

5.10 LAND USE AND PLANNING**5.10.1 Introduction**

The purpose of this section is to: 1) describe the potential impacts on land use and zoning from development and operation of Segments 2 and 3 of the proposed Antelope Transmission Line Project; 2) provide an evaluation of the level of significance of potential impacts based upon significance criteria; and 3) present applicant-proposed mitigation measures, if needed, to reduce impacts to a less than significant level. The potential impacts of the project on land use were evaluated by considering the initial construction activities (Construction Impacts) and long-term operation (Operation Impacts) of the proposed T/Ls and substations. When evaluating the potential project impacts, it was assumed that all applicable federal, State, and local regulatory requirements would be complied with.

Based on the land use information presented in Section 4.10, four general land use and zoning categories (i.e., human developed areas, natural conservation areas, agricultural areas, and mineral resources areas) were identified from the various source materials which included city and county general plans, land use maps, zoning maps, specific plans, and other relevant land management plan sources. CEQA significance criteria, as presented in Section 5.10.2, were identified to assess the potential impacts of the project to these existing land use and zoning categories. It is noted that some of these CEQA significance criteria are also used in the analyses conducted in other sections of this PEA, including Section 5.5 (Biological Resources), Section 5.3 (Agricultural Resources), and Section 5.11 (Mineral Resources). The impacts analysis and significance criteria determinations presented below are consistent with and support the findings presented in the other referenced sections.

5.10.2 Significance Criteria

Significance criteria were derived from CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G. The relevant CEQA significance criteria included IX. Land Use and Planning (a), (b), and (c); IV. Biological Resources (f); II. Agricultural Resources (a), (b), and (c); and X. Mineral Resources (b), as presented below. Under these significance criteria, impacts to land use, zoning and planning would be considered potentially significant if the project would:

1. Physically divide an established community (IXa)
2. 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, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect (IXb)
3. Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan (IXc; IVf)

4. 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 (IIa)
5. Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract (IIb)
6. Changes to the environment resulting in conversion of designated farmland to non-agricultural use (IIc)
7. 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 (Xb)

It is noted that the Segment 2 and Segment 3 T/L routes, including alternatives, do not occur on lands that are administered by federal agencies; accordingly, significance criteria pertaining to land use and land management that reflect of federal standards are not addressed in this PEA.

Segment 2 of the proposed Antelope Transmission Project includes minor electrical interconnections within the fenced boundary of SCE's existing Vincent Substation. No land use impacts are expected to occur at the Vincent Substation, thus it is not discussed further in this land use assessment.

5.10.3 Construction Impacts

5.10.3.1 Construction of Overhead T/Ls

The overhead T/L construction would require excavation, road, tower, and pull pad clearing and grading, and soil stockpiling for the Segment 2 and Segment 3 T/L routes. The majority of the areas disturbed by construction would be restored such that only a minimal amount of permanent land use conversion would occur, including transmission tower footing locations and permanent access roads. Impact assessment and determinations are presented, below, for each of the segments, alternatives, and facilities.

The potential placement of transmission towers on land under Williamson Act contract would not remove the land from Williamson Act contract status. Pursuant to Government Code Section 51238, placement of electrical facilities on Williamson Act land is a compatible land use. Furthermore, at any site only a minimal amount of permanent land use conversion would occur. As such, a default determination of less than significant impact is given regarding the proposed project conflicting with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract, in all the significance criteria determinations presented below.

5.10.3.1.1 Segment 2 – Antelope to Vincent Proposed and Alternative T/L Routes. The proposed 21.5 miles of T/L route would occur within a new 180-foot-wide R-O-W mostly

alongside an existing T/L R-O-W. It would exit and traverse lands in the Ritter Ranch Specific Plan area from MP 7.6 to MP 13.9, whereupon it would enter the Anaverde Specific Plan area. The proposed T/L route would re-connect to the existing R-O-W at MP 14.8 (Figure 3-2, sheet 2 of 3). The route includes low-density residential, mineral resources extraction, agricultural, and open space land use and planning areas.

The Alternative AV1 route crosses over to the east side of the existing T/L corridor at MP 5.7 then crosses back to the west side of the existing T/L corridor at MP 7.6.

The Alternative AV2 route parallels the existing T/L corridor through the Ritter Ranch and Anaverde specific plan areas exiting the proposed T/L route at MP 8.1, and reconnects at MP 14.8 (Figure 3-2, sheet 2 of 3). The route traverses approximately 0.5 mile of Farmland of Local Importance.

Construction impacts pertaining to the proposed and alternative T/L routes would be less than significant regarding physically dividing an established community or conflicting with any applicable general plan, specific plan, or zoning ordinance because there would be minimal to no impacts upon land use and planning in areas under the jurisdiction of the City of Lancaster, the City of Palmdale, and the County of Los Angeles. Construction impacts would be less than significant regarding conflicting with any applicable habitat conservation plan (HCP) or natural community conservation plan (NCCP) because there would be minimal to no impacts upon the designation of the proposed San Andreas Rift Zone Significant Ecological Area (SEA) by Los Angeles County or implementation of the BLMs West Mojave Plan (BLM, 2005). Construction impacts would be less than significant regarding converting Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) farmlands and other designated farmlands to non-agricultural uses, or causing conflicts with existing zoning for agricultural use because only a minimal amount of permanent land use conversion would occur. Construction impacts would be less than significant regarding loss of availability of a designated locally-important mineral resource recovery site because there would be minimal to no impacts upon City of Palmdale designated minerals extraction areas.

5.10.3.1.2 Segment 3 – Antelope to Substation One 500 kV T/L. The proposed T/L route would occur within a new 200-foot-wide, 25.6-mile-long R-O-W. The route includes low-density residential, agricultural, industrial, and resources management land use and planning areas. The T/L is routed around the proposed Del Sur Ranch Specific Plan area in the City of Lancaster. The route does traverse about 3.0 miles of farmland areas designated by the State as potential Prime and of Statewide Importance.

Construction impacts would be less than significant regarding physically dividing an established community or conflicting with any applicable general plan, specific plan, or zoning ordinance because there would be minimal to no impacts upon land use and planning

by the City of Lancaster, Los Angeles County and Kern County. Construction impacts would be less than significant regarding conflicting with any applicable HCP or NCCP because none occur along the route. Construction impacts would be less than significant regarding implementation of the BLM's West Mojave Plan (BLM, 2005), which also includes a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) component. Construction impacts would be less than significant regarding converting FMMP farmlands and other designated farmlands to non-agricultural uses, or causing conflicts with existing zoning for agricultural use because only a minimal amount of permanent land use conversion would occur. Construction impacts would be less than significant regarding loss of availability of a designated locally-important mineral resource recovery site because there would be minimal to no impacts upon Kern County designated mineral and resource areas. The proposed and alternative Segment 3 facilities avoid the limestone mining areas near the Cal Cement facility and north of Highway 58 near Monolith.

5.10.3.1.3 Segment 3 – Alternative A 500 kV T/L (Antelope to Substation 1A). This alternate T/L route would occur within a new 200-foot-wide, 25.9-mile-long R-O-W. The route includes low-density residential, agricultural, industrial, and resources management land use and planning areas. The T/L is routed adjacent to the western boundary of the proposed Del Sur Ranch Specific Plan area in the City of Lancaster. The route does traverse about 1.5 miles of farmland areas designated by the State as potential Prime, Unique, and of Statewide Importance.

The land use impact findings presented in Section 5.10.3.1.2 for the proposed Antelope to Substation One T/L route are also applicable to Alternative A.

5.10.3.1.4 Segment 3 – Alternative B 500 kV T/L (Antelope to Substation 1B). This alternate T/L route would occur within a new 200-foot-wide, 26.04-mile-long R-O-W. The route includes low-density residential, agricultural, industrial, and resources management land use and planning areas. The Alternate B T/L route traverses the east side of the proposed Copa De Oro Estate Specific Plan area in Kern County. The route traverses about 1.3 miles of farmland areas designated by the State as potential Prime, Unique, and of Statewide Importance.

The land use impact findings presented in Section 5.10.3.1.2 for the proposed Antelope to Substation One T/L route are also applicable to Alternative B.

5.10.3.1.5 Segment 3 – Substation One to Substation Two - Proposed 220 kV T/L. This 220 kV T/L route would occur within a new 160-foot-wide, 9.6-mile-long R-O-W. The route includes agricultural, industrial, wind farm, resources reserve and management, and minerals land use and planning areas. The route does not intercept farmland areas designated by the State as important.

Construction impacts would be less than significant regarding physically dividing an established community or conflicting with any applicable general plan, specific plan, or zoning ordinance because there would be minimal to no impacts upon land use and planning by Kern County. Construction impacts would be less than significant regarding conflicting with any applicable NCCP because none occur along the route. Construction would be less than significant regarding implementation of the BLM's West Mojave Plan (BLM, 2005), which also includes an HCP component. Construction impacts would be less than significant regarding converting FMMP farmlands and other designated farmlands to non-agricultural uses, or causing conflicts with existing zoning for agricultural use because only a minimal amount of permanent land use conversion would occur. Construction impacts would be less than significant regarding loss of availability of a designated locally-important mineral resource recovery site because there would be minimal to no impacts upon Kern County designated mineral resource areas.

5.10.3.1.6 Segment 3 – Substation One to Substation Two - Alternative C 220 kV T/L.

This alternate 220 kV T/L route would occur within a new 160-foot-wide, 9.5-mile-long T/L R-O-W. The route includes agricultural, industrial, wind farm, resources reserve and management, and minerals land use and planning areas. The route does not intercept farmland areas designated by the State.

The land use impact findings presented above in Section 5.10.3.1.5 are also applicable to Alternative C.

5.10.3.2 Construction of Substation One

Proposed Substation One and alternate substation sites 1A and 1B would be located between 1.5 and 3 miles eastward of Cal Cement, while alternate site 1C would be located approximately 2.5 miles northwest of Cal Cement. The sites occupy lands in Kern County with industrial and limited agricultural zoning designations. As such, construction impacts would be less than significant regarding physically dividing an established community or conflicting with any applicable general plan, specific plan, or zoning ordinance because there would be minimal to no affects upon land use and planning by Kern County. Construction impacts would be less than significant regarding the remaining significance criteria presented in Section 5.10.2, above. However, alternate sites 1A and 1C include an existing, buried hydrocarbons pipeline, which could be incompatible with an electrical system. In addition, Alternate Site 1C is traversed by the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail; these land uses are not compatible.

5.10.3.3 Construction of Substation Two

Proposed Substation Two and alternate sites 2A and 2B would be located in the Tehachapi Valley south of State Route 58. The sites occupy lands in Kern County with agricultural and wind energy zoning designations. As such, construction impacts would be less than significant regarding physically dividing an established community or conflicting with any applicable general plan, specific plan, or zoning ordinance because there would be minimal to no impacts upon land use and planning by Kern County. Construction impacts would be less than significant regarding the remaining significance criteria presented in Section 5.10.2, above.

5.10.4 Operation Impacts**5.10.4.1 Operation of Overhead T/Ls**

Potential impacts associated with the operation and maintenance of the T/L systems proposed by the Antelope Transmission Project are anticipated to be minimal. As such, potential operational impacts would be less than significant regarding any of the significance criteria presented in Section 5.10.2, above.

5.10.4.2 Operation of the Antelope Substation

Operational impacts of the modified Antelope Substation would be considered less than significant regarding physically dividing an established community or conflicting with any applicable general plan, specific plan, or zoning ordinance because the project would have minimal to no impacts upon land use and planning by the City of Lancaster. There are no impacts regarding the remaining significance criteria presented in Section 5.10.2, above, due to non-applicability.

5.10.4.3 Operation of Substation One and Substation Two

Operational impacts would be considered less than significant regarding Substation One and Substation Two because the project would have minimal to no impacts upon land use and planning by Kern County. There are no impacts regarding the remaining significance criteria presented in Section 5.10.2, above, due to non-applicability.

5.10.5 Mitigation Measures**5.10.5.1 Overhead T/Ls**

The proposed Antelope Transmission Project includes measures to minimize surface disturbance and restore disturbed areas that are not needed for operation of the new T/L systems.

Based upon the evaluation above, potential impacts associated with the construction and operation of the T/L systems are considered to be less than significant. Therefore, no supplemental mitigation measures are identified for land use impacts consistent with the criteria presented above.

5.10.5.2 Substation One and Substation Two

Based upon the evaluation above, potential impacts associated with the construction and operation of Substation One and Substation Two are considered to be less than significant. Therefore, no mitigation measures are identified for land use impacts consistent with the criteria presented above.