat, PSPM, and LAPM. Table 2-1 summarizes the results of non-listed special-status small mammal surveys conducted for the Project. Table 2-1 provides each species' status, a summary of life history requirements, and probability of occurrence within each Project segment. The probability of occurrence is rated as Observed, High, Moderate, Low, and Not Expected. These are defined as follows:

- **Observed:** Species was observed during surveys conducted from 2012 to present.
- **High Probability:** Species identified in the literature search or known to occur in the region, and suitable habitat is present within the project area. These species are generally common or widespread in the project area and vicinity.
- **Moderate Probability:** Species identified in the literature search or known to occur in the region, and suitable habitat is present within the project area. These species are generally less common or widespread than those considered with a High Probability in the project area and vicinity.
- **Low Probability:** Species identified in the literature search or known to occur in the region, but the project area is outside of the species' known distribution or elevation range, or habitat is generally unsuitable.
- **Not Expected:** Species identified in the literature search or are known to occur in the region, but are absent from the project area because the project area is outside of their known distribution or suitable habitat is lacking in the project area.

Once 2017 pocket mouse trapping is concluded, special-status small mammal data will be compiled into a consolidated figure displaying the occurrences of these special-status small mammals and occupied habitats (Section 3.1.2).

**Table 2-1. Special-Status Small Mammals Included in FEIR/FEIS MM WIL-2j Observed Within the WOD Project Area**  
*Non-listed Special-status Small Mammal Avoidance and Minimization Plan*

<b>Scientific Name</b> <b>Common Name</b> <b>Activity Period</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Habitat and Distribution</b>	<b>Project Specific Trapping Survey Dates</b>	<b>Observations</b>
<i>Chaetodipus fallax</i> <b>Northwestern San Diego pocket mouse</b> Nocturnal. Year-round.	CDFW: SSC MSHCP:WR	Found in sandy herbaceous areas, usually associated with rocks or coarse gravel in coastal scrub, chaparral, grasslands, and sagebrush, from Los Angeles County through southwestern San Bernardino, western Riverside, and San Diego counties to northern Baja California.	April, May, June, July, and August 2012 (LSA, 2013b) May 2013 (LSA, 2013c) February, March, and April 2015 (Segment 3) (AMEC, 2015a) May 2015 at El Casco Substation only (Segment 4) (AMEC, 2015c; AMEC, 2016b)	<b>OBSERVED (Segments 1 – 5)</b> In the Badlands, generally southeast of Loma Linda and south of Redlands, between Beaumont and Cherry Valley, and north of Banning (LSA, 2013a). <b>Not Expected (Segment 6)</b>
<i>Chaetodipus fallax pallidus</i> <b>Pallid San Diego pocket mouse</b> Nocturnal. Year-round.	CDFW: SSC	Found in sandy herbaceous areas, usually associated with rocks or coarse gravel in desert wash, desert scrub, desert succulent scrub, and pinyon-juniper woodland. Restricted to southwestern California from southwestern San Bernardino County to eastern San Diego and western Imperial counties.	April, May, June, July, and August 2012 (LSA, 2013b)	<b>OBSERVED (Segments 5 – 6 2012) From Cabazon eastward within the Project area (LSA, 2013a).</b> <b>Not Expected (Segments 1-4)</b>
<i>Lepus californicus bennettii</i> <b>San Diego black-tailed jackrabbit</b> Primarily nocturnal. Year-round.	CDFW: SSC MSHCP:WR	Variety of habitats including herbaceous and desert scrub areas, early stages of open forest and chaparral. Most common in relatively open habitats. Restricted to the cismontane areas of Southern California, extending from the coast to the Santa Monica, San Gabriel, San Bernardino, and Santa Rosa Mountain Ranges.	<b>Not Applicable</b>	<b>OBSERVED (Segments 3–4)</b> <b>Low (Segment 1)</b> <b>Moderate (Segment 2)</b> <b>Not Expected (Segments 5-6)</b>
<i>Neotoma lepida intermedia [bryantii]</i> <b>San Diego desert [Bryant’s] woodrat</b> Nocturnal, occasionally crepuscular and diurnal. Year-round.	CDFW: SSC MSHCP:WR	Frequents poorly vegetated arid lands and is especially associated with cactus patches. Occurs along the Pacific slope from about San Luis Obispo County to northwest Baja California. Three subspecies of desert woodrat have traditionally been recognized in the area, and the boundary of the coastal sub-species’ range is unclear (probably at about Banning). However, the most recent taxonomic work on these animals suggested a species level split within the Project Study Area, with <i>N. lepida</i> to the east (desert) and	April, May, June, July, and August 2012 (LSA, 2013b) May 2013 (LSA, 2013c)	OBSERVED (Segments 1 – 6) In the Badlands, generally located southeast of Loma Linda and south of Redlands, and north of Banning in the central portion of the Project area (LSA). Desert woodrats ( <i>N. lepida</i> ) east of Banning can co-occur with the <i>intermedia</i> subspecies.

**Table 2-1. Special-Status Small Mammals Included in FEIR/FEIS MM WIL-2j Observed Within the WOD Project Area***Non-listed Special-status Small Mammal Avoidance and Minimization Plan*

		<i>N. bryanti</i> to the west (coastal) (Patton et al. 2008). Following this taxonomic treatment, “desert” woodrats from Banning eastward would not be considered SSC.		
<p><i>Perognathus longimembris bangsii</i>  <b>Palm Springs pocket mouse</b>            Nocturnal. Primarily active spring through fall.</p>	<p>BLM: S            CDFW: SSC            MSHCP:CV</p>	<p>Primary habitat in the Coachella Valley is dunes and mesquite hummocks associated with honey mesquite (<i>Prosopis glandulosa</i> var. <i>torreyana</i>) and, to a lesser extent, dunes and hummocks associated with creosote (<i>Larrea tridentata</i>) or other vegetation. Its range in the Coachella Valley extends from Joshua Tree National Park southward, west to San Gorgonio Pass, and south to Borrego Springs and the east side of San Felipe Narrows, in Riverside, San Diego, and Imperial counties.</p>	<p>April and May 2012 (LSA, 2013b)</p>	<p><b>OBSERVED (Segment 6, 2012)</b>            Between Whitewater Canyon and the eastern terminus of the Project area  <b>Moderate (Segment 5)</b>  <b>Not Expected (Segments 1-4)</b></p>
<p><i>Perognathus longimembris brevinasus</i>  <b>Los Angeles pocket mouse</b>            Nocturnal. Primarily active spring through fall.</p>	<p>CDFW: SSC            MSHCP:WR</p>	<p>Prefers sandy soil for burrowing, but has been found on gravel washes and stony soils. Found in coastal sage scrub in Los Angeles (formerly), western Riverside, and southwestern San Bernardino counties.</p>	<p>April, May, June, July, and August 2012 (LSA, 2013b)            May 2013 (LSA, 2013c)            May 2015 at El Casco Substation only (Segment 4) (AMEC, 2015c; AMEC, 2016b)</p>	<p><b>OBSERVED (Segments 4 – 5, 2012–2013)</b>            Between Beaumont and Cherry Valley, north and south of Banning, north and northeast of Cabazon, and 5 miles east of El Casco Substation. (LSA, 2013a).  <b>Low (Segments 1-3)</b>  <b>Not Expected (Segments 6)</b></p>
<p><i>Xerospermophilus tereticaudus chlorus</i>  <b>Palm Springs round-tailed ground squirrel</b>            Diurnal. February through August (Torpid/in torpor September through January).</p>	<p>BLM: S            CDFW: SSC            MSHCP: CV</p>	<p>Desert succulent scrub, desert wash, desert scrub, alkali scrub; will burrow in human-made levees; prefers open, flat, grassy areas in fine textured, sandy soil. Restricted to Coachella Valley.</p>	<p>March, April, May, June, and September 2012 (LSA, 2013b)            April and May 2013 (LSA, 2013c)</p>	<p><b>Low (Segments 6)</b> May be outside species’ current known range. Not observed during surveys. Has been observed as close as approximately 4 miles southeast of Devers Substation (AMEC Foster Wheeler biologists pers. comm.), in habitat similar to that near the substation.  <b>Not Expected (Segments 1-5)</b></p>

## 2.2.1 Observed Species

Non-listed special-status small mammal species observed during the trapping surveys are predicted to persist within the Project area during construction of the Project.

### 2.2.1.1 Palm Springs Pocket Mouse

This subspecies occurs from the San Geronio Pass area east to the Little San Bernardino Mountains and south along the eastern edge of the Peninsular Range to Borrego Valley and the east side of San Felipe Narrows (Hall, 1981). Generally, their habitat is level to gently sloping topography, sparse to moderate vegetative cover, and loosely packed or, especially, sandy soils. This taxon generally breeds from January to August, with a peak of activity from March to May (Dodd, 1996). Several studies suggest that reproduction in heteromyids may be dependent on availability of annual vegetation. Studies of other subspecies of the little pocket mouse indicate that they hibernate in winter and are active above ground in spring, summer, and fall (Bartholomew and Cade, 1957).

PSPM is known to intergrade with the LAPM in the San Geronio Pass area. The range limits of “pure” PSPM and LAPM are not known.

PSPM was observed in Segment 6 within suitable habitat. Little pocket mice were observed in Segment 5, but their subspecific identity cannot conclusively be determined. Individuals in this area are likely intergrades.

PSPM are not expected in Segments 1 through 4. PSPM are a Covered Species in the CV-MSHCP. Except for small parcels of BLM land and those portions of the Project on the Morongo Reservation, Segments 5 and 6 are located in the CV-MSHCP.

### 2.2.1.2 Los Angeles Pocket Mouse

LAPM was observed in Segments 4 and 5 within suitable habitat. The LAPM is a little-studied rodent of the inland valleys, foothills, and desert edges of Southern California. The LAPM occurs primarily in areas containing sandy or loose soils, and the highest densities often occur along drainage courses. Habitats inhabited by LAPM includes alluvial fan sage scrub, coastal sage scrub, and grasslands.

There is a low probability for LAPM occurrence within Segments 1, 2, and 3, due to marginal and fragmented areas of suitable habitat within and adjacent to the Project boundaries. LAPM are not expected to be present within Segment 6 because it is located outside of this subspecies’ known range. Little pocket mice were observed in the eastern portion of Segment 5, but their subspecific identity cannot conclusively be determined. Individuals in this area are likely intergrades (Swei et al., 2003).

LAPM are a Covered Species in the WR-MSHCP. Habitats occupied by LAPM are primarily located within the WR-MSHCP. The areas known to be occupied by LAPM outside the WR-MSHCP include the areas on the Morongo Reservation to the vicinity of the reservation’s eastern boundary (however, see comment in previous paragraph regarding intergradation). Except for small parcels of BLM land and the portions of the Project on the Morongo Reservation, Segments 5 and 6 are located in the CV-MSHCP. LAPM is not a Covered Species in the CV-MSHCP.

### 2.2.1.3 Northwestern San Diego Pocket Mouse

The northwestern San Diego pocket mouse occurs in coastal sage scrub, grassland, alluvial scrub, and chaparral. It primarily inhabits open to moderately vegetated areas containing sandy to loamy soils. It occurs throughout virtually the entire Project area eastward to the edge of the desert at Banning.

Northwestern San Diego pocket mice were observed in Segments 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 within suitable habitat. Northwestern San Diego pocket mice are not expected to occur within Segment 6 because it is located outside of this subspecies known range. Northwestern San Diego pocket mice are widespread

and generally occur in large numbers in the Project area. Project-related impacts are not expected to have a significant impact on local populations.

#### 2.2.1.4 Pallid San Diego Pocket Mouse

The pallid San Diego pocket mouse is widespread throughout large portions of the California desert, including locations such as Valyermo and Oro Grande in the Mojave Desert, and Cabazon and San Felipe Creek (San Diego County) in the Colorado/Sonoran Desert. It extends southward into Baja California. Its habitat includes desert scrub such as creosote bush scrub.

Pallid San Diego pocket mice were observed in Segments 5 and 6 within suitable habitat. Pallid San Diego pocket mouse are not expected to occur within Segments 1, 2, 3, and 4 because they are located outside of this subspecies' known range.

#### 2.2.1.5 San Diego Desert Woodrat

The San Diego desert woodrat (known as Bryant's woodrat [*N. bryanti intermedia*] in recent taxonomic treatments) occurs along the coast of Southern California, extending to the tip of Baja California. Desert woodrats (*N. lepida*) east of Banning can co-occur with the *N.b. intermedia* subspecies. This species occurs in coastal sage scrub, chaparral, and alluvial fan sage scrub, often in association with species of cactus, especially prickly pear (*Opuntia* spp.).

San Diego desert woodrat active nests were observed in all Project segments within suitable habitat. Surveys document presence southeast of Loma Linda and south of Redlands, and north of Banning in the central portion of the Project area (LSA, 2013a). Their widespread distribution and large territory sizes (home range) increase the potential for this species to travel through or within the Project corridor.

#### 2.2.1.6 San Diego Black-Tailed Jackrabbit

San Diego black-tailed jackrabbits were incidentally observed in Segments 3 and 4 within suitable habitat during the course of other targeted-species pedestrian and trapping surveys. They were not observed in Segments 1 and 2 and there is a low probability of occurrence in Segment 1 and a moderate probability of occurrence in Segment 2 due to the presence of appropriate and suitable habitat within and adjacent to the Project boundaries. San Diego black-tailed jackrabbit are not expected to occur within Segments 5 and 6 because these segments are located outside of this subspecies' known range.

### 2.2.2 Potentially Occurring Species

#### 2.2.2.1 Palm Springs Round-tailed Ground Squirrel

Palm Springs round-tailed ground squirrel has a low probability of occurrence within Segments 5 and 6 because the Project is located just outside of this species' known range. Palm Springs round-tailed ground squirrel is not expected to occur in Segments 1 through 4 because these segments are outside of this species' known range.

# Avoidance and Minimization Measures

This section describes potential Project-specific avoidance and minimization measures for the non-listed special-status small mammal species occurring or potentially occurring within the Project area. The measures are intended to be adaptive. Ultimately, qualified biologists will determine the best courses of action based on current field conditions and in cooperation with the CDFW and/or USFWS.

## 3.1 General Measures

The following measures will be implemented for the portions of the Project in San Bernardino County, in the WR-MSHCP area, in the CV-MSHCP area, and on BLM lands, as applicable.

### 3.1.1 Project Design

The Project has been designed to avoid or minimize impacts to native vegetation communities, habitats for special-status plant and wildlife species, and other sensitive biological resources, to the extent feasible. Existing disturbance areas, which generally include compacted soils unsuitable for burrowing small mammal species, and access routes will be used to the maximum extent possible to prevent impacts to habitat. Work areas will be conspicuously staked, flagged, or marked to limit construction activities to predetermined limits. Foot traffic will be limited to existing or designated Project impact areas to the extent possible.

### 3.1.2 Focused and/or Pre-construction Clearance Surveys

SCE is currently conducting focused trapping surveys for PSPM and LAPM in select Project locations. The data will be used to conduct density estimates for these species, which will allow for the quantification of potential impacts to local populations of each species. For example, in many areas, the Project impacts at any given site would represent a very small percentage of the contiguous area of occupied habitat in which the site is located. Therefore, the ratio of the area(s) to be disturbed relative to the size of the contiguous area of occupied habitat, or estimates of number of individual animals that may be impacted relative to the number of individuals in that population, may be used to determine which measures are implemented. In accordance with FEIR/FEIS MM WIL-2j, SCE will conduct pre-construction surveys for special-status small mammals, including San Diego black-tailed jackrabbit, northwestern San Diego pocket, pallid San Diego pocket mouse, PSPM, LAPM, Palm Springs round-tailed ground squirrel, and San Diego desert woodrat in suitable habitats. Consistent with FEIR/FEIS MM WIL-1a, qualified biologists will perform pre-construction biological surveys at each Project work area and access route, and in the area surrounding each work site or access route. Surveyors will be provided with a list of target species potentially occurring at the sites to be surveyed. Surveyors will conduct pedestrian surveys using meandering transects spaced approximately 10 feet apart to achieve 100 percent visual coverage of the survey area. Because many of the target species are cryptic, burrowing species, surveyors will look for sign (e.g., burrows, tracks, scat, etc.). Survey buffers for the special-status small mammals addressed by MM WIL-2j will be no less than 300 feet surrounding each disturbance area. For Project access along existing routes or routes improved during an earlier phase of the Project, the survey buffer requirement will be 100 feet. At a minimum, SCE will conduct pre-construction surveys within 10 days prior to beginning work in any given area, and repeat the surveys if the work site remains inactive for a period of 10 days or more.

The pedestrian surveys will be most effective for identifying jack rabbits and woodrat middens. If recent sign of pocket mouse occupation is found in habitats supporting LAPM or PSPM, especially in areas not previously mapped as occupied habitat (Section 3.1.2), SCE may choose to conduct focused trapping

surveys using the methodology summarized in Section 2.1 to confirm presence, or presence may be assumed and the measures in Sections 3.7.6 and 3.7.7 (depending on species and location) will be implemented, as appropriate.

The locations of special-status small mammals or their sign observed during preconstruction surveys/sweeps will be recorded using a global positioning system (GPS)-enabled handheld data collector. Maps of occupied habitat (Section 3.1.2) will be updated accordingly.

SCE will also conduct pre-construction “sweeps” of each work site immediately prior to beginning construction or disturbance work, to identify any vulnerable wildlife that may have entered the site.

In general, the pre-construction surveys will serve to identify occupied habitat or refine mapping of occupied habitat and to assist qualified biologists with determining the best avoidance and minimization measures.

### 3.1.3 Avoidance Buffers/Areas

To the extent feasible, areas determined to be occupied by non-listed special-status small mammals will be avoided during construction. Construction personnel will be informed of avoidance areas. Staking, fence, or other materials may be used to demarcate the environmentally sensitive areas where they are located close to construction disturbance areas. Environmentally sensitive area buffers will vary by species and be determined by the qualified biologist in coordination with CDFW and/or USFWS. Project personnel will be instructed to avoid ground-disturbing activities within environmentally sensitive areas.

### 3.1.4 Construction Monitoring

SCE will assign approved biological monitors to monitor all work activities during the construction phase. The biological monitoring approach will be adaptive based on the resource, construction activity, site-specific conditions, and other factors. A monitor’s scope of work will be directed by the lead biologist, field leads, and/or Qualified/Authorized Biologists. In some cases, monitors will be present for all activities occurring at any given site. In other cases, monitoring may be conducted on a “spot-check” basis. Monitors are responsible for ensuring that impacts to special-status species, native vegetation, wildlife habitat, and sensitive or unique biological resources are avoided or minimized to the fullest extent safely possible. Monitors are also responsible to ensure that work activities are conducted in compliance with MMs, permit conditions, and other Project requirements. Monitoring activities will be thoroughly and accurately documented on a daily basis.

### 3.1.5 Avoid Entrapment

In accordance with FEIR/FEIS MM WIL-1b, Project-related excavations shall be secured to prevent wildlife entry and entrapment. Holes and trenches shall be backfilled, securely covered, or fenced. Excavations that cannot be fully secured shall incorporate appropriate wildlife ramp(s) at a slope of no more than a 3:1 ratio (horizontal:vertical), or other means to allow trapped animals to escape. Biological monitors shall provide guidance to construction crews to ensure that wildlife ramps or other means are sufficient to allow trapped animals to escape. At the end of each work day, a biological monitor shall ensure that excavations have been secured or provided with appropriate means for wildlife escape.

All pipes or other construction materials or supplies will be covered or capped in storage or laydown areas. No pipes or tubing will be left open either temporarily or permanently, except during use or installation. Any construction pipe, culvert, or other hollow materials will be inspected for wildlife before it is moved, buried, or capped. This type of inspection will be conducted to preclude or minimize potential impacts to all targeted species.

## 3.2 Measures Applicable in San Bernardino County

No MSHCP has been established for the portions of the Project in San Bernardino County (Segments 1 through 3). The avoidance and minimization measures in the following sections address the special-status small mammal species identified in MM WIL-2j that have at least a low potential to occur within the Project area in San Bernardino County (Table 2-1). Those species include San Diego black-tailed jackrabbit, northwestern San Diego pocket mouse, LAPM, and San Diego desert woodrat. The pallid San Diego pocket mouse, PSPM, and Palm Springs round-tailed ground squirrel are not expected to occur on the portions of the Project in San Bernardino County. The following avoidance and minimization measures apply in San Bernardino County.

### 3.2.1 San Diego Black-tailed Jackrabbit

In general, black-tailed jackrabbits will flee an area after being alerted by movement or anything they sense poses a threat; therefore, no direct impacts to San Diego black-tailed jackrabbits are anticipated within the Project area. Black-tailed jackrabbits may retreat to shelter forms or burrows during hot days in summer (air temperatures greater than 42 degrees Celsius [107 degrees Fahrenheit]), but for only 3 to 5 hours in the afternoon. Burrows are not used in high winds or in cold winter months, although they are available. Black-tailed jackrabbits may place their young in a prepared nest in a variety of locations, both above and below ground (Best, 1996). Potential San Diego black-tailed jackrabbit shelter forms or burrows identified within Project disturbance areas during preconstruction surveys will be marked as environmentally sensitive areas for avoidance. If avoidance is not possible, the following measures will apply:

- A biologist approved by the CPUC, BLM, and the Wildlife Agencies to conduct general preconstruction surveys and biological monitoring will investigate the shelter form/burrow for occupancy by examining the interior of the burrow (using flashlight and/or mirror and/or scoping camera, if necessary) for San Diego black-tailed jackrabbits.
- San Diego black-tailed jackrabbits observed within a Project work site will be allowed to leave the area on their own accord.
- Once the burrow is determined clear of black-tailed jackrabbits, a qualified biologist will collapse the burrow or shelter form.

### 3.2.2 Los Angeles Pocket Mouse

While suitable habitats for LAPM occur on the portions of the Project in San Bernardino County, the species has a low probability of occurring. Nonetheless, the following avoidance and minimization measures would be implemented if pre-construction surveys (Section 3.1.2) identify potentially occupied habitats.

Regarding pocket mice, a qualified biologist is a wildlife biologist who possesses a Memorandum of Understanding with CDFW for live-trapping of heteromyid species in Southern California or who has been approved by the CDFW and USFWS for the Project.

#### 3.2.2.1 Construction Scheduling

For construction that would involve disturbance to pocket mouse habitat, construction activities will be phased to the extent feasible and practicable so that suitable habitat islands are no farther than 300 feet apart at any given time to allow pocket mice to disperse between habitat patches across non-suitable habitat (i.e., unvegetated or compacted soils). Prior to Project construction, qualified biologists will assist construction crews in planning access routes to avoid impacts to occupied habitat as much as feasible (i.e., placement of preferred routes on Project plans and incorporation of methods to avoid as much suitable habitat/soil disturbance as possible). During construction activities, the biological monitor

will ensure that connected, naturally vegetated areas with sandy soils and typical native vegetation remain intact to the extent feasible and practicable. Construction activities will be limited to defined work areas. To the extent feasible, construction that involves clearing of habitat will be avoided during the peak breeding seasons (approximately April to July).

### 3.2.2.2 Pre-construction Surveys and Biological Monitoring

Some work locations near occupied pocket mouse habitat will not impact the habitat directly (e.g., at sites where the limits of construction are within soils not suitable for pocket mice). With occupied habitat nearby, however, it will be necessary to have a qualified pocket mouse biologist survey the work area to identify sign of pocket mouse species, such as burrows consistent with pocket mice and scat, prior to any ground disturbance to delineate the potential extent of occupancy. In some cases, it will be sufficient to provide a biological monitor during construction. If construction impacts are to occur in microhabitats unsuitable for pocket mice or if no pocket mouse sign is observed during the preconstruction survey, the qualified biologist, in coordination with CDFW and/or USFWS, may determine that avoidance buffers/areas and biological monitoring are sufficient to avoid impacts. Section 3.1.4 addresses the general monitoring approach.

### 3.2.2.3 Construction Methods

For areas of occupied pocket mouse habitat, the construction methods may be modified to avoid burrow complexes. For example, the removal of towers in some locations may be possible using rubber-tired construction equipment on areas unsuitable for pocket mice, yet “reach” the towers with booms and cranes in areas where pocket mouse presence is suspected. An existing, compacted access road (i.e., unsuitable for pocket mice) passes through each structure site. The equipment may be located on access roads or existing disturbance, such that impacts due to crushing are avoided. At sites where potential pocket mouse burrows may be impacted by construction, one or more of the following additional measures may be required at the discretion of the qualified biologist in coordination with the CDFW and/or USFWS.

### 3.2.2.4 Installation of Construction Exclusion Measures

Where construction activities will occur immediately adjacent to occupied habitat the limits of work areas will be clearly marked with construction staking to prevent unauthorized access of construction equipment and personnel into the pocket mouse habitat. Where, at the discretion of the qualified biologist, it is determined that biological staking may not adequately protect pocket mice, additional exclusion measures, such as fencing, will be considered. The construction contractor will determine the appropriate type of fence in cooperation with the qualified biologist. If the activities are located such that habitat will not be affected, traditional orange construction fence (or similar) may be sufficient for keeping workers and equipment from entering suitable/occupied habitat. Ideally, a material that would allow wildlife movement would be chosen.

Installation of exclusion methods such as fencing would be considered a construction activity in this case. The activity would be included in the Project schedule and/or communicated to the appropriate agencies in advance of execution. A Qualified Biologist or Biological Monitor under supervision of a Qualified Biologist will monitor the fence installation and coordinate with the contractor to ensure that incidental impacts are minimized to the extent feasible.

### 3.2.2.5 Load Spreading Devices

At work sites in occupied pocket mouse habitat, and where unavoidable impacts may have a significant effect on the pocket mouse population as determined by the qualified biologist in coordination with the CDFW and/or USFWS, load-spreading devices may be used to preserve the burrow complexes. Load-spreading devices will be either 4-foot by 8-foot by 0.75-inch-thick plywood sheets, or 4-foot by 8-foot plastic Altarnamats, or equivalent materials. The load-spreading devices will be placed over areas

potentially containing active pocket mouse burrows to avoid disturbance from the vehicles. The exact placement of load-spreading devices will be determined by the qualified biologist. Vehicles will be moved slowly and turned in gentle arcing motions to minimize surface disturbance. Load-spreading devices will be removed immediately after completion of each day's activities so that none are left in place overnight.

Pre-construction pedestrian surveys will be conducted before and after use of load-spreading devices. The purpose of the surveys would be to document the number of burrows and other sign of pocket mice, and to document the condition of the burrow system to the extent that can be determined visually. Surveys conducted after use of load-spreading devices would serve to determine the efficacy of the devices. If the qualified biologist observes signs that the burrow system collapsed, alternative methods will be considered.

Load-spreading devices will be used to the extent that they are deemed effective by the qualified biologist. For sites where clearing and grading are required, burrow complexes would be impacted. Therefore, load-spreading devices would be ineffective as the primary means of impacts avoidance and minimization. However, load-spreading devices may be an effective supplemental avoidance and minimization measure for sites that require fencing, trapping, and repatriation. For example, load-spreading devices may be used to provide access to a fenced site from an existing access road where the ground between the road and the site is also pocket mouse habitat.

#### 3.2.2.6 Exclusion Fencing, Trapping, and Release

These measures will be taken for sites where biological monitoring, construction exclusion measures, or load-spreading devices are not effective, and where impacts to pocket mice may have a significant impact on the pocket mouse population as determined by the qualified biologist.

**Seasonal Considerations.** Exclusion fence installation and trapping will occur during appropriate warmer spring and summer months when the pocket mouse is active. Trapping will not be conducted after September 30, unless weather conditions are suitable, because pocket mice may become dormant and may be difficult or impossible to trap.

**Exclusion Fence Installation.** Prior to construction in occupied habitat, a pocket mouse exclusion fence will be installed around the areas to be trapped. These areas will be determined based on their proximity to previously captured pocket mouse individuals and current site-specific conditions such as final engineering design, construction methods, suitable habitat, and pocket mouse sign/presumed occupied habitat. A qualified biologist will be present during fence installation to avoid or otherwise minimize impacts to sensitive biological resources.

The appropriate fencing material will be determined by the construction contractor in cooperation with the qualified biologist. Fencing materials such as hardware cloth, silt fencing, Animex wildlife exclusion fencing, Ertec wildlife exclusion fencing, or similar products may be considered exclusion fencing, and will be installed by first trenching and then burying the bottom portions of the fence. Fencing will be angled in the direction of the area occupied by the pocket mice or curved at the top to prevent animals from climbing over the fence. If the qualified biologist determines that pocket mice may be close enough to construction activities that exclusion fencing involving staking and burying (i.e., invasive ground disturbance) could also result in potential impacts, the base of the exclusion fencing would be secured with sand bags and bermed soil to prevent impacts to pocket mice that may result from otherwise trenching and burying the bottom portion of the fence. The fencing should be buried to a depth of 12 to 14 inches. Stabilization of the fencing is achieved through the use of 36-inch-long wooden landscape stakes, spaced 5 to 8 feet apart, depending on the stability of the soil. The stakes will be placed into the ground until their tops are approximately even with the top of the fencing. Access points for construction equipment would be established to provide ingress and egress while maintaining integrity of the barrier fence.

Installation of exclusion fencing would be considered a construction activity in this case. The activity would be included in the Project schedule and/or communicated to the appropriate agencies in advance of execution. A Qualified Biologist or Biological Monitor under supervision of a Qualified Biologist will monitor the fence installation and coordinate with the contractor to ensure that incidental impacts are minimized to the extent feasible.

**Trapping Methodology.** All areas will be trapped until no pocket mouse captures have been made for three consecutive nights. A trapping grid would be set in each enclosure. The trap spacing (roughly 13 feet apart) will result in a trap density approximately twice as high as a normal presence/absence trapping survey, potentially allowing the removal of pocket mice as quickly as possible. Each trap will be baited with bird seed or millet placed at the back of the trap. The traps will be reset just prior to dusk each night and inspected once during the night and at dawn. Traps will be closed after the dawn inspection to prevent wildlife from being captured during daylight hours. Captured individuals will be identified to determine sex and species.

**Release.** Prior to trapping, refugia will be placed in or near adjacent undisturbed habitat to provide shelter and forage for pocket mice. Refugia will consist of cardboard mailing tubes, 1 inch inside diameter and 18 inches long, installed into the ground at an angle of approximately 30 degrees, which is a typical angle for natural rodent burrows. The mailing tubes are available at office supply stores. The tubes will be scored on the bottom interior at intervals of once per inch to provide traction so that pocket mice may easily travel up the tube. At the bottom end of each mailing tube will be an inverted 4-inch-diameter nursery peat pot, connected to the tube via a hole in the pot. A small amount of nesting material, such as tissue paper, will be placed in each peat pot, along with bird seed. Two mailing tube refugia will be installed for every pocket mouse captured.

Pocket mice captured during trapping will be placed into one of the two temporary refugia, and the tube will be closed at its exposed end with a plug provided with the mailing tube. Additionally, the plug will contain drilled air holes. The animal will remain in the refugia for no more than 24 hours. The plug will be removed from the refugia tube 1 hour after sunset, allowing the animals to leave the refugia on their own. The refugia are made of biodegradable materials; therefore, they will be left in place indefinitely, or until the qualified biologist determines they are no longer needed.

**Exclusion Fence Maintenance/Removal.** For sites where impacts will be limited to drive and crush, the exclusion fencing would be maintained to ensure that pocket mice do not re-inhabit the area. For sites subject to clearing and grading activities, the fencing would be removed once trapping and release activities are completed. Displaced pocket mice are unlikely to re-inhabit the work areas if the soils have been compacted. As with fence installation, the activity will be monitored by a Qualified Biologist and/or Biological Monitor under supervision of a Qualified Biologist.

In the absence of exclusion fencing, it is possible that some mortality may result, but it likely would not have a significant impact on the population. This method would be determined by the qualified biologist in cooperation with CDFW.

### 3.2.3 Northwestern San Diego Pocket Mouse

SCE will implement the general measures in Section 3.1. In areas where northwestern San Diego pocket mice occupy the same habitats as LAPM, the measures presented in the preceding sections would serve to avoid and minimize impacts to this species as well.

The Northwestern San Diego pocket mouse occurs sympatrically with LAPM, at least partially. Northwestern San Diego pocket mice also occur (often in large numbers) in habitats not occupied by LAPM. It may not be feasible to completely avoid impacts to this subspecies of San Diego pocket mouse in those areas not co-located with LAPM-occupied habitat. However, the Project impacts at any given

site would likely represent a very small percentage of the contiguous area of occupied habitat in which the site is located.

### 3.2.4 San Diego Desert Woodrat

Active woodrat nests that may be occupied by San Diego desert woodrats will be flagged and ground-disturbing activities will be avoided within a minimum of 10 feet surrounding each active nest unless otherwise authorized by the CDFW and/or USFWS. If avoidance is not feasible, SCE will take the following sequential steps:

1. All understory vegetation will be cleared in the area immediately surrounding active nests followed by a period of one night without further disturbance to allow woodrats to vacate the nest.
2. Each occupied nest will then be disturbed by a qualified wildlife biologist until all woodrats leave the nest and seek refuge offsite.
3. The nest sticks will be removed from the Project site and piled at the base of a nearby shrub or tree.

Relocated nests will not be spaced closer than 100 feet apart, unless a qualified biologist has determined that a specific habitat can support a higher density of nests.

SCE will document all relocated San Diego woodrat nests in weekly monitoring reports. In addition, each annual report submitted to the CPUC, BLM, and CDFW and/or USFWS will include a written summary of relocated woodrat nests.

## 3.3 Measures Applicable on BLM Lands

The portions of the Project on BLM lands are isolated to Segment 6. Segment 6 is located within the CV-MSHCP area, but the MSHCP does not apply on BLM lands (or the Morongo Reservation). The avoidance and minimization measures in the following sections address the special-status small mammal species identified in MM WIL-2j that have at least a low potential to occur within the Project area on BLM lands (Table 2-1). Those species include the pallid San Diego pocket mouse, PSPM, Palm Springs round-tailed ground squirrel, and San Diego desert woodrat. The San Diego black-tailed jackrabbit, northwestern San Diego pocket mouse, and LAPM are not expected to occur in the Project area on BLM lands. The following avoidance and minimization measures apply on BLM lands.

### 3.3.1 Palm Springs Pocket Mouse

PSPM are known to occur in Segment 6, and are likely to occur on BLM lands. The avoidance and minimization measures described in Section 3.2.2 are effective for PSPM as well as LAPM, and will be implemented if potentially occupied habitats are found during pre-construction surveys on BLM lands.

### 3.3.2 Pallid San Diego Pocket Mouse

SCE will implement the general measures in Section 3.1. In areas where the pallid San Diego pocket mouse occupy the same habitats as PSPM, the measures presented in Section 3.2.2 would serve to avoid and minimize impacts to these species as well.

The pallid San Diego pocket mouse occur sympatrically with PSPM, at least partially. Pallid San Diego pocket mice likely occur (in unknown numbers) in habitats not occupied by PSPM. It may not be feasible to completely avoid impacts to this subspecies of San Diego pocket mouse in those areas away from PSPM-occupied habitat. However, the Project impacts at any given site would likely represent a very small percentage of the contiguous area of occupied habitat in which the site is located.

### 3.3.3 Palm Springs Round-tailed Ground Squirrel

The Palm Springs round-tailed ground squirrel has a very low probability of occurring in the Project area on BLM lands. The eastern terminus of the Project is approximately 2 miles west of the edge of the current known range of the species. As described in Sections 3.1.3 and 3.1.4, SCE will conduct pre-construction surveys prior to the start of construction. Surveyors will look for signs of occupation by Palm Springs round-tailed ground squirrels. If occupied burrows/habitat is found, avoidance buffers will be implemented. However, if Palm Springs round-tailed ground squirrels are determined to be present during pre-construction surveys and their burrows cannot be avoided, the following measures will be implemented.

#### 3.3.3.1 Trapping and Release

Prior to construction in occupied Palm Springs round-tailed ground squirrel habitat, a ground squirrel exclusion fence will be installed around the areas to be trapped. These areas will be determined based on their proximity. If Palm Springs round-tailed ground squirrels are found during the warm months of the year (this species estivates or hibernates during winter months and is active above ground during the warm/hot months of the year), they will be removed from construction sites by trapping and relocated to a nearby suitable habitat area or held in captivity and repatriated to the capture site following completion of construction activities. Trapping activities will be conducted by qualified biologists in coordination with CDFW.

**Exclusion Fencing.** Prior to construction in occupied Palm Springs round-tailed ground squirrel habitat, a ground squirrel exclusion fence will be installed around the areas to be trapped. These areas will be determined based on their proximity to previously captured Palm Springs round-tailed ground squirrel individuals and current site-specific conditions such as final engineering design, construction methods, suitable habitat, and Palm Springs round-tailed ground squirrel sign/presumed occupied habitat. A qualified biologist will be present during fence installation to avoid or otherwise minimize impacts to sensitive biological resources.

Fencing materials such as hardware cloth, silt fencing, Animex wildlife exclusion fencing, or a similar product is recommended. Exclusion fencing will be installed by first trenching and then burying the bottom portions of the fence. However, if the qualified biologist determines that Palm Springs round-tailed ground squirrel may be close enough to construction activities that exclusion fencing involving staking and burying (i.e., invasive ground disturbance) could also result in potential impacts, the base of the exclusion fencing would be secured with sand bags and bermed soil to prevent impacts to Palm Springs round-tailed ground squirrels that may result from otherwise trenching and burying the bottom portion of the fence. Stabilization of the fencing is achieved through the use of 36-inch-long wooden landscape stakes, spaced 5 to 8 feet apart, depending on the stability of the soil. The stakes will be placed into the ground until their tops are approximately even with the top of the fencing. Access points for construction equipment would be established to provide ingress and egress while maintaining integrity of the barrier fence.

Installation of exclusion fencing would be considered a construction activity in this case. The activity would be included in the Project schedule and/or communicated to the appropriate agencies in advance of execution. A Qualified Biologist or Biological Monitor under supervision of a Qualified Biologist will monitor the fence installation and coordinate with the contractor to ensure that incidental impacts are minimized to the extent feasible.

**Trapping Methodology.** All areas will be trapped until no Palm Springs round-tailed ground squirrel captures have been made for 3 days. A trapping grid would be set in each enclosure. The trap spacing (roughly 13 feet apart) will result in a trap density approximately twice as high as a normal presence/absence trapping survey, potentially allowing the removal of Palm Springs round-tailed ground squirrels as quickly as possible. Each trap will be baited with of bird seed placed at the back of the trap. Trapping

for Palm Springs round-tailed ground squirrel will occur during daylight hours when the animal is active. Due to the extreme daytime temperatures on the ground surface, traps must be monitored at regular intervals during the day (every 3 hours) and covered with a cardboard or shade screen tent to keep the metal traps out of the direct sunlight. Mortality within a hot trap can happen very rapidly. Captured individuals would be identified to determine sex and species.

Once Palm Springs round-tailed ground squirrels are captured, they will either be released into nearby suitable habitat or held in containers offsite in a climate-controlled environment and released back into the enclosed area following construction activities and site preparation (see below). The method will be determined by a qualified biologist in cooperation with CDFW. Each captured animal will have its own holding container, and all containers will be labeled with the geographic coordinates of its capture site.

If trapping and holding is necessary, SCE will contract with a CDFW-approved holding facility. A list of approved facilities can be found in Table 3-1. Alternatively, SCE may establish an offsite holding facility under direction of the qualified biologist and in cooperation with CDFW.

**Artificial Burrow Construction.** Palm Springs round-tailed ground squirrel refugia construction will involve burying a small wooden box underground at least 24 inches deep. Wooden boxes can be inexpensively and effectively constructed following the plans for bluebird bird nest boxes at <http://www.birdwatching-bliss.com/bluebird-house-plans.html>, or by purchasing pre-made bluebird nesting boxes from various retailers and then modifying them to allow for the cardboard tube size opening. Once the box is placed in the ground, an approximately 2- or 3-inch-diameter tube (e.g., cardboard mailer tube) will be run from the underground nest structure opening to the surface at an approximately 30-degree angle. A small amount of nesting material, such as tissue paper, will be placed in each wooden box, along with oatmeal and bird seed. Two refugia will be installed for every Palm Springs round-tailed ground squirrel captured.

**Soft Release into Nearby Suitable Habitat.** Following site approval, the captive Palm Springs round-tailed ground squirrels will be placed into one of the two temporary refugia for their respective locations, and the tube will be closed at its exposed end with a plug (with drilled air holes) provided with the mailing tube. The Palm Springs round-tailed ground squirrel will remain sequestered inside the refugia for at least 5 to 7 days before being released. After a period of 5 to 7 days, the plug will be removed from the refugia tube, allowing the animals to leave the refugia on their own. The refugia are made of biodegradable materials; therefore, they will be left in place indefinitely, or until the qualified biologist determines they are no longer needed. Due to the high potential for post-release mortality or site abandonment associated with a “hard release” method, this method will not be used for the Project.

**Supplemental Food.** Regardless of the release method employed, supplemental food will be provided on a daily basis for at least a 5- to 7-day period to assist the animal with acclimation to its new home site. Additional food availability in the new home site area may act to directly keep the animal attracted to this location, precluding their movement back (homing instinct) to the original capture site within the excluded work site or Project area.

### 3.3.3.2 Offsite Hold and Repatriation of Palm Springs Round-tailed Ground Squirrel

Alternatively, Palm Springs round-tailed ground squirrels may be trapped using the methodology in Section 3.3.1 and held off-site until construction activities are completed. The precise location of each trapped Palm Springs round-tailed ground squirrel will be recorded for the site of each capture and captured animals will eventually be returned to the exact spot where they were captured.

Ideally, construction activities at each site would be completed within 30 days following the day that all Palm Springs round-tailed ground squirrels are determined to be removed from the sites. For locations where work will exceed 30 days, Palm Springs round-tailed ground squirrels may be held offsite for an

additional period as approved by CDFW and/or USFWS. Animals would be held at a CDFW-approved holding facility (Table 3-1).

**Table 3-1. Potential CDFW-approved Holding Facilities**

*Non-Listed Special-Status Small Mammal Avoidance and Minimization Plan*

Location	Facility/Contact	Contact Number
Indio (Riverside County)	Coachella Valley Wild Bird Center	(760) 347-2647
Palm Desert (Riverside County)	The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens	(760) 346-5694

When construction at a site is complete, the exclusion fence will be removed and temporary refugia will be installed into the disturbance area at the locations where Palm Springs round-tailed ground squirrels were originally captured. As with fence installation, the activity will be monitored by a Qualified Biologist and/or Biological Monitor under supervision of a Qualified Biologist. Following fence removal and refugia installation, a qualified biologist will approve the site for repatriation. Refugia would be placed in or near adjacent undisturbed habitat to provide shelter and forage ground for Palm Springs round-tailed ground squirrels while the disturbed habitat areas are revegetated.

### 3.3.4 San Diego Desert Woodrat

San Diego desert woodrats have potential to occur on BLM lands. If active woodrat middens are identified during pre-construction surveys, SCE will implement the measures in Section 3.2.4.

## 3.4 Avoidance and Minimization Measures Applicable in the WR-MSHCP

The portions of the Project in the WR-MSHCP area include the eastern part of Segments 3 and 4. The avoidance and minimization measures in the following sections address the special-status small mammal species identified in MM WIL-2j that have at least a low potential to occur within the Project area in the WR-MSHCP (Table 2-1). Those species include the San Diego black-tailed jackrabbit, northwestern San Diego pocket mouse, LAPM, and San Diego desert woodrat. The pallid San Diego pocket mouse, PSPM, and Palm Springs round-tailed ground squirrel are not expected to occur in the Project Area in the WR-MSHCP. The following avoidance and minimization measures are applicable within the WR-MSHCP area.

### 3.4.1 San Diego Black-tailed Jackrabbit

San Diego black-tailed jackrabbits occur in the WR-MSHCP area. The jackrabbit is a Covered Species in the WR-MSHCP. The WR-MSHCP does not include specific survey requirements for this species, and no measures specific to this species were identified as conditions of SCE's PSE status. However, SCE will implement the general measures in Section 3.1 and the species-specific measures in Section 3.2.1 within the WR-MSHCP area.

### 3.4.2 Los Angeles Pocket Mouse

The WR-MSHCP identifies specific survey areas for LAPM. SCE conducted trapping surveys for LAPM in the MSHCP survey areas (AMEC, 2015c; AMEC, 2016b) and identified occupied habitats in the vicinity of Project activities. Avoidance is the first strategy. However, due to the potential for impacts, a *Los Angeles Pocket Mouse Avoidance and Minimization Plan* (LAPM Plan) (CH2M, 2016) was prepared, and reviewed and approved by the RCA, CDFW, and USFWS. The measures in the LAPM Plan are consistent

with the measures in Section 3.2.2 of this Plan. SCE will implement the LAPM Plan in occupied habitats within the WR-MSHCP survey area for LAPM.

### 3.4.3 Northwestern San Diego Pocket Mouse

Northwestern San Diego pocket mice have the potential to occur in the WR-MSHCP area. This pocket mouse is a Covered Species in the WR-MSHCP. The WR-MSHCP does not include specific survey requirements for this species, and no measures specific to this species were identified as conditions of SCE's PSE status. SCE will implement the general measures in Section 3.1. In areas where northwestern San Diego pocket mouse occupy the same habitats as LAPM, the measures presented in the LAPM Plan would serve to avoid and minimize impacts to this species as well.

### 3.4.4 San Diego Desert Woodrat

San Diego desert woodrats occur in the WR-MSHCP area. The woodrat is a Covered Species in the WR-MSHCP. No measures specific to this species were identified as conditions of SCE's PSE status. SCE will implement the general measures in Section 3.2.4.

## 3.5 Avoidance and Minimization Measures Applicable in the CV-MSHCP

The portions of the Project in the CV-MSHCP area include Segments 5 and 6, excluding the Morongo Reservation and BLM lands. The avoidance and minimization measures in the following sections address the special-status small mammal species identified in MM WIL-2j that have at least a low potential to occur within the Project area in the CV-MSHCP. Those species include the LAPM, PSPM, pallid San Diego pocket mouse, Palm Springs round-tailed ground squirrel, and San Diego desert woodrat. The northwestern San Diego pocket mouse and San Diego black-tailed jackrabbit are not expected to occur in the Project Area in the CV-MSHCP. The following avoidance and minimization measures are applicable within the CV-MSHCP area as described below.

### 3.5.1 Los Angeles Pocket Mouse

LAPM are known to occur sympatrically with PSPM in the area of the San Gorgonio wash. The LAPM is not a Covered Species in the CV-MSHCP. Therefore, where LAPM occur, SCE will implement the measures in Section 3.2.2.

### 3.5.2 Northwestern San Diego Pocket Mouse and Pallid San Diego Pocket Mouse

SCE will implement the general measures in Section 3.1. In areas where northwestern San Diego pocket mouse and pallid San Diego pocket mouse occupy the same habitats as LAPM, the measures presented in Section 3.2.2 would serve to avoid and minimize impacts to these species as well.

Northwestern San Diego pocket mice and pallid San Diego pocket mice occur sympatrically with LAPM or PSPM, at least partially. Northwestern San Diego pocket mice and pallid San Diego pocket mice likely occur (in unknown numbers) in habitats not occupied by LAPM. It may not be feasible to completely avoid impacts to these subspecies of San Diego pocket mouse. However, Project impacts at any given site would likely represent a very small percentage of the contiguous area of occupied habitat in which the site is located.

### 3.5.3 Palm Springs Pocket Mouse

PSPM have a high probability of occurring in the CV-MSHCP area, and are a Covered Species in the CV-MSHCP. SCE will implement the following avoidance and minimization measures Upper Mission Creek/Big Morongo Canyon Conservation Area. These measures are consistent with the conditions of SCE's PSE agreement.

#### 3.5.3.1 Construction Phasing

For construction that would involve disturbance to PSPM habitat, activity should be phased to the extent feasible and practicable so that suitable habitat islands are no farther than 300 feet apart at any given time to allow pocket mice to disperse between habitat patches across non-suitable habitat (i.e., unvegetated and/or compacted soils). Prior to Project construction, a biological monitor familiar with this species should assist construction crews in planning access routes to avoid impacts to occupied habitat as much as feasible (i.e., placement of preferred routes on Project plans and incorporation of methods to avoid as much suitable habitat/soil disturbance as possible). Furthermore, during construction activities, the biological monitor will ensure that connected, naturally vegetated areas with sandy soils and typical native vegetation remain intact to the extent feasible and practicable. Finally, construction that involves clearing of habitat should be avoided during the peak breeding season (approximately March to May), and activity should be limited as much as possible during the rest of the breeding season (January to February and June to August).

#### 3.5.3.2 Revegetation

Clearing of native vegetation (e.g., creosote, rabbitbrush, burrobush, cheesebush) should be followed by revegetation, including natural reestablishment and other means, resulting in habitat types of equal or superior biological value for PSPM. Revegetation will be conducted according to the Habitat Restoration and Revegetation Plan (HRRP) and SWPPP requirements.

#### 3.5.3.3 Translocation

Where avoidance is not feasible and impacts to PSPM, as determined by a Qualified Biologist in coordination with the CDFW and USFWS, may have a significant impact on the pocket mouse population, trapping may be required. Trapping and subsequent translocation activities will be conducted in accordance with accepted protocols. Translocation programs will be conducted by or in coordination with the CVCC, CDFW, and USFWS, likely using the methods described in Section 3.2.2.6.

### 3.5.4 Palm Springs Round-tailed Ground Squirrel

The Palm Springs round-tailed ground squirrel has a very low probability of occurring in the Project area in the CV-MSHCP. The eastern terminus of the Project is approximately 2 miles west of the edge of the current known range of the species. The Palm Springs round-tailed ground squirrel is a Covered Species in the CV-MSHCP. As described in Sections 3.1.3 and 3.1.4, SCE will conduct pre-construction surveys prior to the start of construction. Surveyors will look for signs of occupation by Palm Springs round-tailed ground squirrels. If occupied burrows/habitat is found, avoidance buffers will be implemented. However, if Palm Springs round-tailed ground squirrels are determined to be present during pre-construction surveys and their burrows cannot be avoided, the following measures in Section 3.3.3 will be implemented.

### 3.5.5 San Diego Desert Woodrat

San Diego desert woodrats occur in the CV-MSHCP area. The species is not a Covered Species in the CV-MSHCP. If active woodrat middens are found during pre-construction surveys, SCE will implement the measures in Section 3.2.4.

## 3.6 Revegetation/Restoration

Prior to starting construction, SCE will prepare a HRRP in accordance with FEIR/FEIS MM VEG-1d focused on restoration or revegetation of all temporary disturbance areas. The HRRP will be designed to replace the habitat values present prior to disturbance (i.e., native plant species cover, habitat structure, and soil or substrate conditions). The HRRP will address pre-construction conditions, methodology and technique, implementation schedule, monitoring and maintenance, and success criteria. The HRRP is subject to review and approval by the CPUC, BLM, CDFW, and USFWS.

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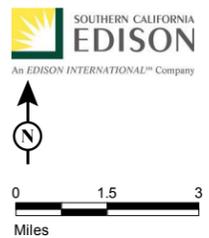
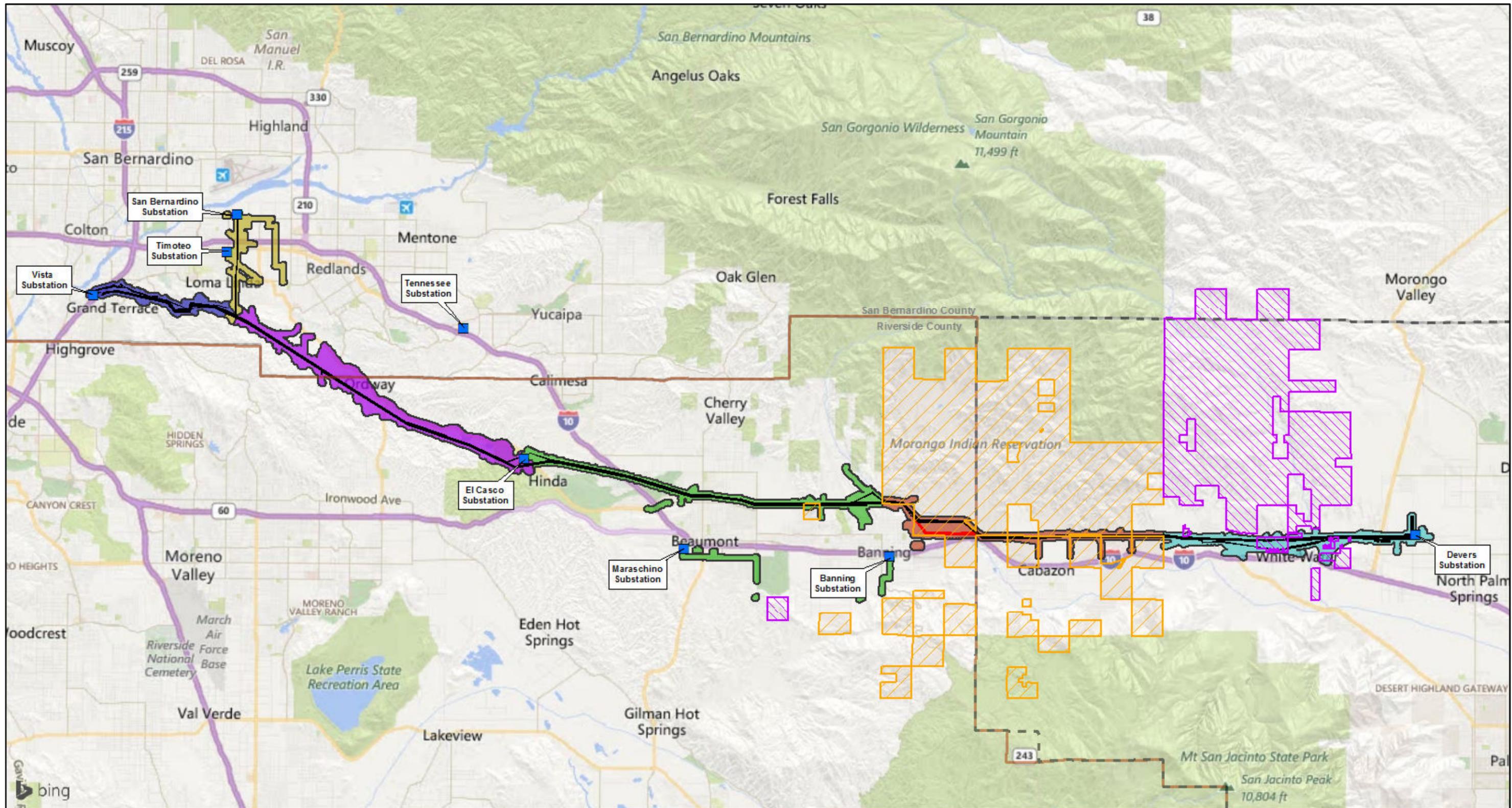
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# Revisions

Revisions made to standard text (black ink) should be noted below to document changes in requirements or SCE's approach to these Measures.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Description of Revision</b>	<b>Contact</b>

Figure



**LEGEND**

- Project Study Area
- Existing Transmission Line Right of Way
- Proposed Right of Way
- Substation
- Segment 1
- Segment 2
- Segment 3
- Segment 4
- Segment 5
- Segment 6
- U.S. Bureau of Land Management
- Morongo Reservation
- Western Riverside County MSHCP
- Coachella Valley MSHCP



FIGURE 1-1  
**DRAFT**

Southern California Edison  
West of Devers Upgrade Project  
**Project Overview and Study Area**  
Special-Status Small Mammals  
Avoidance and Minimization Measures