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## D.5 Wilderness and Recreation

This section discusses the effects of the Proposed Project and alternatives on recreation and wilderness areas. A recreation area is any site or facility that is used for recreational activities, including but not limited to a national, State, county or city park; refuge or preserve; open space; cultural center or museum; area of critical environmental concern (ACEC); campground; or a private recreational site such as a golf course. Wilderness areas, as defined in this section, include State-owned land designated by the California legislature as “wilderness areas,” areas within the State park system classified by the State Park and Recreation Commission (SPRC) as “State wildernesses,” and federal wilderness areas identified by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) under the Federal Land Management Policy Act of 1976. Characteristically, a wilderness area is an undeveloped, primitive area of at least 5,000 acres, and is designated to preserve its natural condition and its inherent ecological, geological, scientific, educational, scenic, or historic value (an expanded definition is provided in Section D.5.3, Applicable Regulations, Plans, and Standards).

### D.5.1 Regional Setting and Approach to Data Collection

The Proposed Project and alternatives are located within or pass adjacent to recreational resources and wilderness areas under the jurisdiction of the U.S Bureau of Land Management (BLM), National Park Service (NPS), California State Parks, San Diego County, City of San Diego, and private land-owners. In order to gather information regarding the effects of the Proposed Project and alternatives on recreation and wilderness areas, representatives from each of the affected jurisdictions were contacted. Data were also collected and verified during multiple site visits between October 2006 and May 2007 to identify recreation areas and wilderness areas along the Proposed Project and alternatives. Recreation and wilderness areas within the ROW of the Proposed Project or alternatives and those areas that may be affected due to visual or noise impacts were included in the impact assessment. The following sections describe these recreation and wilderness areas, and their locations are shown on maps for each region.

### D.5.2 Environmental Setting for the Proposed Project

Analysis of consistency of the Proposed Project and alternatives with plans and policies governing the region is presented in Section D.16. Appendix 2 presents a Policy Screening Report in which plans and policies are evaluated for their relevance to the Proposed Project and alternatives.

#### D.5.2.1 Imperial Valley Link

The Imperial Valley Link of the Proposed Project is characterized by diverse recreational opportunities within BLM and California State Park lands, including areas for off-road vehicle (ORV) use, camping, backpacking, and wildlife observation. Figure D.5-1 illustrates these resources in the Imperial Valley Link. There are no wilderness areas near the Proposed Project within the Imperial Valley Link. Recreational facilities that would be located near, or traversed by, the Proposed Project within the Imperial Valley Link include:

- **Yuha Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC).** The Yuha Desert ACEC is managed by BLM and was designated as an ACEC because of its significant natural, cultural and historic resources (i.e., FTHL populations, Yuha well, Yuha geoglyph, Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail) (BLM, 2004). Camping is only permitted within six BLM-designated primitive

campgrounds that are located south of the Proposed Project and Interstate 8 in the Yuha Desert. BLM primitive campgrounds are widely dispersed, and undeveloped (i.e., without toilets, electricity or water). These BLM primitive campgrounds are located along the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail (BLM, 2005). The Proposed Project would be located in new ROW through approximately 4.8 miles of the ACEC, approximately 0.25 miles north of the closest primitive campground (Dunaway Camp) near Milepost (MP) 4.

- **Open Camping.** In limited use areas camping is allowed adjacent to “open” routes outside of the Yuha Area of Critical Concern within specific distances of the centerline of the route. These distances range from 25 to 300 feet.
- **Plaster City ORV Open Area.** This area provides 41,000 acres of open desert terrain for ORV recreationists and includes two staging areas, Plaster City East and Plaster City West, that are popular primitive camping and day use areas (BLM, 2005a). The Proposed Project would be located within new ROW, adjacent to the eastern boundary of Plaster City ORV Open Area near MPs 10 and 11. Vehicle travel and camping are permitted anywhere in the area.
- **Superstition Mountain Open Area.** This 13,000 ORV area is located north of the Plaster City ORV Open Area. Cross county travel is permitted within the boundaries of the open area and primitive camping is allowed (BLM, 2007h). The proposed project ROW would be adjacent to and southeast of the ORV area between MPs 14 and 17.
- **Arroyo Salada ORV Area.** Arroyo Salada ORV Area is located adjacent to the eastern boundary of Ocotillo Wells State Vehicular Recreation Area (SVRA) on 4,800 areas of public land managed by Ocotillo Wells State Park under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the BLM. This area is designated as limited use area and is a popular destination for ORV enthusiasts (BLM, 2006). The Proposed Project at MP 47 would be located approximately 0.6 miles south of the Arroyo Salada ORV area.
- **Ocotillo Wells State Vehicular Recreation area.** The Ocotillo Wells SVRA is an ORV park comprised of over 42,000 acres of desert terrain managed by the California Department of Parks and Recreation. The Ocotillo Wells SVRA provides opportunities for ORV uses, camping and picnicking (CDPR, 2006). The Proposed Project would be adjacent to the southern boundary of the recreation area, in new ROW along State Route (SR) 78, between MPs 40.2 and 47.2.
- **Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail.** The Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail is a 1,200-mile trail through Arizona and California administered by the National Park Service. The trail features campsites, and interpretive and historic sites (NPS, 2006). A total of 38 miles of the trail is within BLM lands in the Yuha Desert. The Proposed Project would require new ROW where it would intersect the trail near MP 49.

### D.5.2.2 Anza-Borrogo Link

The Anza-Borrogo Link encompasses the proposed SRPL through Anza-Borrogo Desert State Park (ABDSP). With over 600,000 acres, ABDSP is the largest State park in the contiguous United States. The Park has an annual average of 600,000 visitors, 85% of whom visit between November and April. Approximately 75% of Park visitation occurs north of State Route (SR) 78 (CDPR, 2005). Within ABDSP, the proposed ROW would generally follow SDG&E and IID’s existing easements, although additional ROW would need to be acquired, resulting in a total ROW width of 150 feet. See Section B.2.2 for a detailed discussion of the history and status of ROW easements in ABDSP. From the eastern boundary of the Park, the proposed SRPL ROW would follow the existing IID 92 kV transmission line from the eastern boundary of the park to the Narrows Substation. The existing 92 kV overhead transmission line

would be under built onto the new 500 kV SRPL structures, except along SR78 where the 92 kV transmission line would be placed underground in the road ROW and the SRPL 500 kV line would continue on H-frame structures on the north side of the highway. Along most of SR78 in the eastern portion of the Park, the SRPL would be located immediately north of Vallecito Mountains Wilderness Area.

At the Narrows Substation, the 92 kV line would terminate and the existing SDG&E 69 kV overhead transmission line would exit the substation. Similar to the 92 kV line, the 69 kV line would be placed underground in SR78. Near the intersection of SR78 and County Highway 3 (S3), the 69 kV line would transition from underground to overhead and would be under built on the new 500 kV SRPL structures to the western boundary of the Park. In the western portion of ABDSP, the proposed SRPL ROW would be located generally parallel to Grapevine Canyon Road, which is an unimproved road through Grapevine Canyon that also serves as a portion of the Trans-County Trail (see Figure D.5-2). In this area, the existing easement forms a gap between the Pinyon Ridge and Grapevine Mountain Wilderness Areas. The additional ROW width through Grapevine Canyon would require the use of approximately 50.2 acres of State wilderness within the Pinyon Ridge Wilderness Area (48.1 acres) and Grapevine Mountain Wilderness Area (1.3 acres). Additionally, temporary pull sites would be located within 0.8 acres of Vallecito Mountain Wilderness Area, as described below.

Recreation and wilderness areas that would be located near, or traversed by, the Proposed Project within ABDSP are illustrated on Figure D.5-2 and include:

- **Open Camping.** ABDSP has an open camping policy that allows backcountry camping throughout its 600,000 acres (CDPR, 2006a).
- **Desert Tours.** A variety of privately operated desert tours are available that offer a range of trip options. Because these tours cover a large portion of ABDSP and the surrounding area, the Proposed Project may be in the vicinity of tour routes at multiple locations. These tours are described below:
  - **California Overland** conducts public and private tours and excursions in open-air, former military vehicles. Trip options include day and overnight tours throughout the southern California desert, including ABDSP (California Overland, 2006).
  - **La Casa del Zorro Desert Resort** conducts full-day and half-day driving tours of ABDSP using luxury 4-wheel drive vehicles. The tours begin at the resort in Borrego Springs and the full day tour travels as far south as Carrizo Badlands, although custom tours can be arranged (La Casa del Zorro, 2006).
  - **ABDSP Sky Trail** originates and terminates at the Ocotillo Airport and contains 15 waypoints throughout the Park. The Sky Trail highlights some of the Parks natural and historic features, some of which can only be seen from the air (Pilot Getaways, 2006).
- **State Route 78.** SR78 is an officially designated California State Scenic Highway through ABDSP that provides scenic desert vistas to motorists. The Proposed Project would cross SR78 and then parallel the north side of the highway through ABDSP and an existing 69 and 92 kV overhead line would be placed underground for approximately 6.5 miles within the highway within ABDSP.
- **Tamarisk Grove Campground.** Tamarisk Grove is a developed campground with 27 campsites on the north side of SR78 near the intersection with S3. Facilities include showers, flush toilets, picnic tables, shade ramadas, stoves/fire rings and a campfire center (CDPR, 2006a). The proposed 500 kV overhead line and the transition structure for the 69 kV line would be located immediately south of the campground, along SR78.

- **ABDSP Trails.** Three trails can be accessed from Tamarisk Grove Campground: Cactus Loop Trail (1-mile loop), Yaqui Well Nature Trail (1.6 miles round trip), and Bill Kenyon Overlook (1-mile loop). These are short nature trails with opportunities for wildlife viewing. The Narrows Earth Trail begins approximately 4.7 miles east of Tamarisk Grove Campground. This self-guided 0.5-mile loop highlights the geology of the area (CDPR, 2006a).
- **Yaqui Well Primitive Camp Area.** Yaqui Well is a no-fee primitive campground with 10 sites and vault toilets. It is located west of Tamarisk Grove Campground and north of SR78. Yaqui Well is known for its bird watching opportunities (CDPR, 2006a). Near this recreation area, the Proposed Project would follow the existing SDG&E 69 kV transmission line ROW and the existing 69 kV overhead line would be under built onto the SRPL structures. The Proposed Project would be located approximately 0.2 miles south of the Yaqui Well Primitive Camp Area.
- **Trans-County Trail.** When completed, the Trans-County Trail (also know as the Sea-to-Sea Trail) will be a 140-mile walking, hiking and equestrian trail between the Salton Sea and the Pacific Ocean near Del Mar, California. The route of this multi-jurisdictional trail will generally use existing trails. Segments outside of existing trails are under construction (Sea to Sea Trail, 2005). As the trail traverses east to west, it would intersect the proposed SRPL ROW in the Anza-Borrego, Inland Valley, and Coastal Links. Within the Anza-Borrego Link, the Proposed Project would parallel an existing segment of the Trans-County Trail for approximately 3 miles through Grapevine Canyon, along Grapevine Canyon Road. Near the trail, the Proposed Project would generally follow the existing SDG&E 69 kV transmission line ROW, except between MPs 80.7 and 82.2, where it would diverge from the existing ROW to avoid cultural resource sites in Angelina Springs. The existing 69 kV overhead line would be under built onto the SRPL towers.
- **ABDSP State Wilderness Areas.** ABDSP contains over 400,000 acres of State Wilderness including 12 separate State Wilderness Areas. Wilderness areas provide dispersed recreational opportunities such as camping and hiking and are intended to provide the recreationist with a primitive natural experience (CDPR, 2005). The proposed SRPL ROW would be adjacent to or traverse three State Wilderness Areas:
  - **Vallecito Mountain Wilderness Area** (85,377 acres) is located south of SR78 and south of the proposed SRPL ROW, from the eastern Park boundary to MP 75. Small portions of three temporary pull sites would be located within a total of approximately 0.8 acres of the Vallecito Mountain Wilderness Area. The pull sites are located near MP 61.7 (7, 071 sq ft within WA), MP 67.9 (27, 073 sq ft within WA), and MP 70.6 (359 sq ft in WA).
  - **Pinyon Ridge Wilderness Area** (22,904 acres) is located north of the Proposed Project through Grapevine Canyon, from MP 75 to the western Park boundary. Within Grapevine Canyon, a portion of the proposed SRPL ROW and some temporary pull sites would traverse the Pinyon Ridge Wilderness Area, affecting approximately 48.1 acres (refer to detailed maps of the Proposed Project through ABDSP, Appendix 11B). Within this Wilderness Area, the Proposed Project would generally follow the existing SDG&E 69 kV transmission line ROW, except between MPs 80.7 and 82.2, where it would diverge from the existing ROW to avoid cultural resource sites in Angelina Springs. The existing 69 kV overhead line would be under built onto the SRPL towers.
  - **Grapevine Mountain Wilderness Area** (9,072 acres) is located south of the Proposed Project through Grapevine Canyon, from MP 79 to the western Park boundary. The Proposed Project would affect approximately 1.3 acres of this Wilderness Area (see Appendix 11B). Within this Wilderness Area, the Proposed Project would follow the existing SDG&E 69 kV transmission line ROW and the existing 69 kV overhead line would be under built onto the SRPL towers.

Figure D.5-1. Wilderness and Recreation Areas: Imperial Valley Link  
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Figure D.5-2. Wilderness and Recreation Areas: Anza-Borrego Link  
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### D.5.2.3 Central Link

Much of the land within the Central Link is privately owned. The SRPL within this link would traverse the multi-jurisdictional Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail (PCT) and recreation areas under the jurisdiction of BLM, the San Dieguito River Park Joint Power Authority, and San Diego County, as shown in Figure D.5-3 and described below:

- **San Felipe Hills Wilderness Study Area.** The 5,325-acre San Felipe Hills Wilderness Study Area (WSA) is west of ABDSP's Grapevine Canyon and is comprised of public lands administered by the BLM. The San Felipe Hills WSA offers opportunities for dispersed recreation, such as primitive camping and hiking. The Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail passes through the San Felipe Hills WSA (BLM, 2006a). The Proposed Project would be constructed outside of and generally east and north of the WSA. From the western boundary of ABDSP, the Proposed Project would follow the existing SDG&E 69 kV transmission line ROW, which comprises the WSA boundary between MPs 84.5 and 86, and the existing 69 kV overhead line would be under built onto the SRPL towers. At MP 87.7, the existing 69 kV circuits would deviate from the SRPL towers and the Proposed Project would turn due west in new ROW adjacent to the north boundary of the WSA between MPs 87.7 and 88.9. Figures D.5-3 and D.5-4 show that the Proposed Project runs parallel to the outer edge of the San Felipe Hills WSA.
- **Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail.** The 2,650-mile PCT was designated by Congress in 1968 as one of the first scenic trails in the National Trails System. National Scenic Trails, including the PCT, are intended to provide conservation and enjoyment of nationally significant scenic, historic, natural, or cultural qualities of the areas through which they pass (NPS, 1993). Extending from Mexico to Canada, the PCT traverses the crests of mountains through California, Oregon and Washington and is limited to non-mechanized modes of transportation (USDA Forest Service, 2006). From the western boundary of ABDSP, the Proposed Project would run parallel to and approximately 1 mile east of the PCT for approximately 5 miles. Along this segment, the Proposed Project would follow the existing SDG&E 69 kV transmission line ROW and the existing 69 kV overhead line would be under built onto the SRPL towers. At MP 87.7, the existing 69 kV circuits would separate from the SRPL towers and the Proposed Project would turn due west in a new ROW. In this configuration, the Proposed Project would intersect the PCT at MP 88.6, north of the San Felipe Hills WSA.
- **Mataguay Scout Ranch.** The Mataguay Scout Ranch is an 840-acre property owned and operated by the San Diego–Imperial Council of Boy Scouts of America. Recreational opportunities available to Scout and non-Scout groups include camping, hiking, archery, shooting, climbing/rappelling, and swimming. Visitors hike and camp along trails throughout the area surrounding the Scout Ranch. The proposed 230 kV lines would span the access road to the Scout Ranch, approximately 1 mile north of the main Mataguay Scout Ranch facilities near MP 95.5 and would cross the BSA High Adventure Backpack Trail. The Proposed Project would not be visible from the facilities in the Valley but would be visible from the trail to Pardee Outpost.
- **San Dieguito River Park.** The San Dieguito River Park is an open space greenway and park system within the San Dieguito River Valley designed to protect natural waterways, cultural resources, and sensitive lands and resources while allowing compatible recreation and agricultural uses. The San Dieguito River Park Joint Power Authority is comprised of members from the County of San Diego, and the Cities of Del Mar, Escondido, Poway, San Diego, and Solana Beach. The goal of the Park is to eventually extend throughout the entirety of the San Dieguito River Park Focused Planning Area from the Pacific Ocean near Del Mar to Volcan Mountain, north of Julian, including

a 55-mile segment of the Coast-to-Crest Trail (SDRP, 2006). The Coast to Crest Trail is recognized as a regional trail corridor by the State of California (CDPR, 2002) and County of San Diego (San Diego County DPR, 2002). The SRPL ROW would pass through the San Dieguito River Park parallel to an existing 69 kV overhead transmission line, north of the town of Santa Ysabel between MP 106.8 and 108.2.

- **Santa Ysabel Open Space Preserve.** The 5,312-acre Santa Ysabel Open Space Preserve (SYOSP) was recently added to the San Diego County Open Space System and was opened for public recreational use in June 2006. The SYOSP is included in the San Dieguito River Park Focused Planning Area and is comprised of two parcels located north of SR78, one east of SR79 and one west of SR79 and separated by approximately 0.8 miles. Recreational opportunities within the SYOSP include hiking along the Coast-to-Crest Trail, biking, and horse riding on designated trails (San Diego County DPR, 2006). The Proposed Project would pass between the east and west parcels near MP 107.5 and would be parallel to a relocated existing 69 kV transmission line near the Preserve.

#### D.5.2.4 Inland Valley Link

Within the Inland Valley Link, recreational opportunities are provided at seven open space preserves managed by San Diego County, as well as a private resort and golf club, and the multi-jurisdictional Trans-County Trail, as shown in Figure D.5-5. Recreation areas that are located near or traversed by the Proposed Project include:

- **Mt. Gower Open Space Preserve.** Mt. Gower Open Space Preserve is a 1,574-acre preserve, south of Ramona, with 8 miles of hiking trails and a primitive campground (San Diego County DPR, 2006). The Proposed Project would enter the northeastern portion of the Preserve as an overhead 230 kV transmission line and then transition from overhead to underground at MP 117.2, within the Preserve. At this point, the underground segment of the Proposed Project would follow an unpaved road through the Preserve to Gunn Stage Road at the Preserve's western boundary. The public lands around the Mt. Gower Preserve are under a lease to the San Diego County Parks and Recreation Department. BLM retains ownership of these lands. Therefore, construction of the proposed route across these lands would require consultation with the County and BLM.
- **San Vicente Resort and Golf Club.** The privately owned San Vicente Resort and Golf Club, located in the San Diego Country Estates, south of Ramona, provides golf, tennis, and resort facilities (SVRGC, 2006). The underground portion of the Proposed Project would be adjacent to the north side of the San Vicente Resort and Golf Club along San Vicente Road, near MP 120.
- **Simon Park Open Space Preserve.** Simon Park Open Space Preserve is a 650-acre preserve that has more than 10 miles of trails accessible to non-motorized recreational use (Ramona Trails, 2004). The proposed underground segment along San Vicente Road would not traverse the Preserve, but would be located approximately 0.5 miles from the southern boundary of the Preserve.
- **Barnett Ranch Open Space Preserve.** Barnett Ranch Open Space Preserve was recently added to the San Diego County Open Space System and is not yet open to the public because the land is recovering after being burned in the 2003 Cedar Fire (Ramona Trails, 2006). The Preserve is located between Ramona and SR67. The Proposed Project would cross the Preserve as an overhead 230 kV transmission line between MPs 122 and 123.7.

Figure D.5-3. Wilderness and Recreation Areas: Central Link  
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Figure D.5-4. San Felipe Hills Wilderness Study Area  
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- **Boulder Oaks Open Space Preserve.** The 1,215-acre Boulder Oaks Open Space Preserve, located approximately 6 miles south of Ramona, was recently acquired in support of the land preservation goals defined by the San Diego County Multiple Species Conservation Plan (San Diego County, 2003). The Proposed Project would be constructed overhead and parallel to an existing 69 kV transmission line through 0.23 miles of the Preserve east of SR67, near MP 128.
- **San Vicente Highlands Open Space Preserve.** The San Vicente Highland Open Space preserve is located adjacent to and southeast of the Boulder Oaks Open Space Preserve. This 1,550-acre Preserve was purchased by the State in support of the San Diego County Multiple Species Conservation Plan and is managed by San Diego County. The Proposed Project would be constructed overhead and parallel to an existing 69 kV transmission line through 1.3 miles of the northern portion of the Preserve between MP 128.5 and MP 129.8.
- **Sycamore Canyon and Goodan Ranch Open Space Preserves.** Sycamore Canyon Open Space Preserve is a 1,700-acre Preserve located adjacent to and east of the 325-acre Goodan Ranch Open Space Preserve. Both Preserves are located west of SR67 near MP 132.5. Combined, the Preserves have more than 10 miles of trails suitable for hiker and equestrian use (San Diego County DPR, 2002a). The Proposed Project would be constructed overhead and parallel to an existing 69 kV transmission line through 0.2 miles of the north portion of Sycamore Canyon Open Space Preserve and within 0.25 miles of Goodan Ranch Open Space Preserve.
- **Trans-County Trail.** As described in Section D.5.2.2, the multi-jurisdictional Trans-County Trail (Sea-to-Sea Trail) will be a 140-mile walking, hiking, and equestrian trail. Within the Inland Valley Link, the Trans-County Trail will use existing trails through Goodan Ranch and Sycamore Canyon Open Space Preserves. An overhead segment of the Proposed Project would intersect the Trans-County Trail at MP 132 within the Sycamore Canyon Open Space Preserve.

### D.5.2.5 Coastal Link

Recreational opportunities within the Coastal Link are provided by various urban parks managed by the City of San Diego and/or the County of San Diego Parks and Recreation Department. Recreation areas that are located near or traversed by the Proposed Project are shown on Figure D.5-6 and include:

- **San Diego Bikeways.** The Proposed Project would cross or pass within 0.25 miles of multiple bikeways: Spring Canyon, Scripps Poway, Poway, Rancho Peñasquitos, SR56, Black Mountain and Park Village Bikeways. Please refer to Figure D.5-6 for the locations of these bikeways in relation to the Proposed Project.
- **Scripps Miramar Ranch Residential Parks.** The Proposed Project would be located within 0.25 miles of three parks in the Scripps Miramar Ranch Residential Area: Scripps Ranch Community Park, Spring Canyon Park, and Views West Neighborhood Park.
- **Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve.** The 4,000-acre Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve extends east-west for 7 miles between Interstate 15 and the junction of Interstates 5 and 805. The Preserve encompasses both Los Peñasquitos and Lopez Canyons and exhibits abundant natural and cultural resources, including a scenic waterfall, the El Cuervo Adobe Ruin, and the restored Santa Maria de Los Peñasquitos Adobe. Other recreational opportunities include hiking, biking, and horseback riding on designated trails. Guided tours and interpretive walks are provided by park rangers (San Diego City DPR, 2006). A 5.2-mile segment of the Proposed Project would be within the north

portion of the Preserve, including a 2.4-mile underground segment along a trail north of Peñasquitos Creek. Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve is the largest municipal park that would be crossed by the Proposed Project.

- **Los Peñasquitos Adobe.** Other recreational opportunities include hiking, biking, and horse-back riding on designated trails. Guided tours and interpretive walks are provided by park rangers (San Diego City DPR, 2006). A 5.2-mile segment of the Proposed Project would be within the north portion of the Preserve, including a 2.4-mile underground segment along a trail north of Peñasquitos Creek. Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve is the largest municipal park that would be crossed by the Proposed Project.
- **Trans-County Trail.** As described in Sections D.5.2.2 and D.5.2.4, the multi-jurisdictional Trans-County Trail (Sea-to-Sea Trail) will be a 140-mile walking, hiking and equestrian trail. The Trans-County trailhead is near the Peñasquitos Substation and the trail uses the trails within Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. Within the Coastal Link, the Proposed Project would intersect the Trans-County Trail at MPs 141.4 and 147.2.
- **Rancho Peñasquitos Skate Park.** The Rancho Peñasquitos Skate Park is a 0.5-acre recreational facility for skateboarders and in-line skaters (San Diego City DPR, 2006a). The park is located north of Ted Williams Parkway and approximately 0.25 miles northeast of an underground segment of the proposed SRPL near MP 142.2.
- **Town Center Park.** The proposed Town Center Park is an urban, linear park consisting of three or more acres. The park is intended to serve as a pedestrian linkage among the commercial, residential and civic building areas of the Town Center development area in Rancho Peñasquitos. Recreational facilities may include small court games, sitting areas, outdoor bicycle storage and play areas for children (San Diego City Planning, 2005). The underground portion of the Proposed Project would traverse the southern portion of the proposed park near MP 142.5.
- **Cypress Canyon Park** and the **Torrey Hills Community Park** are both located within the Coastal Link near MP 138.6 and the Peñasquitos Substation, respectively. The Proposed Project would be located approximately 0.15 miles north of Cypress Canyon Park and 0.2 miles east of Torrey Hills Community Park.

#### D.5.2.6 Other System Upgrades: Sycamore Canyon–Elliot Reconductor

A 3-mile segment of the existing Sycamore Canyon–Elliot 69 kV transmission line traverses the northwest portion of the Mission Trails Regional Park (MTRP) (refer to Figure D.5-7), which is owned by the City of San Diego. Encompassing approximately 5,800 acres, MTRP is one of the largest urban parks in the country. Recreational opportunities at MTRP include hiking, camping at Kumeyaay Lake, boating at Lake Murray, equestrian facilities, a BMX track, and a visitor's center (San Diego City DPR, 2007). The Sycamore Canyon–Elliot 69 kV transmission line is located near the Fortuna Saddle, Rim, and Quarry Loop Trails.

Figure D.5-5. Wilderness and Recreation Areas: Inland Valley Link  
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Figure D.5-6. Wilderness and Recreation Areas: Coastal Link  
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Figure D.5-7. Wilderness and Recreation Areas: Sycamore Canyon–Eliot Substation  
Reconductor

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## D.5.3 Applicable Regulations, Plans, and Standards

### Federal Regulations, Plans and Standards

#### National Wilderness Preservation System: Wilderness Study Areas

The Proposed Project would be constructed adjacent to, but outside of the San Felipe Hills WSA west of ABDSP, as described in Section D.5.2.3. In Section 603 (a) of The Federal Land Management Policy Act of 1976, Congress directed BLM to identify potential wilderness areas in lands under its jurisdiction. The areas were to have characteristics of wilderness as defined in the Wilderness Act of 1964:

*A wilderness, in contrast with those areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain. An area of wilderness is further defined to mean in this chapter an area of undeveloped Federal land retaining its primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation, which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural conditions and which (1) generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable; (2) has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation; (3) has at least 5,000 acres of land, either by itself or in combination with contiguous areas possessing wilderness characteristics, or is of sufficient size as to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition; and (4) may also contain ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value. (Public Law 88-577, Section 2[c]).*

BLM's California State office presented its suitability recommendations to Congress in the Eastern San Diego County Management Framework Plan (1981) in which BLM recommended that San Felipe Hills be removed from consideration as a Wilderness Area. Congress has not yet made a determination as to whether San Felipe Hills will be removed from consideration, so the area is managed by BLM according to the direction provided in Section 603 (c) of the FLMPA (commonly called the "Interim Management Policy for Lands Under Wilderness Review"). Generally, this directive requires BLM to maintain the characteristics of wilderness so that the suitability of the WSA for preservation as a wilderness area is not impaired.

The BLM Manual 8550 – Interim Management Policy and Guidelines for Lands under Wilderness Review (H-8550-1) further defines the non-impairment standard. BLM reviews all proposals for uses and/or facilities within the WSA for consistency with the non-impairment standard. This standard is comprised of the following criteria:

*(a) The use, facility, or activity must be temporary. This means a temporary use that does not create surface disturbance or involve permanent placement of facilities may be allowed if such use can easily and immediately be terminated upon wilderness designation, at which time the use must cease and/or the facility must be removed. "Surface disturbance" is any new disruption of the soil or vegetation, including vegetative trampling, which would necessitate reclamation...*

*(b) When the use, activity, or facility is terminated, the wilderness values must not have been degraded so far as to significantly constrain the Congress's prerogative regarding the areas suitability for preservation as wilderness. The wilderness values to be considered are those mentioned in Section 2(c) of the Wilderness Act of 1964.*

Additionally, management direction for lands under wilderness review is contained in the BLM California Desert Conservation Area Plan (1980, as amended).

#### Federal Land Management Policy Act (FLMPA) of 1976

The designation of BLM's Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs) was authorized in Section 202 (c)(3) of the Federal Land Policy Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976, and was designed to be used as a process for determining the special management required by certain environmental resources or hazards (BLM, 1999). According to Section 103(a) of the FLPMA, an ACEC is defined as the following:

*An area within the public lands where special management attention is required (when such areas are developed or used or where no development is required) to protect and prevent irreparable damage to important historic, cultural, or scenic values, fish and wildlife resources, or other natural systems or processes, or to protect life and safety from natural hazards. (BLM, 1999)*

Prior to its designation, management prescriptions are developed for each proposed ACEC. These prescriptions are site-specific and include actions that the BLM has authority to carry out, as well as recommendations for actions that the BLM does not have direct authority to implement, such as cooperative agreements with other agencies and mineral withdrawals (BLM, 1999).

#### Eastern San Diego County Resource Management Plan

In March 2007, BLM's El Centro Field Office released the Draft Resource Management Plan (RMP) and Environmental Impact Statement for public review. This document guides the management policies for BLM land within San Diego County that is within the California Desert Conservation Area, essentially the land north of Interstate 8. When finalized, this RMP will supersede the 1981 Eastern San Diego County Management Framework Plan.

#### BLM Manual 8550-1 – Interim Management Policy and Guidelines for Lands under Wilderness Review

BLM's policy for management of lands under wilderness review (i.e., "Wilderness Study Areas") is as follows:

##### **A. GENERAL POLICY:**

*1. The BLM's management policy is to continue resource uses on lands under wilderness review in a manner that maintains the area's suitability for preservation as wilderness. The IMP will remain in effect on all congressionally mandated WSAs until Congress acts on the Secretary's recommendations. Areas identified as WSAs under Section 202 of FLPMA will receive interim management protection upon designation as a WSA. Those WSAs studied under Section 202 of FLPMA and subsequently found to be no suitable for wilderness designation may be released from interim management by the BLM State Director 30 days after approval of the land-use plan. Suitable WSAs studied under Section 202 of FLPMA will be studied using the Bureau's procedures for such areas, remaining under IMP protection until Congress acts. In the interest of consistency with related*

*land-use plans, the State Director also has the option of keeping such areas in wilderness study status, and under interim management, until final decisions have been made on adjacent areas under wilderness review.*

### California Desert Conservation Area Plan

The California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA) contains over 12 million acres of public lands within the area known as the California Desert, which includes the Mojave, the Sonoran, and a small portion of the Great Basin deserts. The 12 million acres of public lands, which are administered by the BLM, represent half of all land within the CDCA (25 million acres). The Proposed Project would include the development of a new transmission line including towers, potential alternative substation sites, and a fiber optic repeater/series capacitor within the CDCA.

The CDCA Plan (Plan) is a comprehensive, long-range plan with goals and specific actions for the management, use, development, and protection of the resources and public lands within the CDCA, and it is based on the concepts of multiple use, sustained yield, and maintenance of environmental quality. The Plan's goals and actions for each resource are established in its 12 elements. Each of the Plan elements provides both a desert-wide perspective of the planning decisions for one major resource or issue of public concern as well as more specific interpretation of multiple-use class guidelines for a given resource and its associated activities.

### Comprehensive Management and Use Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement, Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail

The Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail (De Anza Trail) is a 1,210-mile United States national historic trail that runs from Nogales, Arizona, on the U.S.-Mexico border, to San Francisco, California. The De Anza Trail commemorates the 1775–1776 route that Spanish commander Juan Bautista de Anza took to build a presidio and mission near San Francisco Bay. The National Park Service provides overall administration for the De Anza Trail. The Proposed Project would cross the De Anza Trail near MP 49, south of Highway 78. The “Purpose and Need for the Plan,” found within the Comprehensive Management and Use Plan, describes general policies regarding the management and preservation of the De Anza Trail.

### Southern California Forests Land and Resource Management Plans

The Southern California Forests Land and Resource Management Plan includes the Cleveland National Forest Strategy (Part 2) and the Southern California Forests Vision (Part 1), which pertain to the SRPL Project. Both the Southern California Forests Vision and CNF Strategy contain elements directive of wilderness management:

***Southern California National Forests Vision Goal 3.2:** Retain a natural evolving character within wilderness. Desired conditions for wilderness include...Solitude — outstanding opportunities for solitude and inspiration are characteristic and stable, or increasing. Challenge — primitive and unconfined recreation opportunities that offer physical and mental challenges are stable or increasing.*

*CNF Strategy SD 1: Wilderness:...Protect and manage the areas recommended for wilderness designation to maintain their wilderness values.*

## Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail Strategic Plan

The Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail (Pacific Crest Trail) spans 2,650 miles between Mexico and Canada and traverses three western states — California, Oregon, and Washington. The Pacific Crest Trail traverses both public and private lands along its multi-state alignment. Overall management is provided by the U.S. Forest Service. The Proposed Project would cross the Pacific Crest Trail near MP 89 on land owned by Vista Irrigation District, north of the San Felipe Hills Wilderness Study Area and south of San Diego County Route S22. The Pacific Crest Trail Association 2007–2009 Strategic Plan was approved July 15, 2006 and contains goals and strategies for the permanent protection of the Pacific Crest Trail through wilderness and other public lands.

## State Regulations, Plans and Standards

### California State Wilderness Preservation System

The Proposed Project would traverse and be constructed adjacent to wilderness areas established by the Legislature or the State Park and Recreation Commission (SPRC). Management of these areas is subject to the requirements set forth within the applicable sections of the California Public Resources Code, the SPRC Statements of Policy, and the Anza-Borrego Desert State Park Final General Plan and EIR (CDPR, 2005). The following is a discussion of the requirements applicable to the Proposed Project, including management direction and designation processes.

#### *Definition of Wilderness*

The California Wilderness Preservation System (State Wilderness System) is comprised of State-owned land that has been designated by the Legislature as “wilderness areas” and units of the State Park System classified by the SPRC as “State wildernesses” (Pub.Res.Code § 5093.33). The definitions of wilderness areas and State wildernesses are similar except that the definition of SPRC-designated State wildernesses allows for the persistence of structures that existed when an area was established as wilderness. The definitions of each are provided below with the difference applicable to State wildernesses shown in bold:

*[Wilderness areas and state wildernesses], in contrast with areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape, are hereby recognized as areas where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man and where man himself is a visitor who does not remain. A [wilderness area or state wilderness] is further defined to mean an area of relatively undeveloped state-owned or leased land which has retained its primeval character and influence or has been substantially restored to a near-natural appearance, without permanent improvements or human habitation, other than semi-improved campgrounds, **or structures which existed at the time of classification of the area as a state wilderness and which the State Park and Recreation Commission has determined may be maintained and used in a manner compatible with the preservation of the wilderness environment**, or primitive latrines, which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural conditions, and which:*

- (a) Appears generally to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man’s work substantially unnoticeable.*
- (b) Has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation.*

- (c) *Consists of at least 5,000 acres of land, either by itself or in combination with contiguous areas possessing wilderness characteristics, or is of sufficient size as to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition.*
- (d) *May also contain ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value. (Pub.Res.Code §§ 5019.68, 5093.33(c))*

The classification of wilderness precludes all types of development within such an area. Pursuant to Pub.Res.Code § 5093.36(a), SPRC is charged with “preserving the wilderness character of an area” and must ensure that “wilderness areas shall be devoted to the purposes of recreational, scenic, scientific, educational, conservation, and historic use.”

Furthermore, SPRC policies provide that all lands within the State Park System, including wilderness, “shall be dedicated to the public use and managed in accordance with its classification” and that “the Director of Parks and Recreation shall, whenever possible, provide for the use of the State Park System lands as classified and planned, and shall not grant nonconforming uses without the concurrence of the State Park and Recreation Commission” (Policy II.1).

Prohibited uses within wilderness areas include commercial enterprises, temporary or permanent roads, structures or installations, motor vehicles, motorized equipment, landing or hovering of aircraft, flying of aircraft lower than 2,000 feet above ground, and other forms of mechanical transport (Pub.Res.Code § 5093.36 (b)). Additionally, the ABDSP Final General Plan and EIR (2005) specifies that power lines are not to be found within wilderness areas (pg. 2-92).

#### ***Wilderness Designation***

Lands may be designated as part of the State Wilderness System by either the Legislature or SPRC. In 1974, portions of ABDSP were designated by the Legislature as part of the Santa Rosa Mountains State Wilderness Area (Pub.Res.Code § 5093.34(a)(1)). The Legislature delegated the task of defining the precise boundaries of the Santa Rosa State Wilderness Area to SPRC. Although the boundaries were designated by SPRC, the Legislature has the authority to alter the boundaries of the wilderness area following a recommendation by the Secretary of the Resource Agency or the State Lands Commission.

Alternatively, lands may be classified as part of the State Wilderness System by SPRC, which has the authority to classify land units within the State Park System (Pub.Res.Code §§ 5019.50, 5019.68). According to the ABDSP Final General Plan and EIR (2005), the Santa Rosa State Wilderness was expanded in 1982 and 11 other roadless areas within ABDSP were included by SPRC in the State Wilderness System (pg. 2-93). The wilderness areas surrounding the Proposed Project have been designated as State wildernesses by SPRC. These include Vallecito Mountain Wilderness Area, Pinyon Ridge Wilderness Area, and Grapevine Mountain Wilderness Area. It should be noted that an existing easement and 69 kV overhead powerline existed within Grapevine Canyon prior to 1982. The existing ROW was not included within a wilderness designation. Section B.2.2 describes the history and current status of SDG&E’s ROW easement through ABDSP.

Although designated under different authorities, wilderness areas and State wildernesses within ABDSP are all governed by SPRC. In total, approximately two thirds (469,000 acres) of ABDSP is comprised of wilderness areas or State wilderness. As described in Section D.5.2.2, the proposed SRPL would require the expansion of SDG&E’s existing easement through Grapevine Canyon. This expansion would result in approximately 50.2 acres of State Wilderness within the Pinyon Ridge Wilderness Area (48.1 acres) and Grapevine Mountain Wilderness Area (1.3 acres) being traversed by the Proposed

Project (see Figure D.5-2 and Appendix 11B). Additionally three temporary pull sites would be located within a total of 0.8 acres of the Vallecito Mountain Wilderness Area.

Per SPRC Policy III.8 (Utilities), it is the objective of SPRC to ultimately place all existing utilities underground, although exceptions may be allowed by the Director if it is in the best interest of the Park. In general, granting utility easements within units of the State park is governed by this policy, which states that:

All right-of-way grants to utility companies shall require that utilities be placed underground, unless in the opinion of the Director, special conditions prevail which would make this action impractical. Rights of way or easements should be for a specified period of time. However, exceptions may be made by the Director where necessary upon his finding that this action would be in the best interests of the State Park System. Rights of way or easements may be granted where otherwise appropriate with the provision that the right of way or easement may be moved upon a finding of the Director that their location interferes with future development, and shall be under the terms and conditions in the best interest of the State Park System.

#### ***Modification of Wilderness Boundaries***

Given the definition and prohibited uses within wilderness areas, construction and operation of SRPL would be inconsistent with wilderness area designation. Specifically, the presence of the towers and conductors, temporary and permanent roads, motor vehicles and helicopters within wilderness areas would be inconsistent with Pub.Res.Code § 5093.36 (b) and the ABDSP Final General Plan and EIR. The existing wilderness boundaries would need to be modified in order that the proposed SRPL ROW be located outside of a designated wilderness area. The de-designation of State wilderness would require approval of the SPRC. De-designation of a State Wilderness Area has never occurred in California. Also, as required by Pub.Res.Code § 5002.2(a), modification of State wildernesses as designated by SPRC, would require a revision to the existing ABDSP General Plan:

*Following classification or reclassification of a unit by the State Park and Recreation Commission, and prior to the development of any new facilities in any previously classified unit, the department shall prepare a general plan or revise any existing plan, as the case may be, for the unit.*

Please refer to Section D.17.2.2 for a detailed discussion of the ABDSP General Plan and its relationship to the Proposed Project.

#### **Anza-Borrego Desert State Park Final General Plan and EIR**

The Proposed Project alignment would pass through ABDSP, affecting wilderness areas including the Vallecito Mountains Wilderness Area, Pinyon Ridge Wilderness Area, and Grapevine Mountain Wilderness Area. The ABDSP General Plan, adopted in 2005, establishes the overall long-range purpose and vision for the future of ABDSP. The general plan delineates six management zones (i.e., State Wilderness, Cultural Preserve, Backcountry, Focused-use Zone I, Focused-use Zone II, Information/Entrance Zone) providing for a variety of uses and a set of goals and guidelines that guide park management, as well as specific project management and implementation. These goals and guidelines are designed to rectify identified issues, while providing for continued resource protection, preservation, rehabilitation, recreational opportunities, and facility development and interpretation at ABDSP. The goals and guidelines provide direction for future park managers and set the parameters for subsequent management and development plans.



The ABDSP General Plan acknowledges a ROW easement for the existing SDG&E 69 kV transmission line through the Park and specifically excludes the existing 69 kV easement from wilderness designation.

## Local Regulations, Plans and Standards

### Imperial County General Plan

The Imperial County covers an area of 4,597 square miles within the southeastern portion of the State of California. Approximately 50 percent of Imperial County lands are undeveloped and under federal ownership and jurisdiction. Presently, 20 percent of the nearly 3 million acres of Imperial County is irrigated for agricultural purposes, most notably the central area known as Imperial Valley. The Imperial County General Plan consists of nine Elements that serve as the primary policy statement by the Board of Supervisors for implementing development policies and land uses in Imperial County. There is not a plan element specific to recreation. The Conservation and Open Space Element provides for the preservation of open space and the conservation of desert lands for recreation. Additionally, the geothermal and transmission element directs that all transmission line corridors should be designed for minimum impacts on recreational activities.

### San Dieguito River Park Concept Plan

Various jurisdictions in San Diego County have created a concept plan for the park located within the San Dieguito River watershed. This park would involve a mix of public and private lands and, on private lands, would rely on easements to provide continuity among the various units of the planned park. The San Dieguito River Park Concept Plan was adopted February 18, 1994 and updated February 15, 2002. At this time, there is no management plan for the planned park, but overall goals have been written for the park. Two of these goals pertain to recreation:

**Preservation of Open Space** – Establish a continuous open space corridor throughout the length of the focused planning area that ... provides compatible areas for recreational opportunities.

**Creation of Recreation and Educational Opportunities** – Create a scenic trail and interpretive system and establish recreational areas including water related uses, which are compatible with the natural values of the river system. (SDRP, 2006)

### San Diego County General Plan

The current County of San Diego General Plan was last updated in 1979, with substantial amendments made since. In 1998, the County embarked on a multi-year project to update the San Diego General Plan. When the update is complete, the Board of Supervisors will adopt a new plan, replacing the existing plan. Until that time, the current plan remains in force. The Recreation Element of the general plan is directive of County officials and provides for the creation of a system of public parks and riding and hiking trails.

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## ***Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures for the Proposed Project***

This section presents a discussion of impacts and mitigation measures for the Proposed Project. Construction and operation-related impacts are assessed and mitigation measures are presented for each of the five links.

### **D.5.4 Significance Criteria and Approach to Impact Assessment**

#### **D.5.4.1 Significance Criteria**

Significance criteria were developed to provide a means of systematically and explicitly distinguishing degrees of significance, as described in Section 3.1. The criteria take into account the magnitude (e.g., scale, frequency, duration), direction of change (e.g., positive/negative), and the reversibility (e.g., temporary/permanent) of the impact in consideration of the sensitive receptors in the study area. Impacts to wilderness and recreation would be significant if:

- The Proposed Project or alternatives would directly or indirectly disrupt activities in established federal, State, or local recreation areas and/or wilderness areas.
- The Proposed Project or alternatives would substantially reduce the scenic, biological, cultural, geologic, or other important factors that contribute to the value of federal, State, local, or private recreational facilities or wilderness areas.

#### **D.5.4.2 Applicant Proposed Measures**

Table D.5-1 presents the Applicant Proposed Measures (APMs) that are relevant to Wilderness and Recreation. The impact analysis presented in Section D.5.5 assumes that all APMs would be implemented as part of the Proposed Project; where the impact analysis has determined that significant environmental impacts would occur as a result of the Proposed Project despite the implementation of these APMs, mitigation measures are recommended.

**Table D.5-1. Applicant Proposed Measures – Wilderness and Recreation**

<b>APM No.</b>	<b>Description</b>
R-APM-2a	Advance notice of restriction of conflicts with access routes to recreational use areas will be provided.
R-APM-2b	No construction that affects trail use will be conducted in that area on federal holidays.
R-APM-2c	SDG&E will coordinate all construction activities, including temporary trail closures, affecting the parklands and trail systems of San Diego and Imperial Counties with the counties' Parks and Recreation Department and the California State Parks Department (for ABDSP), respectively, before construction begins in these areas.
R-APM-2d	Signs directing vehicles to alternative park access and parking will be posted in the event construction temporarily obstructs parking areas near trailheads.
R-APM-2e	Signs advising recreation users of construction activities and directing them to alternative trails or bikeways will be posted on both sides of all trail intersections or as determined through SDG&E's coordination with the respective jurisdictional agencies.
R-APM-2f	Where helicopters are used for construction, signage advising equestrians of construction timeframes with helicopter use will be posted at all equestrian trail access points within the vicinity of the flight path. These signs will be checked and maintained regularly.
R-APM-3a	Construction-related traffic shall be restricted to routes approved by the authorized agencies. New access roads or cross-country vehicle travel will not be permitted on ABDSP or State land unless prior written approval is given by the authorized ABDSP officer. Authorized roads used by the project shall be rehabilitated when construction activities are complete as coordinated with California State Parks.

**Table D.5-1. Applicant Proposed Measures – Wilderness and Recreation**

APM No.	Description
R-APM-4	The Proposed Project would require additional ROW within designated wilderness. In order to reduce these impacts to less than significant, a 2:1 mitigation ratio has been proposed for wilderness lands and a 1:1 ratio for non designated wilderness lands that are needed for new ROW. <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This mitigation ratio was proposed by SDG&E in its PEA but not specified as an APM. Refer to Section 5.1.3, page 5.1-33 of the PEA. Source: SDGE, 2006.

### D.5.4.3 Impacts Identified

Table D.5-2 lists the impacts identified for the Proposed Project, along with the significance of each impact. Detailed discussions of each impact and the specific locations where each is identified are presented in the following sections.

**Table D.5-2. Impacts Identified – Proposed Project – Wilderness and Recreation**

Impact No.	Description	Impact Significance
<b>Proposed Project</b>		
WR-1	Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to wilderness or recreation areas	Class I, II
WR-2	Presence of a transmission line or substation would permanently change the character of a recreation area, diminishing its recreational value	Class I, III
WR-3	Presence of a transmission line would permanently preclude recreational activities	Class I, II, or No Impact
WR-4	Presence of a transmission line in a designated wilderness or wilderness study area would result in loss of wilderness land	Class I or No Impact
<b>Proposed Project - Future Transmission System Expansion</b>		
WR-1	Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to recreation or wilderness areas	Class II
WR-2	Presence of a transmission line or substation would change the character of a recreation area, diminishing its recreational value	Class I
WR-3	Presence of a transmission line would permanently preclude recreational activities	Class I
WR-4	Presence of a transmission line in a designated wilderness or wilderness study area would result in loss of wilderness land	No Impact
<b>Proposed Project - Connected Actions</b>		
WR-1	Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to recreation or wilderness areas	Class I, II
WR-2	Presence of a transmission line or substation would change the character of a recreation area, diminishing its recreational value	Class I, III
WR-2GT	Presence of the project would change the character of a recreation area, diminishing its recreational value	Class III
WR-2LR	Presence of the project would change the character of a recreation area, diminishing its recreational value	Class I
WR-3	Presence of a transmission line would permanently preclude recreational activities	Class II or No Impact
WR-3GT	Presence of the project would permanently preclude recreational activities	Class II
WR-3LR	Presence of the project would permanently preclude recreational activities	Class III

## D.5.5 Imperial Valley Link Impacts and Mitigation Measures

### Construction Impacts

*Impact WR-1: Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to recreation or wilderness areas (Class II)*

The Proposed Project would traverse the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail near MP 49. Additionally, the Yuha Desert ACEC would be traversed by a 5-mile segment of the Proposed Project within new ROW, approximately 0.25 miles north of the Dunaway Camp, a primitive campground, which is located near MP 4 of the Proposed Project. The Proposed Project would be located within new ROW, adjacent to the eastern boundary of Plaster City ORV Open Area and Superstition Mountain Open Area and adjacent to the southern boundary of Ocotillo Wells SVRA along SR78, between MPs 40.2 and 47.2. There are no wilderness areas in the vicinity of the Proposed Project within this link. Project construction activities would not require the use of roads that serve as the primary access to these recreational facilities. Therefore, construction activities would not affect access to established recreation areas.

The noise and presence of heavy equipment associated with project construction may temporarily reduce visitation to recreational areas. Recreationists may cancel or schedule their visits to avoid construction periods thereby resulting in temporarily reduced visitation, especially to segments of the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail, where construction could pose a safety hazard to trail users. Such a disturbance to recreational resources would result in significant impacts (Class II).

Construction-related impacts to recreational resources within the Imperial Valley Link would be mitigated to a less than significant level through implementation of Mitigation Measures WR-1a (Coordinate construction schedule and activities with the authorized officer for the recreation area), WR-1b (Provide temporary detours for trail users), and WR-1c (Coordinate with local agencies to identify alternative recreation sites). Please note the full text of the mitigation measures appears in Appendix 12.

SDG&E commits to providing advance notice and adequate signage, and to time construction activities to avoid major holidays through implementation of APMs R-APM-2a through 2f. However, Mitigation Measure WR-1a presents additional detail. Therefore, APMs R-APM-2a through 2f are superseded by Mitigation Measure WR-1a.

*Mitigation Measures for Impact WR-1: Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to recreation or wilderness areas*

**WR-1a** **Coordinate construction schedule and activities with the authorized officer for the recreation area.** No less than 60 days prior to construction, SDG&E shall coordinate construction activities and the project construction schedule with the authorized officer for the recreation areas listed below. SDG&E shall schedule construction activities to avoid heavy recreational use periods in coordination with and at the discretion of the authorized officer. SDG&E shall locate construction equipment to avoid temporary preclusion of recreation areas in accordance with the recommendation of the authorized officer. SDG&E shall document its coordination efforts with the authorized officer and provide this documentation to the CPUC, BLM, and affected park jurisdictions at least 30 days prior to construction.

- BLM Dunaway Camp
- Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail
- ABDSP (Open Camping, Tamarisk Grove Campground, Yaqui Well Campground, Cactus Loop Trail, Yaqui Well Nature Trail, Bill Kenyon Overlook Trail, Trans-County Trail, Vallecito Mountain Wilderness Area Pinyon Ridge Wilderness Area, Grapevine Mountain Wilderness Area)
- Desert Tours (California Overland, La Casa del Zorro, Sky Trail)
- California State Scenic Highway 78
- Trans-County Trail
- Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail
- Santa Ysabel Open Space Preserve
- San Dieguito River Park
- Mt. Gower Open Space Preserve
- San Vicente Resort and Golf Club
- Barnett Ranch Open Space Preserve
- Boulder Oaks Open Space Preserve
- San Vicente Highlands Open Space Preserve
- Sycamore Canyon Open Space Preserve
- Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve
- Mission Trails Regional Park

**WR-1b Provide temporary detours for trail users.** No less than 60 days prior to construction, SDG&E shall coordinate with the authorized officer of the trails listed below to establish temporary detours of the trails to avoid construction area hazards, if the trail is deemed unsafe to use during construction. Should new trail segments be constructed as detours during construction, the temporary new trail segments would be sited to avoid sensitive resources, in coordination with the authorized officer of the trail or recreation area, and would be restored to pre-construction condition by SDG&E when SRPL construction is complete, if required by the authorized officer of the trail or recreation area. SDG&E shall post a public notice of the temporary trail closure and information on the trail detour. SDG&E shall document its coordination efforts with the authorized officer and submit this documentation to the CPUC, BLM, and affected park jurisdictions at least 30 days prior to construction.

- Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail
- ABDSP Trails (Cactus Loop Trail, Yaqui Well Nature Trail, Bill Kenyon Overlook Trail)
- Trans-County Trail
- Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail
- San Dieguito River Park Trails
- Mission Trails Regional Park (Fortuna, Rim, and Quarry Loop Trails)

**WR-1c Coordinate with local agencies to identify alternative recreation areas.** SDG&E shall coordinate with the authorized officer for the applicable federal, State, or local parks and recreational facilities listed below at least 60 days before construction in order to identify alternative recreation facilities that may be used by the public during construction. SDG&E shall post a public notice at recreation facilities that are to be closed or where access would be limited during project construction. SDG&E shall document its coordination efforts with the parks and recreation departments and provide this documentation to the CPUC, BLM, and all affected park jurisdictions 30 days prior to construction.

- BLM Dunaway Camp
- Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail
- ABDSP (Open Camping, Tamarisk Grove Campground, Yaqui Well Campground, Cactus Loop Trail, Yaqui Well Nature Trail, Bill Kenyon Overlook Trail, Vallecito Mountains Wilderness Area, Pinyon Ridge Wilderness Area, Grapevine Mountain Wilderness Area)
- Desert Tours (California Overland, La Casa del Zorro, Sky Trail)
- California State Scenic Highway 78
- Trans-County Trail
- Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail
- Santa Ysabel Open Space Preserve
- San Dieguito River Park
- Mt. Gower Open Space Preserve
- San Vicente Resort and Golf Club
- Barnett Ranch Open Space Preserve
- Boulder Oaks Open Space Preserve
- San Vicente Highlands Open Space Preserve
- Sycamore Canyon Open Space Preserve
- Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve
- Mission Trails Regional Park

## Operational Impacts

### *Impact WR-2: Presence of a transmission line or substation would change the character of a recreation area, diminishing its recreational value (Class I)*

Large portions of BLM and State property within the Imperial Valley Link are ORV areas, such as Ocotillo Wells SVRA, Plaster City, Superstition Mountain, and Arroyo Salada ORV Open Areas. The Proposed Project would be located adjacent to the eastern boundary of the Plaster City and Superstition Mountain ORV Open Areas and approximately 0.6 miles south of the Arroyo Salada ORV Open Area. An existing Imperial Irrigation District 161 kV transmission line bisects the Superstition Mountain Open Area. Due to the existing and continuous high level of disturbance at the ORV areas and because the Proposed Project would be located outside of the recreation area boundaries, the Proposed Project would not change the character of these recreation areas.

On BLM lands, dispersed camping is allowed within limited use areas outside of the ORV areas discussed above. Dispersed recreation occurs along the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail, which traverses the Proposed Project near MP 49. Many recreational resources, particularly in the desert, are valued for their solitude and expansive scenic setting. As described in Section D.3.5.1, Visual Resources, this portion of the Proposed Project would be built in an area that does not presently contain structures of similar scale and character as the Proposed Project.

A 500 kV transmission line creates a constant buzzing or crackling noise (corona noise) from the conductors which would be a significant contrast to the current desert quiet experienced by hikers along the Juan Bautista de Anza Trail and campers on BLM land in the Imperial Valley Link. As described in Section D.5.8.1 (Noise) corona noise from the 500 kV line would be audible up to 500 feet from the edge of the ROW. In areas with elevated ambient noise levels (e.g., ORV parks), it is likely that corona noise would not be noticeable, but in quiet areas this noise would be disturbing.

Presence of the transmission structures and corona noise from the 500 kV conductors would diminish the value of the recreational experience in the Imperial Valley Link, resulting in significant and unmitigable impacts (Class I). Although it would not reduce the severity of the impact to less than significant levels, Visual Resources Mitigation Measures V-3a (Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors) and Noise Mitigation Measure N-3a (Respond to complaints of corona noise) would be required in order to reduce recreation impacts along the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail. The full text of the visual and noise mitigation measures presented below is provided in Appendix 12, along with the full text of all other mitigation measures.

### *Mitigation Measures for Impact WR-2: Presence of a transmission line or substation would change the character of a recreation area, diminishing its recreational value*

**V-3a        Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors.**

**N-3a        Respond to complaints of corona noise.**

### *Impact WR-3: Presence of a transmission line would permanently preclude recreational activities (Class II)*

As described above, the Proposed Project would intersect the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail near MP 49. If transmission support structures were sited on or immediately adjacent to the trail, recreationists would be precluded from these locations. Exact locations of transmission support structures have not been determined. Although preliminary locations have been proposed, these may be modified based on site-specific environmental conditions (i.e., slope stability, presence of sensitive

biological or cultural resources). This impact analysis, therefore, conservatively assumes that structures would be sited on trails. Impacts to existing recreational resources that resulted from locating new towers on or immediately adjacent to the trail would be significant (Class II). Preclusion of the use of the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic trail would be mitigated to a less than significant level through implementation of Mitigation Measure WR-3a (Coordinate tower and road locations with the authorized officer for the recreation area).

***Mitigation Measure for Impact WR-3: Presence of a transmission line would permanently preclude recreational activities***

**WR-3a Coordinate tower and road locations with the authorized officer for the recreation area.** Where the Proposed Project crosses the recreation areas listed below, SDG&E shall coordinate with the authorized officer for the recreation area to determine specific tower site and spur road locations in order to minimize impacts to recreational resources. In consultation with the authorized officer of the trail or recreation area, access roads shall not be located on trails (i.e., PCT, Trans-County Trail) unless the authorized officer determines that the construction of new access roads would result in greater impacts than modifying the trail for use as an access road. This coordination shall occur no less than 60 days prior to the start of construction. SDG&E shall document its coordination with the authorized officer and shall submit this documentation to the CPUC, BLM, and ABDSP, at least 30 days prior to project construction.

- Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail
- Anza-Borrego Desert State Park
- Trans-County Trail
- Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail
- San Dieguito River Park
- Mt. Gower Open Space Preserve

***Impact WR-4: Presence of a transmission line in a designated wilderness or wilderness study area would result in loss of wilderness land (No Impact)***

There are no wilderness areas or WSAs that would be affected by the Proposed Project within the Imperial Valley Link. As such, impacts to these resources would not occur.

**Modifications to Imperial Valley Substation**

All proposed modifications and associated staging and access requirements would be located within the previously disturbed area of the existing SDG&E Imperial Valley Substation property. The substation is not near any recreation or wilderness areas. As such, no impacts to recreational resources or wilderness areas would occur.

## D.5.6 Anza-Borrego Link Impacts and Mitigation Measures

The Proposed Project would be constructed approximately 23 miles across ABDSP, including portions that would traverse the Vallecito Mountain, Pinyon Ridge, and Grapevine Mountain Wilderness Areas. As described in Section D.5.2.2, ABDSP offers a variety of recreational activities, including camping, hiking, scenic driving, wildlife observation, and desert aerial and 4x4 tours. The Proposed Project would traverse one of the highest visitor use areas of the Park, along the SR78 corridor, which is a designated California State Scenic Highway. Recreation areas within ABDSP are shown in Figure D.5-2. Detailed maps of the Proposed Project in relation to ABDSP wilderness areas are presented in Appendix 11B.



## Construction Impacts

### ***Impact WR-1: Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to recreation or wilderness areas (Class I)***

Project construction activities would create a number of temporary conditions that may dissuade recreationists from visiting the Park. Noise, dust and heavy equipment traffic generated during construction activities would negatively affect a visitor's enjoyment of the recreation area. The location of construction equipment may temporarily preclude access to recreation areas, especially in the vicinity of SR78 (i.e., Tamarisk Grove Campground, Yaqui Wells Primitive Camp Area, desert tours, Cactus Loop Trail, Yaqui Well Nature Trail, Bill Kenyon Overlook, Vallecito Mountain Wilderness Area, and Pinyon Ridge Wilderness Area). Disturbances to recreational activities would cause a temporary reduction of access and visitation to portions of ABDSP during SRPL construction activities.

Although this impact would be temporary, it is possible that the construction activities would occur throughout the entire duration of a person's visit to the Park. As described in Section D.5.2.2, ABDSP has an annual average of 600,000 visitors, 85 percent of whom visit between November and April and approximately 75 percent of Park visitation occurs north of SR78 (CDPR, 2005). Construction along SR78, including undergrounding of the existing 69 and 92 kV lines, would occur mid-October through the end of June (refer to Figure B-42 for the Proposed Project construction schedule). In the reasonably foreseeable case that construction activities occur for the entire duration of a person's visit to the Park, these impacts would not seem temporary. A complete overlap of the Proposed Project construction schedule and tourist season for ABDSP would cause a reduction in visitation and access to recreation and wilderness areas, resulting in a significant and unmitigable impact (Class I). Although these measures would not reduce the severity of the impact of the Proposed Project on recreation areas in ABDSP to a less than significant level, Mitigation Measures WR-1a (Coordinate construction schedule and activities with the authorized officer for the recreation area), WR-1b (Provide temporary detours for trail users), and WR-1c (Coordinate with local agencies to identify alternative recreation areas) would be required to reduce the impact to the extent possible. The full text of the mitigation measures appears in Appendix 12.

### ***Mitigation Measures for Impact WR-1: Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to recreation or wilderness areas***

**WR-1a**     **Coordinate construction schedule and activities with the authorized officer for the recreation area.**

**WR-1b**     **Provide temporary detours for trail users.**

**WR-1c**     **Coordinate with local agencies to identify alternative recreation areas.**

## Operational Impacts

### ***Impact WR-2: Presence of a transmission line or substation would change the character of a recreation area, diminishing its recreational value (Class I)***

The Proposed Project includes construction of a new 500 kV overhead transmission line with 140 130-foot towers across approximately 23 miles of ABDSP. The proposed SRPL would generally follow an existing SDG&E-owned 69 kV or IID-owned 92 kV transmission line. Presence of the Proposed Project would permanently change the character of this portion of ABDSP from an open space with minimal development to one that includes large industrial structures. Although there is an existing 92 kV transmission line (east of Narrows Substation) and 69 kV transmission line (west of Narrows Substation) within this part of the Park, these lines are supported by wood poles. These poles existed at their present location

prior to the Park's establishment, and the character of the wood poles is not perceived as inconsistent with the Park experience. This recreational experience would be dramatically diminished by the presence of the large, steel structures required to support the proposed SRPL 500 kV transmission line.

As described in Section D.5.2.2, the Park is visited by recreational users for a wide variety of activities including camping, hiking, scenic driving, wildlife observation, and desert aerial and 4x4 tours. Recreational opportunities in the desert are especially valued for their solitude and natural setting, which characterizes the majority of the Park. A 500 kV transmission line creates a constant buzzing or crackling noise (corona noise) from the conductors which would be a significant contrast to the current desert quiet experienced by visitors to ABDSP, especially campers at Tamarisk Grove Campground, Yaqui Wells Primitive Camp and hikers in Grapevine Canyon. As described in Section D.8.5.2, Noise, corona noise caused by operation of the Proposed Project would substantially elevate the current ambient noise levels in the natural areas of the park within 500 feet of the ROW edge, thereby resulting in a significant and unmitigable impact (Class I).

Additionally, as discussed in Section D.3.5.2, Visual Resources, presence of the 500 kV towers and conductors would result in long-term visual impacts to travelers and recreationists in the vicinity of SR78 or along the Trans-County Trail through Grapevine Canyon. A digital terrain model was developed to identify and quantify areas in the Park from which the SRPL would be visible. The analysis was created using the United States Geological Survey (USGS) digital elevation model (DEM) 10-meter dataset. The tower location and corresponding heights were placed on the DEM and a radius of 5 miles was assigned to the analysis. Five miles was selected because this is the foreground/midground distance zone and the furthest distance the towers could likely be seen under normal environmental conditions. The results of the model show areas within the Park from which the SRLP would be visible and are illustrated in Figure D.5-8. Within 5 miles of the Proposed Project, the SRPL towers would be visible from a total of 88,013 acres in ABDSP (including wilderness areas). Degradation of the visual landscape in ABDSP would directly impact the character of recreational resources within ABDSP, resulting in a significant and unmitigable impact (Class I).

Visual resource and noise impacts would directly and adversely affect the character of recreation and wilderness areas within ABDSP. Presence of the proposed SRPL transmission line, including the large 130-foot transmission support structures in a park with formerly vast scenic vistas and constant corona noise in an ordinarily quiet desert environment would irreparably diminish the recreational value of portions of ABDSP. One effect of the diminished value of the affected recreation areas within ABDSP could be a long-term reduction in Park visitation, especially to Grapevine Canyon, Tamarisk Grove Campground, Yaqui Wells Primitive Camp and other areas along SR78. It is likely that visitors may conclude that the Park experience with the SRPL does not provide the desired desert park experience (solitude, expansive natural vistas) and may travel to other desert parks instead of visiting ABDSP.

In addition to the direct impact to State wilderness areas (refer to discussion for Impact WR-4), the character of the wilderness areas in ABDSP would be adversely affected because the visual and noise impacts from operation of the Proposed Project would conflict with the desired experience of visitors to wilderness areas and the definition of wilderness as having primeval character. The digital terrain model was also used to assess indirect impacts to wilderness by quantifying the number of acres within State wilderness from which the Proposed Project would be visible. According to the model output, the SRPL towers would be visible from approximately 64,516 acres of State wilderness. Figure D.5-8 shows the portions of the wilderness areas in ABDSP from which the Proposed Project would be visible.

Figure D.5-8. Digital Terrain Model/Viewshed Analysis in ABDSP: Proposed Project  
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Although these measures would not reduce the severity of the impact of the Proposed Project on recreation and wilderness areas in ABDSP to less than Class I, Visual Resources Mitigation Measures V-3a (Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors) and V-8a (Structure design consultation in ABDSP), Noise Mitigation Measure N-3a (Respond to complaints of corona noise), and Cultural Resources Mitigation Measure C-6a (Reduce adverse visual intrusions to historic built environment properties (i.e., Tamarisk Grove Campground)) would be required to reduce impacts to recreational resources within ABDSP. The full text of the visual, noise, and cultural mitigation measures presented below is provided in Appendix 12, along with the full text of all other mitigation measures.

*Mitigation Measures for Impact WR-2: Presence of a transmission line or substation would change the character of a recreation area, diminishing its recreational value*

- V-3a**      **Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors.**
- V-8a**      **Structure design consultation in ABDSP.**
- N-3a**      **Respond to complaints of corona noise.**
- C-6a**      **Reduce adverse visual intrusions to historic built environment properties.**

*Impact WR-3: Presence of a transmission line would permanently preclude recreational activities (Class I and II)*

The Proposed Project would be located along a 3-mile segment of the Trans-County Trail within Grapevine Canyon (near MP 80). If new transmission support structures were sited on or immediately adjacent to the trail, recreationists would be precluded from using these areas. Exact locations of transmission support structures have not been determined. Although preliminary locations have been proposed, these may be modified based on site-specific environmental conditions (i.e., slope stability, presence of sensitive biological or cultural resources). This impact analysis, therefore, conservatively assumes that structures may be potentially sited on trails. Impacts to existing recreational resources resulting from locating new towers on or immediately adjacent to trails within ABDSP would be significant (Class II). Potential preclusion of the use of the Trans-County Trail, and other trails within ABDSP would be mitigated to a less than significant level through implementation of Mitigation Measure WR-3a (Coordinate tower and road locations with the authorized officer for the recreation area).

Park officials have stated that Tamarisk Grove Campground would likely have to be closed and relocated outside of the 500 kV corridor, due to unmitigable impacts to the recreational quality of the campground as described under Impact WR-2. Although there is open camping allowed throughout the majority of ABDSP, closure of Tamarisk Grove Campground would result in the loss of 27 out of 170 improved and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-compliant camping facilities in ABDSP. Preclusion of the use of these camping facilities would result in a significant and unmitigable impact (Class I). Implementation of Mitigation Measure WR-3b would reduce this impact, but not to a less than significant level. Loss of revenue from reduced uses in ABDSP is discussed in Section D.14.6, Socioeconomics, Public Services, and Utilities.

*Mitigation Measure for Impact WR-3: Presence of a transmission line would permanently preclude recreational activities*

- WR-3a**      **Coordinate tower and road locations with the authorized officer for the recreation area.**
- WR-3b**      **Provide funding for planning and physically establishing replacement campsites and facilities.** Should Tamarisk Grove Campground or other established recreation facility in ABDSP be closed by CDPR due to public safety concerns or a significant reduction of recreational value resulting from construction of the Proposed Project or alternative, then SDG&E shall

provide full funding for planning and developing replacement campsites and facilities at a location in ABDSP identified by CDPR that are of comparable quality and capacity to the closed campsite and/or facility. SDG&E shall document its payment to and coordination efforts with CDPR officials and provide this documentation to the CPUC, BLM at least 30 days prior to initiating any SRPL construction that would affect the subject park facility.

***Impact WR-4: Presence of a transmission line in a designated wilderness or wilderness study area would result in loss of wilderness land (Class I)***

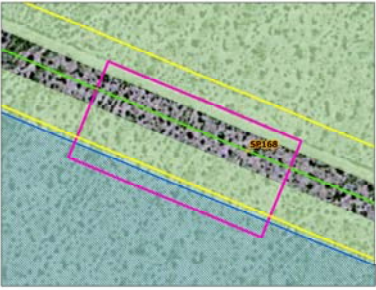
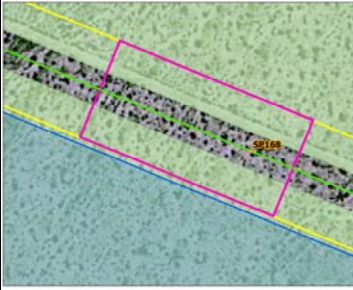
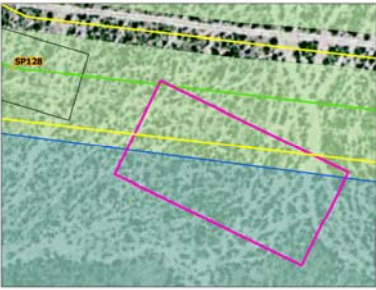
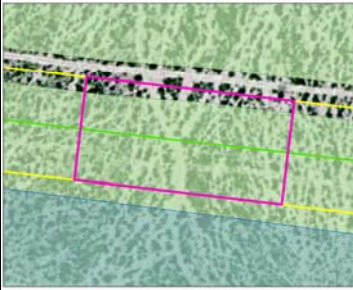
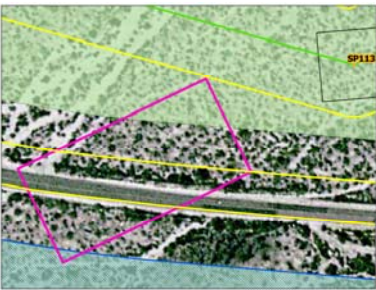
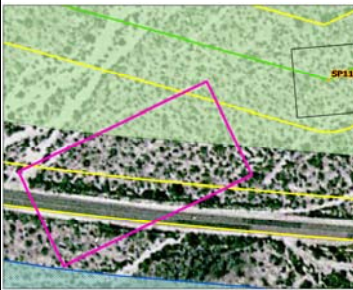
The proposed SRPL Project would require a 50-foot expansion of SDG&E's existing easement throughout ABDSP, and in some locations in Grapevine Canyon, a larger portion of the ROW would be located within wilderness areas. The additional ROW width through Grapevine Canyon would require the use of approximately 50.2 acres of State Wilderness within the Pinyon Ridge Wilderness Area (48.1 acres) and Grapevine Mountain Wilderness Area (1.3 acres) (see Table D.5-3 and Appendix 11B for detailed maps). Proposed SRPL ROW would not be located within Vallecito Mountains Wilderness Area; however, portions of three temporary pull sites for stringing the 500 kV conductor would be located within the Wilderness Area, resulting in 0.8 acres of impact to wilderness. Note that the distinction between temporary and permanent impacts to wilderness is not made because both are prohibited.

As described in Section D.5.3, the presence of a transmission line and the presence and use of construction equipment, and pull sites directly conflict with the definition of a wilderness area, and would require de-designation of the wilderness classification on affected land. No record of the re-classification of California State Wilderness, once established, has been identified. Also, as discussed in more detail in Section D.17, modification of State wilderness designated by SPRC would require a revision to the existing ABDSP General Plan. The loss of land in wilderness areas would be a significant and unmitigable impact (Class I). Although it would not reduce the severity of the impact of the Proposed Project on wilderness areas in ABDSP, Mitigation Measures WR-4a (Purchase additional State wilderness acreage) and WR-4b (Minimize area of project facilities within wilderness land) would offset the significant loss of wilderness land within the Park.



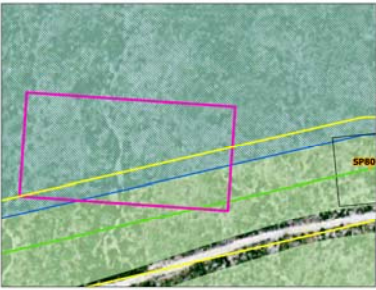
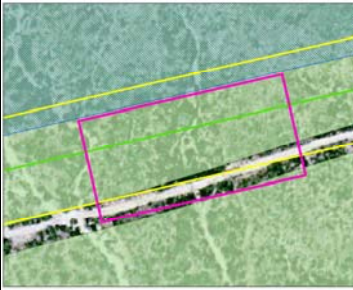
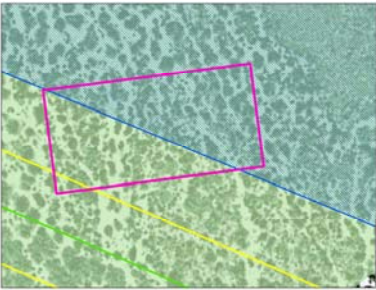
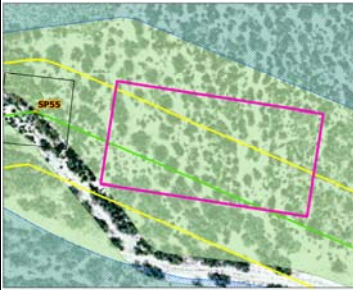
In R-APM-4, SDG&E proposed a 2:1 mitigation ratio for wilderness lands (SDG&E, 2006; page 5.1-33). In coordination with SPRC officials, it was determined that this ratio would not be sufficient compensation for impacts to State wilderness in ABDSP, both because of the inherent value wilderness land and the opinion that re-classification of wilderness would set a precedent for future projects that propose uses incompatible with the definition and purpose of wilderness. Mitigation Measure WR-4a (Purchase additional State wilderness acreage) requires that SDG&E purchase 5.5 acres of new wilderness for each acre removed from wilderness; this ratio was developed using the highest mitigation ratio proposed within this EIR/EIS as a benchmark, reflecting the high value of wilderness land. APM R-APM-4 is superseded by Mitigation Measure WR-4a.

Mitigation Measure WR-4b (Minimize area of project facilities within wilderness lands) would require several minor modifications of the Proposed Project route where permanent or temporary direct effects on State-designated wilderness areas would occur. In the areas defined in Table D.5-3, the route or temporary pull sites could be relocated outside of wilderness, so re-design of Proposed Project facilities could reduce the direct effects on wilderness lands.

**Table D.5-3. Mitigation Measure WR-4b (Minimize project facilities in wilderness land): Modified ROW and Pull Site Locations**

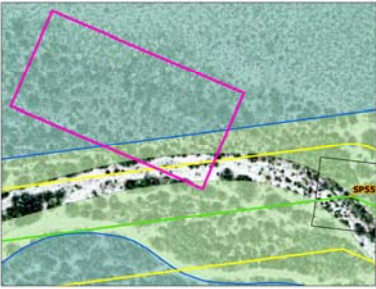
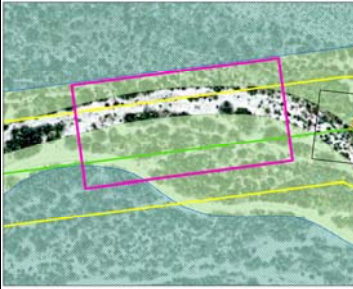
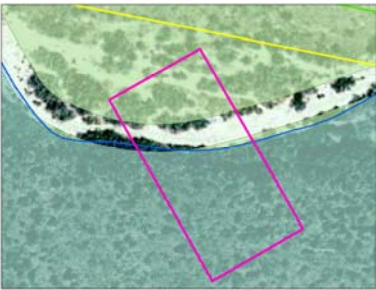

Reference Structure(s) <sup>1</sup>	Facility Type (ROW or Pull Site)	Proposed Project		Mitigation Measure 4b		
		Area in Wilderness (square feet)	Illustration	Illustration	Area in Wilderness (square feet)	Description
SP168 (DW_P06)	Pull site	7,071			0	Contain pull site within proposed ROW at structure SP168 by moving northeast
SP129 (DW_P12)	Pull site	27,073			0	Contain pull site in proposed ROW between structures SP128 and SP129 by moving north
SP113 (DW_P14)	Pull site	359			0	Move pull site (Moved 41 feet to the northeast) toward structure SP113
SP84 – SP72 (DW_P19 & DW_P20)	ROW	315,275	(Refer to Figure D.5-8a)	(Refer to Figure D.5-8a)	0	Maximize use of existing 69 kV ROW by moving ROW south

**Table D.5-3. Mitigation Measure WR-4b (Minimize project facilities in wilderness land): Modified ROW and Pull Site Locations**

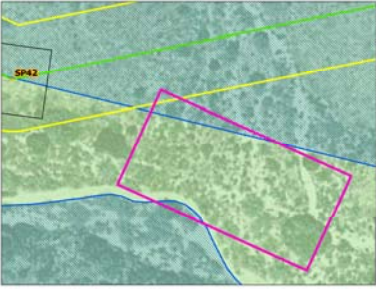
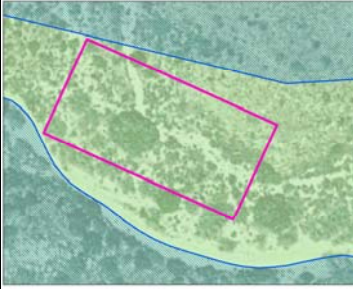
Reference Structure(s) <sup>1</sup>	Facility Type (ROW or Pull Site)	Proposed Project		Mitigation Measure 4b		
		Area in Wilderness (square feet)	Illustration	Illustration	Area in Wilderness (square feet)	Description
SP81 (DW_P19)	Pull site	41,375			0	Contain pull site in modified ROW between structures SP80 and SP81 by moving south
SP80 (DW_P19)	Pull site	37,926			0	Contain pull site in modified ROW between structures SP80 and SP79 by moving south
SP68 – SP65 (DW_P21 & DW_P22)	ROW	17,784	(Refer to Figure D.5-8a)	(Refer to Figure D.5-8a)	0	Maximize use of existing 69 kV ROW by moving ROW southwest
SP56 (DW_P23)	Pull site	24,868			0	Contain pull site in modified ROW between structures SP55 and SP56 by moving south



**Table D.5-3. Mitigation Measure WR-4b (Minimize project facilities in wilderness land): Modified ROW and Pull Site Locations**

Reference Structure(s) <sup>1</sup>	Facility Type (ROW or Pull Site)	Proposed Project		Mitigation Measure 4b		
		Area in Wilderness (square feet)	Illustration	Illustration	Area in Wilderness (square feet)	Description
SP55 (DW_P24)	Pull site	37,779			1,802	Contain pull site in modified ROW at structure SP55 by moving southwest
SP55 – SP54 (DW_P24)	ROW	17,533	(Refer to Figure D.5-8b)	(Refer to Figure D.5-8b)	5,148	Maximize use of existing 69 kV ROW by moving ROW north
SP54 – SP52 (DW_P24)	ROW	59,049	(Refer to Figure D.5-8b)	(Refer to Figure D.5-8b)	4926	Maximize use of existing 69 kV ROW by moving ROW south
SP52 (DW_P24)	Pull site	26,672			0	Contain pull site in proposed ROW between structures SP51 and SP52 by moving north

**Table D.5-3. Mitigation Measure WR-4b (Minimize project facilities in wilderness land): Modified ROW and Pull Site Locations**

Reference Structure(s) <sup>1</sup>	Facility Type (ROW or Pull Site)	Proposed Project		Mitigation Measure 4b		
		Area in Wilderness (square feet)	Illustration	Illustration	Area in Wilderness (square feet)	Description
SP43 (DW_P24)	Pull site	3,860			0	Move pull site southeast out of wilderness
SP42 – SP35 (DW_P25 & DW_P26)	ROW	310,576	(Refer to Figure D.5-8a)	(Refer to Figure D.5-8a)	173,560	Maximize use of existing 69 kV ROW by moving ROW southwest

<sup>1</sup>Reference structure is the nearest structure to the east of the subject facility.

Mitigation Measure 4B
  Proposed Pull Sites
  State Park
  Wilderness Area
 ● Structures
  Existing ROW
  Modified ROW
  Proposed Centerline ROW

Figure D.5-9a. Wilderness and Recreation Areas: Mitigation Measure WR-4b Modified ROW  
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Figure D.5-9b. Wilderness and Recreation Areas: Mitigation Measure WR-4b Modified ROW  
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*Mitigation Measures for Impact WR-4: Presence of a transmission line in a designated wilderness or wilderness study area would result in loss of wilderness land*

**WR-4a Purchase additional State wilderness acreage.** As partial compensation for declassification of existing wilderness within ABDSP, following construction, SDG&E shall acquire lands as partial compensation for the loss of wilderness within ABDSP. The land to be acquired shall be at least five and one half times greater than the acreage of land removed from currently designated wilderness areas. The specific location of the acquired land shall be determined by CDPR officials. Acquired lands must be consistent with the definition of wilderness as defined in Public Resources Code §§ 5019.68, 5093.33(c). The lands shall be transferred to the State within 6 months after the start of operation and shall be administered by CDPR.

**WR-4b Minimize area of project facilities within wilderness lands.** Segments of the Proposed Project ROW and temporary pull sites located within State wilderness shall be minimized by relocating project components to fully use existing ROW or locate project facilities outside of State wilderness lands, where technically feasible. Modifications to the proposed SRPL ROW and pull sites in wilderness areas are presented in Table D.5-3. Figures D.5-9a and D.5-9b show additional detail maps comparing proposed and modified ROW segments. At least 60 days prior to construction, SDG&E shall prepare and submit design plans for the modified SRPL facilities to the CPUC, BLM, and ABDSP for review and approval. Should complete relocation outside of wilderness lands be infeasible due to engineering or environmental constraints, a full feasibility analysis shall be prepared and submitted to CPUC, BLM, and ABDSP with adequate justification for review and approval.

## D.5.7 Central Link Impacts and Mitigation Measures

### Construction Impacts

*Impact WR-1: Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to recreation or wilderness areas (Class II)*

Within the Central Link, the Proposed Project would generally follow a trail within San Dieguito River Park between MP 106.7 and MP 108.2. The Proposed Project would cross the PCT at MP 88.7. Construction activities along the PCT, Mataguay Scout Ranch trails, and San Dieguito River Park trails would create a hazard to recreationists and a temporary closure of these trails during project construction would result in a significant impact (Class II). In order to allow for continued use of the trails, Mitigation Measure WR-1b (Provide temporary detours for trail users) would be implemented. Additionally, implementation of Mitigation Measures WR-1a (Coordinate construction schedule with the authorized officer for the recreation area) and WR-1c (Coordinate with local agencies to identify alternative recreation areas) would reduce construction-related impacts of the Proposed Project to recreational resources to less than significant levels.

Although SDG&E commits to providing advance notice and adequate signage, and to time construction activities to avoid major holidays through implementation of APMs R-APM-2a through 2f, Mitigation Measure WR-1a presents additional detail. Therefore, APMs R-APM-2a through 2f are superseded by Mitigation Measure WR-1a. The full text of the mitigation measures appears in Appendix 12.

*Mitigation Measure for Impact WR-1: Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to recreation or wilderness areas*

**WR-1a** Coordinate construction schedule and activities with the authorized officer for the recreation area.

**WR-1b** Provide temporary detours for trail users.

**WR-1c** Coordinate with local agencies to identify alternative recreation areas.

#### Operational Impacts

*Impact WR-2: Presence of a transmission line or substation would change the character of a recreation area, diminishing its recreational value (Class I)*

From the western boundary of ABDSP, the Proposed Project would run parallel to and approximately 1 mile east of the PCT for approximately 5 miles. Along this segment, the Proposed Project would follow the existing SDG&E 69 kV transmission line ROW and the existing 69 kV overhead line would be under built onto the SRPL towers. At MP 87.7, the existing 69 kV circuits would separate from the SRPL towers and the Proposed Project would turn due west in a new ROW. In this configuration, the Proposed Project would intersect the PCT at MP 88.6, just north of the San Felipe Hills WSA.

Continuing west, the proposed 230 kV lines would span the access road to the Mataguay Scout Ranch and would cross the High Adventure Backpack Trail, which connects to the PCT. As described in Section D.3.7, Visual Resources, the Proposed Project would not be visible from the facilities in the Valley but would be visible from the trail to Pardee Outpost.

The SRPL ROW would pass through the San Dieguito River Park and adjacent to the Santa Ysabel Open Space Preserve parallel to an existing 69 kV overhead transmission line, north of the town of Santa Ysabel between MP 106.8 and 108.2. Within these areas, construction of the 500 kV or 230 kV transmission lines would introduce a new feature, much more industrial in character than the existing 69 kV lines that are currently in the ROW. The proposed 500 kV transmission structures in the vicinity of the PCT and the proposed 230 kV transmission structures through San Dieguito River Park would be 150-160 and 120 feet tall, respectively.

As described in Section D.3.5.2, Visual Resources, the increase in structural complexity and industrial character resulting from presence of the Proposed Project would contrast with the surrounding natural landscape. Additionally, the corona noise from the proposed 500 kV segment would substantially elevate the ambient noise levels within 500 feet of the edge of the 500 kV ROW in the natural areas between ABDSP and the proposed Central East Substation (i.e., San Felipe Hills WSA and the PCT corridor). Refer to Section D.8.5.3 for additional information on noise impacts in the Central Link.

Visual resource and noise impacts would directly adversely affect the character of recreation areas within the Central Link and result in a significant and unmitigable impact (Class I). Visual Resources Mitigation Measure V-3a (Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors) and Noise Mitigation Measure N-3a (Respond to complaints of corona noise) are presented to reduce impacts to the recreational value of the PCT, San Felipe Hills WSA, San Dieguito River Park, and Santa Ysabel Open Space Preserve within the Central Link, but the impact would remain significant for these recreation areas. The full text of the visual and noise mitigation measures presented below is provided in Appendix 12, along with the full text of all other mitigation measures.



*Mitigation Measures for Impact WR-2: Presence of a transmission line or substation would change the character of a recreation area, diminishing its recreational value*

**V-3a Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors.**

**N-3a Respond to complaints of corona noise.**

*Impact WR-3: Presence of a transmission line would permanently preclude recreational activities (Class II)*

As described in Section D.5.2.3, the Proposed Project would cross the PCT at MP 88.6. If transmission support structures were sited on or immediately adjacent to the trail, recreationists would be precluded from these locations. Exact locations of transmission support structures have not been determined. Although preliminary locations have been proposed, these may be modified based on site-specific environmental conditions (i.e., slope stability, presence of sensitive biological or cultural resources). This impact analysis, therefore, conservatively assumes that structures would be sited on trails. Impacts to existing recreational resources that resulted from locating new towers on or immediately adjacent to the trail would be significant (Class II). Preclusion of the use of the PCT would be mitigated to a less than significant level through implementation of Mitigation Measure WR-3a (Coordinate tower and road locations with the authorized officer for the recreation area).

*Mitigation Measure for Impact WR-3: Presence of a transmission line would permanently preclude recreational activities*

**WR-3a Coordinate tower and road locations with the authorized officer for the recreation area.**

*Impact WR-4: Presence of a transmission line in a designated wilderness or wilderness study area would result in loss of wilderness land (No Impact)*

The proposed SRPL Project would be constructed outside of and generally east and north of the San Felipe Hills WSA, as illustrated in Figure D.5-4. Presence of the Proposed Project would not require new ROW within the WSA. As such, wilderness land would not be lost, and no impact would occur.

#### Proposed Central East Substation

The Central East Substation would be constructed on a parcel owned by SDG&E near the community of San Felipe, west of S2 and approximately 1.5 miles south of the intersection of S2 and S22. The substation would not be sited near a recreation area or wilderness area. As such, no construction or operation-related impacts would occur to recreational or wilderness resources.

## D.5.8 Inland Valley Link Impacts and Mitigation Measures

### Construction Impacts

*Impact WR-1: Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to recreation or wilderness areas (Class II)*

The Proposed Project would enter the northeastern portion of the Mt. Gower Open Space Preserve as an overhead 230 kV transmission line and then transition from overhead to underground at MP 117.2, within the Preserve. At this point, the underground segment of the Proposed Project would follow an unpaved road through the Preserve to Gunn Stage Road at the Preserve's western boundary. The public lands around the Mt. Gower Preserve are under a lease to the San Diego County Parks and Recreation

Department. BLM retains ownership of these lands. Therefore, construction of the proposed route across these lands would require consultation with the County and BLM, as required by Mitigation Measure WR-1a (Coordinate construction schedule and activities with the authorized officer for the recreation area). The full text of the mitigation measures appears in Appendix 12.

The proposed underground segment along San Vicente Road would not traverse the Simon Park Open Space Preserve, but would be located approximately 0.5 miles from the southern boundary of the Preserve. The Proposed Project would cross the Barnett Ranch Open Space Preserve as an overhead 230 kV transmission line between MPs 122 and 123.7. It would be constructed overhead and parallel to an existing 69 kV transmission line through 0.23 miles of the Boulder Oaks Open Space Preserve east of SR67, near MP 128, through 1.3 miles of the northern portion of the San Vicente Highlands Open Space Preserve between MP 128.5 and MP 129.8, through 0.2 miles of the north portion of Sycamore Canyon Open Space Preserve and within 0.25 miles of Goodan Ranch Open Space Preserve.

Additionally, the Proposed Project would intersect the Trans-County Trail within the Sycamore Canyon Open Space Preserve, near MP 132 and would be located adjacent to the northwestern boundary of the privately owned San Vicente Resort and Golf Club near MP 120.

Project construction activities would create a number of temporary impacts that would diminish the value of the open space preserves and golf club for their duration. Noise, dust and traffic generated during construction activities would negatively affect a visitor's enjoyment of these recreation areas. Recreationists may be less likely to visit these resources during project construction.

In addition, the following open space preserves would be traversed by the Proposed Project and may temporarily close some of their recreational facilities in order to ensure the safety of recreationist during construction: Mt. Gower, Barnett Ranch, Boulder Oaks, San Vicente Highlands, and Sycamore Canyon (including the Trans-County Trail).

Temporary closure would cause a temporary reduction of access and visitation and thus would result in significant impacts (Class II). Construction-related impacts to recreation at the open space preserves would be mitigated to a less than significant level through implementation of Mitigation Measures WR-1a (Coordinate construction schedule and activities with the authorized officer for the recreation area), WR-1b (Provide temporary detours for trail users) and WR-1c (Coordinate with local agencies to identify alternative recreation areas).

*Mitigation Measure for Impact WR-1: Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to recreation or wilderness areas*

- WR-1a**     **Coordinate construction schedule and activities with the authorized officer for the recreation area.**
- WR-1b**     **Provide temporary detours for trail users.**
- WR-1c**     **Coordinate with local agencies to identify alternative recreation areas.**

#### Operational Impacts

*Impact WR-2: Presence of a transmission line or substation would change the character of a recreation area, diminishing its recreational value (Class I)*

The Proposed Project (in this area, a new double-circuit 230 kV transmission line) would be constructed overhead and parallel to an existing 69 kV transmission line through five open space preserves: Mt.

Gower, Barnett Ranch, Boulder Oaks, San Vicente Highlands, and Sycamore Canyon Open Space Preserves. The Proposed Project would span the Trans-County Trail near MP 132, within the Sycamore Canyon Open Space Preserve. Because the Proposed Project towers would be steel (as opposed to the existing wood poles) and much greater in height than the existing 69 kV towers, the viewshed in the area of these recreational facilities would be altered (see Section D.3.5.4, Visual Resources) and the character of the recreation areas would be diminished. Impacts to recreation resulting from siting new transmission towers or access roads in or near these resources would result in significant and unmitigable impacts (Class I). Although it would not reduce the severity of the impact of the Proposed Project on recreational resources to less than significant, Mitigation Measure V-3a (Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors) is presented. The full text of this mitigation measure is provided in Appendix 12, along with the full text of all other mitigation measures.

*Mitigation Measures for Impact WR-2: Presence of a transmission line or substation would change the character of a recreation area, diminishing its recreational value*

**V-3a Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors.**

*Impact WR-3: Presence of a transmission line would permanently preclude recreational activities (Class II)*

The Proposed Project would intersect the Trans-County Trail near MP 132 and would traverse five San Diego County open space preserves and the San Dieguito River Park. However, the Proposed Project would be located within an existing ROW through the Barnett Ranch, Boulder Oaks, San Vicente Highlands, and Sycamore Canyon Open Space Preserves; no new ROW would be acquired.

If transmission support structures were sited on or immediately adjacent to the Trans-County Trail and trails within the San Dieguito River Park and Mt. Gower Open Space Preserve, recreationists would be precluded from these locations. Exact locations of transmission support structures have not been determined. Although preliminary locations have been proposed, these may be modified based on site-specific environmental conditions (i.e., slope stability, presence of sensitive biological or cultural resources). This impact analysis, therefore, conservatively assumes that structures would be potentially sited on trails. Impacts to existing recreational resources that resulted from locating new towers on or immediately adjacent to the trail would be significant (Class II). Preclusion of the use of recreational resources within the Inland Valley Link would be mitigated to a less than significant level through implementation of Mitigation Measure WR-3a (Coordinate tower and road locations with the authorized officer for the recreation area).

*Mitigation Measure for Impact WR-3: Presence of a transmission line would permanently preclude recreational activities*

**WR-3a Coordinate tower and road locations with the authorized officer for the recreation area.**

*Impact WR-4: Presence of a transmission line in a designated wilderness or wilderness study area would result in loss of wilderness land (No Impact)*

There are no wilderness areas or WSAs within the Inland Valley Link. As such, impacts to these resources would not occur.

## D.5.9 Coastal Link Impacts and Mitigation Measures

### Construction Impacts

***Impact WR-1: Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to recreation or wilderness areas (Class II)***

A 5.2-mile segment of the Proposed Project would be located within the north portion of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, including a 2.4-mile underground segment along a trail just north of Peñasquitos Creek. The Proposed Project within the Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve would consist of both overhead and underground segments. The Trans-County Trail originates near the Peñasquitos Substation and uses existing trails through Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. Within the Coastal Link, the Proposed Project would intersect the Trans-County Trail at MPs 141.4 and 147.2.

There are a number of neighborhood parks located near the Proposed Project:

- The Rancho Peñasquitos Skate Park is located north of Ted Williams Parkway and approximately 0.25 miles northeast of an underground segment of the proposed SRPL near MP 142.2
- The underground portion of the Proposed Project would traverse the southern portion of the proposed Town Center Park near MP 142.5 and the northern portion of Views West Neighborhood Park near MP 142.6
- An overhead segment of the Proposed Project would be located adjacent to the north boundary of the Spring Canyon Neighborhood Park near MP 140.3
- The SRPL would be located overhead approximately 0.2 miles north east of the Scripps Ranch Community Park
- The Proposed Project would be located approximately 0.15 miles north of Cypress Canyon Park and 0.2 miles east of Torrey Hills Community Park.

Additionally, the Proposed Project would traverse various bikeways within the City of San Diego, including

- Scripps Poway Parkway (SRPL would parallel for 0.8 miles before intersecting at MP 140),
- Poway Road (SRPL would intersect at MP 141.3),
- Rancho Peñasquitos Boulevard (SRPL would parallel bikeway for 0.6 miles before intersecting at MP 142.3),
- SR56 Bike Path (underground segment of SRPL would be constructed adjacent to bike path between MPs 142.4 and 143.8),
- Black Mountain Road (SRPL would intersect MP 143.5),
- Park Village Road (SRPL would be constructed underground within road for 0.8 miles between MPs 143.9 and 145).

Project construction would create a number of temporary impacts that would diminish the recreation value of the preserve and parks for its duration. Noise, dust and traffic generated during construction activities would negatively affect a visitor's enjoyment of these recreation areas. Recreationists may be less likely to visit these resources during project construction. In addition, Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve may temporarily close some of its recreational facilities in order to ensure the safety of recreationists during construction. Temporary closure would cause a temporary reduction of access and visitation and would thus result in significant impacts (Class II). Construction-related impacts to recrea-

tion at the open space preserves would be mitigated to a less than significant level through implementation of Mitigation Measures WR-1a (Coordinate construction schedule and activities with the authorized officer for the recreation area), WR-1b (Provide temporary detours for trail users) and WR-1c (Coordinate with local agencies to identify alternative recreation areas).

*Mitigation Measure for Impact WR-1: Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to recreation or wilderness areas*

**WR-1a** Coordinate construction schedule and activities with the authorized officer for the recreation area.

**WR-1b** Provide temporary detours for trail users.

**WR-1c** Coordinate with local agencies to identify alternative recreation areas.

### Operational Impacts

*Impact WR-2: Presence of a transmission line or substation would change the character of a recreation area, diminishing its recreational value (Class III)*

As described in Section D.5.2.5., the Proposed Project would be within 0.25 miles of six urban parks (Cypress Canyon Park, Scripps Ranch Community Park, Spring Canyon Neighborhood Park, Views West Park, Town Center Park, and Torrey Hills Community Park) and a large portion of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. The Proposed Project within the northern portion of the Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve would consist of a 2.8-mile overhead segment requiring 15 steel poles and a 2.4-mile underground segment along a trail north of Peñasquitos Creek. The Preserve is located approximately 1.5 miles south of SR56 and less than 0.3 miles east of the junction of Interstate 5 and Interstate 805.

Within the Coastal Link, the proposed overhead 230 kV transmission line would be sited in an existing utility corridor that presently contains three circuits on two sets of separate structures (230 kV and 69 kV on steel poles, 138 on wood H-frame towers); the 138 kV circuit would be relocated to the SRPL structures and the wood H-frames towers would be removed. This configuration is illustrated in Figure D.5-6. Although the SRPL structures would be significantly taller than the existing structures proposed for removal, the Proposed Project would not introduce a new industrial use across an undeveloped recreational resource. Therefore, impacts would be adverse but less than significant and no mitigation is required (Class III).

*Impact WR-3: Presence of a transmission line would permanently preclude recreational activities (No Impact)*

Although construction of the Proposed Project would result in temporary impacts to recreational resources as described above, implementation of project components would not permanently preclude access to the existing recreational resources. Within the Coastal Link, the overhead portion of the Proposed Project would be located within an existing ROW; no new ROW would be acquired. As such, no operational impacts resulting in permanent preclusion of users from recreational resources would occur.

*Impact WR-4: Presence of a transmission line in a designated wilderness or wilderness study area would result in loss of wilderness land (No Impact)*

There are no wilderness areas or WSAs within the Coastal Link. As such, impacts to these resources would not occur.

### Modifications to Sycamore Canyon Substation

All proposed modifications and associated staging and access requirements would be located within the previously disturbed area of the existing SDG&E Sycamore Canyon Substation property. The substation is not near any recreation or wilderness areas. Therefore, no impacts to recreational resources or wilderness areas would occur.

### Modifications to Peñasquitos Substation

All proposed modifications and associated staging and access requirements would be located within the previously disturbed area of the existing SDG&E Peñasquitos Substation property. The substation is not near any recreation or wilderness areas. Therefore, no impacts to recreational resources or wilderness areas would occur.

## D.5.10 Other System Upgrades – Impacts and Mitigation Measures

### Reconductor Sycamore Canyon to Elliot 69 kV Line

The reconductoring of the existing 69 kV transmission line between Sycamore Canyon Substation and Elliot Substation would require access road improvements, replacement of 11 existing poles, replacement of porcelain insulators with polymer insulators, and replacement of the conductors. Construction would occur within the existing right-of-way. A 3-mile segment of the existing Sycamore Canyon–Elliot 69 kV transmission line is located within the northwestern portion of the Mission Trails Regional Park (MTRP) near the Fortuna Saddle, Rim, and Quarry Loop Trails.

### Construction Impacts

*Impact WR-1: Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to recreation or wilderness areas (Class II)*

Project construction activities would create a number of temporary impacts that would diminish the value of MTRP for their duration. For example, the noise, dust and traffic generated during construction activities would negatively affect a visitor's enjoyment of this recreation area. Recreationists may be less likely to visit MTRP during project construction. In addition, MTRP would be likely to temporarily close some recreational facilities in order to ensure the safety of recreationists during the reconductor. Temporary closure would cause a temporary reduction of access and visitation and thus would result in significant impacts (Class II). Construction-related impacts to recreation at the open space preserves would be mitigated to a less than significant level through implementation of Mitigation Measures WR-1a (Coordinate construction schedule and activities with the authorized officer for the recreation area), WR-1b (Provide temporary detours for trail users) and WR-1c (Coordinate with local agencies to identify alternative recreation areas). The full text of the mitigation measures appears in Appendix 12.

*Mitigation Measure for Impact WR-1: Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to recreation or wilderness areas*

- WR-1a**     **Coordinate construction schedule and activities with the authorized officer for the recreation area.**
- WR-1b**     **Provide temporary detours for trail users.**
- WR-1c**     **Coordinate with local agencies to identify alternative recreation areas.**

## Operational Impacts

### ***Impact WR-2: Presence of a transmission line or substation would change the character of a recreation area, diminishing its recreational value (No Impact)***

Although construction of the Proposed Project would result in temporary impacts to recreational resources as described above, implementation of project components would not permanently change the character of MTRP. The proposed reconductor would require replacement of existing transmission hardware within an existing ROW and no new structures would be installed. Replacement poles would be of the same height and similar composition as the existing wood poles. As such, no operational impacts resulting in permanent reduction of the recreational value of MTRP would occur.

### ***Impact WR-3: Presence of a transmission line would permanently preclude recreational activities (No Impact)***

Although construction of the Proposed Project would result in temporary impacts to recreational resources as described above, implementation of project components would not permanently preclude access to the existing recreational resources. Within MTRP, the overhead portion of the Proposed Project would be located within an existing ROW; no new ROW would be acquired. As such, no operational impacts resulting in permanent preclusion of users from recreational resources would occur.

### ***Impact WR-4: Presence of a transmission line in a designated wilderness or wilderness study area would result in loss of wilderness land (No Impact)***

There are no wilderness areas or WSAs in the vicinity of the existing Sycamore Canyon to Elliot transmission line. As such, impacts to these resources would not occur.

## Modifications to San Luis Rey Substation

All proposed modifications and associated staging and access requirements would be located within the previously disturbed area of the existing SDG&E San Luis Rey Substation property. The substation is not near any recreation or wilderness areas. Therefore, no impacts to recreational resources or wilderness areas would occur.

## Modifications to South Bay Substation

All proposed modifications and associated staging and access requirements would be located within the previously disturbed area of the existing SDG&E South Bay Substation property. The substation is not near any recreation or wilderness areas. Therefore, no impacts to recreational resources or wilderness areas would occur.

## D.5.11 Future Transmission System Expansion

The Proposed Project would facilitate the possible future construction of additional 230 kV and 500 kV transmission lines. These lines are not proposed at this time, but because the construction of the Proposed Project would include a substation and create new transmission corridors that could be used by these additional circuits, impact analysis is presented in this EIR/EIS.

### D.5.11.1 Environmental Setting – 230 kV Future Transmission System Expansion

As described in Section B.2.7, the Central East Substation that would be built as a part of the Proposed Project would accommodate up to six 230 kV circuits. Only two circuits are proposed by SDG&E at this time, but construction of additional 230 kV circuits out of the Central East Substation may be required within the next 10 years. This section considers the impacts of construction and operation of these potential future transmission lines. Based on information provided by SDG&E, there are four substation endpoints and five routes that would be most likely for these future lines; each is addressed below. Figure B-12a illustrates the potential routes of each of the 230 kV transmission lines.

#### Central East Substation to Sycamore Canyon or Peñasquitos Substation

The new 230 kV line would most likely follow the proposed SRPL project route from the Central East Substation to Sycamore Canyon or Peñasquitos Substation and would pass through the Central Link, Inland Valley Link and Coastal Link. Therefore, the environmental setting for the FTSE corridor between Central East Substation and Sycamore Canyon or Peñasquitos Substation would be the same as the Proposed Project, which is described in Sections D.5.2.3 (Central Link), D.5.2.4 (Inland Valley Link), and D.5.2.5 (Coastal Link).

#### Central East Substation to Mission Substation

The new 230 kV line would most likely follow the proposed SRPL project route from the Central East Substation to the Sycamore Canyon Substation. Therefore, the environmental setting for the future 230 kV line would be the same as for the proposed SRPL project from these locations. At the Sycamore Canyon Substation, the 230 kV line would turn southwest and would most likely follow an existing 69 kV transmission line corridor that runs between Sycamore Canyon and Elliot Substations and traverses the northwest portion of the Mission Trails Regional Park (MTRP), which is described in Section D.5.2.6. Installation of a future 230 kV line between the Sycamore Canyon and Elliot Substations would occur mostly on undeveloped land under the jurisdiction of the Department of Defense (i.e., MCAS Miramar). From Elliot Substation, the route would continue southwest within the existing 69 kV corridor, through Mission Trails Regional Park, and cross I-15 to terminate at the existing Mission Substation, which is near the intersection of I-8 and I-805.

#### Central East Substation to Los Coches Substation

The new 230 kV line would most likely follow the proposed SRPL project route from the Central East Substation to 1.0 mile south of the Creelman Substation (MP 122.2) in the Town of Ramona. Therefore, the environmental setting for the future 230 kV transmission line would be the same as for the proposed SRPL project from these locations. At MP 122.2, the future expansion 230 kV line could turn south following the existing Creelman-Lakeside 69 kV corridor through unincorporated San Diego County and then 1.6 miles through largely hilly open space on the Barona Reservation east of the San Vicente Reservoir and west of the Barona Creek Golf Club, the Barona Valley Resort and Casino, and Oak Oasis Open Space Preserve. The route would then pass through or adjacent to Louis A. Stelzer County Park, cross the San Diego River and terminate at the existing Los Coches Substation northwest of Lake Jennings near Lake Jennings County Park and the community of Lakeside. These recreation areas are described below.

**San Vicente Reservoir.** San Vicente Reservoir is located approximately 25 miles northeast of the City of San Diego and is a deep, steep-sided reservoir on San Vicente Creek. When full the reservoir has



1,069 surface acres, a maximum water depth of 190 feet, and 14 miles of shoreline. Recreational activities include boating, waterskiing, fishing, and picnicking.

**Barona Valley Resort and Casino.** The Barona Valley Resort and Casino is located near the community of Lakeside and was established by the Barona Indian Tribe. The resort includes a hotel, casino, restaurants, spa, and entertainment. Additionally, the resort includes the Barona Creek Golf Club, a public-access, 18-hole golf course and clubhouse.

**Oak Oasis Open Space Preserve.** Oak Oasis Open Space Preserve is located approximately 3.75 miles northeast of the community of Lakeside and consists of 397 acres of oak woodland, boulder-dotted hillsides, and mature stands of chaparral. The future 110-mile Trans-County Trail is planned to traverse the Preserve from east to west. Recreational opportunities include hiking and bird watching.

**Louis A. Stelzer County Park.** Louis A. Stelzer County Park is located just north of the San Diego River and the community of Lakeside and includes 340 acres of oak woodland and coastal sage scrub. There is a natural year-round spring that provides water for riparian habitat and oak trees that are approximately one hundred years old. Recreational resources and activities include children's playgrounds, horse-shoe pits, picnicking, camping, hiking, and bird watching.

**Lake Jennings.** Lake Jennings is located on the east side of the community of Lakeside and is a drinking water reservoir under the jurisdiction of the Helix Irrigation District. The lake is used for recreational activities including fishing, hiking, and bird watching.

**Lake Jennings County Park.** Lake Jennings County Park is located on the northwest side of Lake Jennings, which is on the east side of the community of Lakeside. Lake Jennings is the main attraction at the park. Recreational activities include camping, fishing, hiking, and bird watching.

## Central East Substation to Escondido Substation

### *Northern Route*

From the proposed Central East Substation, the future 230 kV transmission line route would travel west through Vista Irrigation District (VID) land paralleling the proposed SRPL route for approximately 6.6 miles to its intersection with SR79. At SR79, the line would diverge from the proposed SRPL route and would head north parallel to SR79 for approximately 1.2 miles to the intersection of S2 and SR79 at the existing Warner Substation. From there, the route would parallel the existing 69 kV corridor west across open space owned by (VID) north of Lake Henshaw and then turn southwest, following the northwest edge of the lake to SR76.

At SR76, the route would turn west-northwest paralleling SR76 for 13.3 miles and following the existing Warners-Rincon 69 kV transmission corridor across and/or adjacent to parcels of the Cleveland National Forest for approximately 4 miles. The route would also traverse La Jolla Reservation for 6 miles and connect to Rincon Substation, which is just north of the Rincon Reservation at the S6 intersection with SR76. The route is primarily agricultural/open space with scattered rural residences.

At Rincon Substation, the route would diverge from SR76 and would follow the existing Rincon-Escondido 69 kV corridor, generally parallel to S6, through the Rincon Reservation for 3 miles. South of the Rincon Reservation, the route would turn west toward the Valley Center Substation, generally parallel to S6, and passing on the west side of Hellhole Canyon County Open Space Preserve (approximately 0.30 miles from the ROW). East of S6, the route would turn south for 1.6 miles before turning

southwest, crossing S6, and entering the City of Escondido after approximately 0.75 miles. The new line could run adjacent to or cross Daley Ranch near Escondido. In the City of Escondido, the route would turn south and then southwest for approximately 8 miles following the existing 69 kV corridor into Escondido Substation. The northern portion of the Central East Substation to Escondido Substation route would traverse or be adjacent to a variety of recreation areas as described below.

**Lake Henshaw.** Lake Henshaw is located just north of the intersection of SR76 and SR79. The southwest side of the lake is bordered by SR76 and the northwest side is bordered by the Cleveland National Forest. On the east side of the lake is the Rancho San Jose Del Valle. The water is used for drinking water and is under the jurisdiction of VID. Recreational activities include a resort, fishing, camping, hiking, and bird watching.

**Cleveland National Forest.** The FTSE corridor would follow the existing Warners-Rincon 69 kV transmission corridor across and/or adjacent to parcels of the Cleveland National Forest. The route would pass between the Henshaw scenic overlook and Lake Henshaw, and would be located north of the San Luis Rey picnic area along SR76 and the San Luis Rey River on CNF land.

**Hellhole Canyon County Open Space Preserve.** Hellhole Canyon Preserve is a 1,712-acre preserve located approximately 3.75 miles east of the community of Valley Center. The preserve contains dense mixed chaparral, characterized by scrub oak, manzanita, redberry, and ceanothus. Recreational activities include hiking, equestrian use, and bird watching. The FTSE corridor would be located east of the Preserve on the west (opposite) side of SR76.

**Daley Ranch.** Daley Ranch, a 3,058-acre conservation area owned and administered by the City of Escondido, is located in the northeastern portion of the City of Escondido, north of Dixon Lake and west of Valley Center Road. The area contains a number of vegetation communities including oak woodlands, coastal sage scrub and chaparral, grasslands, and riparian habitat. Recreational activities include hiking, mountain biking, and equestrian use.

### *Southern Route*

This route would follow the “Central East Substation to Peñasquitos Substation” route described above, diverging from the proposed route at the Chicarita Substation. From the existing Chicarita Substation, the route would turn north along existing 230 kV and 69 kV transmission lines for approximately 6.2 miles. Upon entering San Dieguito River Park planning area, it would jog west-northwest for 1 mile along the existing lines. The route would follow the existing 69 kV line east and north along the west bank of Hodges Reservoir and crossing in and out of the City of Escondido for another 7.2 miles to terminate at Escondido Substation. The southern portion of the Central East Substation to Escondido Substation route would traverse or be adjacent to a variety of recreation areas as described below.

**Jack’s Pond Park.** Jack’s Pond Park is a 23-acre park under the jurisdiction of the City of San Marcos. The park features hiking along the Jack’s Pond trail, picnicking, and a nature center. Jack’s Pond trail is the first segment of a planned trail network within the City of San Marcos (City of San Marcos, 2007).

**Hodges Reservoir.** Hodges Reservoir and the surrounding recreation area are administered by the City of San Diego. Recreation opportunities include fishing, boating, bike and horseback riding, and picnicking (San Diego City DPR, 2007c). The trails in the Hodges Reservoir area are within the San Dieguito River Park planning area and are part of the planned Coast-to-Crest trail, which is described in Section D.5.2.3.

**Black Mountain Open Space Park.** Black Mountain Open Space Park is owned and managed by the City of San Diego and encompasses Black Mountain (elev. 1,554 feet). This 2,352-acre park includes trails that traverse most of the park, including the summit of Black Mountain, and are accessible to hikers, bicyclists, and equestrians. Expansive views are available from the top of Black Mountain (San Diego City DPR, 2007d).

**Hilltop Community Park.** Hilltop Community Park includes a recreation center, basketball courts, and open space (San Diego City DPR, 2007e). The trailhead to access the Summit trail, which traverses the Black Mountain Open Space Park, is located on the perimeter of the Hilltop Community Park.

## D.5.11.2 Environmental Impacts – 230 kV Future Transmission System Expansion

### Construction Impacts

*Impact WR-1: Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to recreation or wilderness areas (Class II)*

Project construction activities would create a number of temporary impacts that would diminish the value of the open space preserves, trails, parks, lakes, resorts and golf clubs for their duration. For example, the noise, dust and traffic generated during construction activities would negatively affect a visitor's enjoyment of these recreation areas. Recreationists may be less likely to visit these resources during project construction. In addition, some open space preserves and parks (e.g., Daley Ranch) may temporarily close some of their recreational facilities in order to ensure the safety of recreationists during construction. Temporary closure would cause a temporary reduction of access and visitation and thus would result in potentially significant impacts (Class II).

The temporary reduction in access and visitation to recreational and wilderness areas is mitigable to less than significant levels through implementation of Mitigation Measures WR-1a (Coordinate construction schedule and activities with the authorized officer for the recreation area), WR-1b (Provide temporary detours for trail users), and WR-1c (Coordinate with local agencies to identify alternative recreation areas) could apply. The full text of the mitigation measures appears in Appendix 12.

*Mitigation Measures for Impact WR-1: Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to recreation or wilderness areas*

- WR-1a**     **Coordinate construction schedule and activities with the authorized officer for the recreation area.**
- WR-1b**     **Provide temporary detours for trail users.**
- WR-1c**     **Coordinate with local agencies to identify alternative recreation areas.**

### Operational Impacts

*Impact WR-2: Presence of a transmission line or substation would change the character of a recreation area, diminishing its recreational value (Class I)*

The majority of the routes for the future 230 kV lines follow existing 69 kV routes. However, in comparison to the existing 69 kV support structures, the structures required to support the new 230 kV lines would be substantially taller and more industrial in appearance. Also, construction of the Future Transmission System Expansion scenario would require multiple circuits and therefore multiple sets of transmission support structures, thereby exacerbating impacts to recreational resources from a single set of

230 kV towers. In addition to visual resource impacts affecting recreation areas, operation of the future lines would produce constant corona noise, audible to recreationists near the transmission lines, which would be disturbing in quiet areas (e.g., CNF, Santa Ysabel Open Space Preserve, Mt. Gower Open Space Preserve, and Mission Trails Regional Park). The corona noise and adverse impact on visual resources would change the character of the recreation areas from which the future 230 kV lines would be visible or audible. The diminution of the recreational value of affected facilities would result in a significant and unmitigable impact (Class I).

During the environmental review process for the future 230 kV transmission lines, mitigation measures would be identified to address the operational impacts listed above. While implementation of mitigation measures could minimize the impact of the transmission lines and their structures on recreational areas, it is possible that this impact cannot be mitigated to an insignificant level (Class I). Mitigation Measure V-3a (Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors) and Mitigation Measure N-3a (Respond to complaints of corona noise) would reduce the impact, but not below significant and unmitigable.

*Mitigation Measures for Impact WR-2: Presence of a transmission line or substation would change the character of a recreation area, diminishing its recreational value*

**V-3a        Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors.**

**N-3a        Respond to complaints of corona noise.**

*Impact WR-3: Presence of a transmission line would permanently preclude recreational activities (Class II)*

If future transmission system support structures were sited on or immediately adjacent to trails, recreationists would be precluded from these locations (e.g., Trans-County trail and San Dieguito River Park trails). However, exact locations of transmission support structures have not been determined. This impact analysis, therefore, conservatively assumes that structures would be sited on trails. Impacts to existing recreational resources that resulted from locating new towers on or immediately adjacent to the trail generally would be considered significant, but mitigable (Class II). Preclusion of the use of trails would be mitigated to a less than significant level through implementation of Mitigation Measure WR-3a (Coordinate tower and road locations with the authorized officer for the recreation area).

*Mitigation Measure for Impact WR-3: Presence of a transmission line would permanently preclude recreational activities*

**WR-3a        Coordinate tower and road locations with the authorized officer for the recreation area.**

*Impact WR-4: Presence of a transmission line in a designated wilderness or wilderness study area would result in loss of wilderness land (No Impact)*

There are no wilderness areas or WSAs that would be affected by the expected Future Expansion alignments. As such, impacts to these resources would not occur.

### D.5.11.3 Environmental Setting – 500 kV Future Transmission System Expansion

As described in Section B.7.2 and illustrated in Figure B-12b, the potential Future 500 kV Circuit would connect the proposed Central East Substation to the Southern California Edison (SCE) transmission system at a new substation north of Interstate 15 (I-15), about 20 miles west of SCE's Valley Substation.

The potential 500 kV FTSE route would traverse or be adjacent to a variety of recreation areas as described below. The portion of the potential 500 kV route between the proposed Central East Substation and the existing Rincon Substation is the same as part of the Northern Route of the potential Central East Substation to Escondido Substation 230 kV route. As such, the environmental setting for this shared portion (i.e., Lake Henshaw, Henshaw scenic overlook, and San Luis Rey picnic area) is described under Central East Substation to Escondido Substation in Section D.5.11.1.

**CNF Trails.** Various trails on CNF land would traverse or be adjacent to the potential 500 kV route, including Morgan Trailhead, Tenaja Trailhead, and Horsethief Trail. The Morgan and Tenaja trails are used to access the San Mateo Canyon Wilderness.

**El Cariso Campground.** The El Cariso Campground is located on CNF land and includes 24 campsites (CNF, 2007c). The potential 500 kV route would be located adjacent to the campground.

**Hang glider launch sites.** There are nine hang gliding launch sites along South Main Divide Road near the potential 500 kV route. Two of these launch sites, “E” and Edwards, are operated under a special use permit from USFS.

**San Mateo Canyon Wilderness.** San Mateo Canyon Wilderness is a 38,484-acre federal wilderness area managed by CNF. Recreational opportunities include hiking and camping (Wilderness.net, 2007). The potential 500 kV route would be located northwest/southeast roughly along but outside of the eastern boundary of the wilderness area.

**Wildomar OHV Area and Wildomar Campground.** The Wildomar OHV Area is available through an agreement between CDPR and USDA Forest Service. The 360-acre OHV area is the only place within the Trabuco Ranger District that OHV use is allowed and contains 4 miles of trails. The Wildomar Campground is within the OHV area and has 11 campsites. It is located near the main trailhead of the OHV area (CNF, 2007d).

#### D.5.11.4 Environmental Impacts – 500 kV Future Transmission System Expansion

##### Construction Impacts

*Impact WR-1: Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to recreation or wilderness areas (Class II)*

The location of construction equipment along roadways may preclude or constrain access to these recreation areas during construction. In addition, the noise and presence of heavy equipment associated with project construction may temporarily reduce visitation to recreation areas. Recreationists may cancel or schedule their visits to avoid construction periods thereby resulting in temporarily reduced visitation to affected recreation areas (e.g., CNF campgrounds and trails, San Mateo Canyon Wilderness, Lake Henshaw, and hang gliding sites). Such a disturbance to recreational resources would result in significant impacts (Class II).

Construction-related impacts to these recreational resources would be mitigated to a less than significant level through implementation of Mitigation Measures WR-1a (Coordinate construction schedule and activities with the authorized officer for the recreation area), WR-1b (Provide temporary detours for trail users), and WR-1c (Coordinate with local agencies to identify alternative recreation sites). The full text of the mitigation measures appears in Appendix 12.

*Mitigation Measures for Impact WR-1: Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to recreation or wilderness areas*

- WR-1a**     **Coordinate construction schedule and activities with the authorized officer for the recreation area.**
- WR-1b**     **Provide temporary detours for trail users.**
- WR-1c**     **Coordinate with local agencies to identify alternative recreation areas.**

#### Operational Impacts

*Impact WR-2: Presence of a transmission line or substation would change the character of a recreation area, diminishing its recreational value (Class I)*

The potential 500 kV route traverse or be located adjacent to the Wildomar OHV Area and campground, hang gliding areas, various CNF campgrounds and trails, and the San Mateo Canyon Wilderness. These areas vary dramatically in the type of provided recreation experience and thus the degree of impact sensitivity; ORV areas are typically disturbed and noisy and would not necessarily be significantly affected by the presence of a transmission line whereas wilderness areas are undeveloped and remote and highly sensitive to impact.

The potential 500 kV transmission line would be built through a region that does not presently contain structures of similar scale and character as the 500 kV towers. As such, long-term, operational visual impacts would be experienced by viewers throughout most of the length of this route. Additionally, corona noise from the 500 kV line would be audible up to 500 feet from the edge of the ROW (refer to Section D.8, Noise). In areas with elevated ambient noise levels (e.g., ORV parks), it is likely that corona noise would not be noticeable, but in quiet areas this noise would be disturbing.

Presence of the transmission structures and corona noise from the 500 kV conductors would diminish the value of the recreational experience along the Interstate 8 Alternative route, resulting in significant and unmitigable impacts (Class I). Although it would not reduce the severity of the impact to less than significant levels, Visual Resources Mitigation Measures V-3a (Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors), V-45a (Prepare and implement Scenery Conservation Plan) and Noise Mitigation Measure N-3a (Respond to complaints of corona noise) are presented in an effort to reduce recreation impacts along the Interstate 8 Alternative. The full text of the visual and noise mitigation measures presented below is provided in Appendix 12, along with the full text of all other mitigation measures. Mitigation Measure V-45a is specific to Forest Service land.

*Mitigation Measures for Impact WR-2: Presence of a transmission line or substation would change the character of a recreation area, diminishing its recreational value*

- V-3a**        **Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors.**
- V-45a**      **Prepare and implement Scenery Conservation Plan.**
- N-3a**        **Respond to complaints of corona noise.**

*Impact WR-3: Presence of a transmission line would permanently preclude recreational activities (Class II for trails; Class I for hang gliding)*

The potential 500 kV route would cross or be located adjacent to the Wildomar OHV Area, Morgan Trailhead, Tenaja Trailhead, and Horsethief Trail. If transmission support structures were sited on or immediately adjacent to trails, recreationists would be precluded from these locations. Exact locations

of transmission support structures have not been determined. This impact analysis, therefore, conservatively assumes that structures may be potentially sited on trails. Impacts to existing recreational resources that resulted from locating new towers on or immediately adjacent to a trail would be significant. Preclusion of the use of trails would be mitigated to a less than significant level through implementation of Mitigation Measure WR-3a (Coordinate tower and road locations with the authorized officer for the recreation area) (Class II).

As described above, the potential 500 kV transmission line would be constructed near the hang gliding launch pads located along South Main Divide Road. The location of the overhead conductors would present a serious safety risk to glider pilots. As such, recreational pilots would be permanently precluded from affected hang gliding and paragliding sites, resulting in a significant impact. While Mitigation Measure WR-3c (Construct transmission line underground to avoid hand gliding areas) is recommended, it would not reduce the impact to a less than significant level.

Construction of the underground portion of the transmission line would, at its closest, transition back to an overhead transmission line about 1,700 feet from the “E” launch site and at about 7,800 feet from the “Edwards” launch site. Given the locations of the launch sites and typical flight paths, this transition location should preserve hang gliding launches from the launch “Edwards,” or the southern of the two USFS permitted sites. Given the relatively closer proximity to the “E” launch site, operations of the transmission line would likely reduce the number of launchings from this site and could potentially preclude use of this site for hang gliding. Project operations could negatively affect house thermals in areas near the transmission line. Two to three thermal origination points (areas where air masses break away from the surface) are expected to be affected by operations in the vicinity of South Main Divide Road, which could permanently impair or preclude hang gliding opportunities associated with these areas. These potentially adverse impacts are considered significant and unmitigable should they occur (Class I).

*Mitigation Measure for Impact WR-3: Presence of a transmission line would permanently preclude recreational activities*

**WR-3a**     **Coordinate tower and road locations with the authorized officer for the recreation area.**

**WR-3c**     **Construct transmission line underground to avoid hand gliding areas.** This would place 2.1 miles of the potential 500kV route underground through the hang gliding area along South Main Divide Road.

*Impact WR-4: Presence of a transmission line in a designated wilderness or wilderness study area would result in loss of wilderness land (No Impact)*

The potential 500 kV transmission line would not traverse any wilderness areas or WSAs. As such, direct impacts to these resources would not occur.

## D.5.12 Connected Actions and Indirect Effects

Section B.6 describes the other projects that have been found to be related to the Sunrise Powerlink Project. They fall into two categories:

- **Connected Actions.** The four projects found to be connected to the Sunrise Powerlink Project are the Stirling Energy Systems solar facility, two components of the IID 230 kV transmission system upgrades, the Esmeralda–San Felipe Geothermal Project, and the Jacumba Substation. Those projects are addressed in Sections D.5.12.1 through D.5.12.4.

- **Indirect Effects.** One project, the SCE La Rumorosa Wind Project, would create effects as a result of the construction and operation of the Sunrise Powerlink Project. That project is addressed in Section D.5.12.5.

### D.5.12.1 Stirling Energy Systems Solar Two LLC Project

As agreed in a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) approved by the CPUC, SDG&E would purchase up to 900 MW of solar power produced at a proposed 8,000-acre Concentrating Solar Power (CSP) facility in the Imperial Valley (see Section B.6.1). At least 600 MW of this total would be transmitted via the SRPL. Stirling Energy Systems (SES) Solar Two, LLC would construct, own, and operate the CSP facility and an associated 230 kV transmission line. The CSP site would be leased by SES from BLM, and additional individual private parcels within the site boundaries would be acquired. The transmission line would be constructed within a new ROW easement just north of and adjacent to the SWPL.

As described in Section B.6, the CPUC and BLM have determined that the Stirling CSP facility and associated 230 kV transmission line are so closely related to the Proposed Project as to be considered “connected actions” under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Therefore, the Stirling site and transmission line are discussed in this EIR/EIS in order to fully disclose the potential for this project to be constructed as a result of the presence of the SRPL (if it is approved and constructed). Mitigation measures that would reduce significant impacts of the Stirling CSP facility and transmission line are presented in the environmental impact analysis below.

Approval of the SRPL would not result in automatic approval of the Stirling CSP facility or transmission line discussed below, and the project would require SES permit applications to CEC and BLM and compliance with CEQA and NEPA, followed by approvals from the CEC and BLM prior to construction on BLM lands.

#### Environmental Setting

The area around the proposed Stirling CSP site and associated transmission line route is characterized by diverse recreational opportunities within mostly BLM lands, including areas for off-road vehicle (ORV) use, camping and backpacking. There are no wilderness areas that would be impacted by construction or operation of the Stirling CSP facility or ancillary transmission line. Recreational facilities that would be located near, or traversed by, project features include the following:

- **BLM Primitive Campgrounds.** One BLM designated primitive campground is located south of Interstate 8 and around the 230 kV line in the Yuha Desert. BLM primitive campgrounds are widely dispersed, undeveloped, and without signage. They are areas that have been cleared of vegetation and have a hard, compacted surface. This BLM primitive campground is located along the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail. The transmission line route would be located approximately 0.25 miles north of the primitive campground (BLM, 2005). BLM also allows dispersed camping within limited use areas throughout its jurisdiction.
- **Plaster City ORV Open Area.** This area provides 41,000 acres of open desert terrain for ORV recreationists and includes two staging areas, Plaster City East and Plaster City West, that are popular primitive camping and day use areas (BLM, 2005a). The Stirling CSP site would be located adjacent to the southern boundary of Plaster City ORV Open Area, separated from the ORV area by an existing railroad.



- **Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail.** The Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail is a 1,200-mile trail through Arizona and California administered by the National Park Service. The trail features campsites, and interpretive and historic sites (NPS, 2006). A total of 38 miles of the trail is within BLM lands in the Yuha Desert. The southernmost 1.5-mile segment of this trail passes through the Stirling Solar site.

## Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

### Construction Impacts

#### *Impact WR-1: Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to recreation or wilderness areas (Class II)*

The Stirling CSP site would encompass the southernmost 1.5 miles of the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail, and construction of project features at the site would temporarily limit access to the trail, resulting in a significant but mitigable impact (Class II). The Stirling site is bounded on the north by the Union Pacific Railroad (south of the Plaster City Plant) and on the south by Interstate 8. The Yuha Desert ACEC would be traversed by a 7-mile segment of the 230 kV transmission line within a new ROW, approximately 0.25 miles north of the Dunaway Camp, a primitive campground. Project construction activities would require the use of S80/Evan Hewes Highway, the road that serves as the primary access to the Plaster City ORV area; however, increased traffic due to the movement of construction vehicles would not significantly limit access to this recreation area (see Section D.9, Transportation and Traffic, for a discussion of impacts related to transportation and traffic).

Construction of the 230 kV transmission line would not limit access to any of the nearby recreational uses. However, the noise and presence of heavy equipment associated with project construction may temporarily reduce visitation to recreational areas. Recreationists may cancel or schedule their visits to avoid construction periods thereby resulting in temporarily reduced visitation, especially to segments of the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail, where construction could pose a safety hazard to trail users. Such a disturbance to recreational resources would result in significant impacts (Class II). Construction-related impacts to recreational resources could be mitigated to a less than significant level through implementation of mitigation measures listed below.

#### *Mitigation Measures for Impact WR-1: Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to recreation or wilderness areas*

- WR-1a**     **Coordinate construction schedule and activities with the authorized officer for the recreation area.**
- WR-1b**     **Provide temporary detours for trail users.**
- WR-1c**     **Coordinate with local agencies to identify alternative recreation areas.**

### Operational Impacts

#### *Impact WR-2: Presence of a transmission line or substation would change the character of a recreation area, diminishing its recreational value (Class I and III)*

The Stirling CSP site would be located adjacent to the southern boundary of the Plaster City ORV Area. Plaster City ORV Area is highly disturbed due to cross-country ORV activity. Generally, visitors to this recreation area are not seeking the solitude or expansive scenic setting that characterizes other desert recreation areas; however, an 8,000-acre CSP facility adjacent to the ORV Area would introduce a new

feature and substantially increase the industrial character of this area. Although impacts to visual resources in this area would be significant, as described in Section D.3.12.2, the presence of a solar power facility would not diminish the recreational value of Plaster City ORV Area. Impacts to the character of this recreation area would be adverse but less than significant and no mitigation is required (Class III).

Dispersed recreation occurs along the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail, which is encompassed by the CSP site for its southernmost 1.5 miles. Many recreational resources, particularly in the desert, are valued for their solitude and expansive scenic setting. As described in Section D.3.5, Visual Resources, project features would be built in an area that does not presently contain structures of similar scale and character. Consequently, project features would be highly noticeable to trail recreationists near its southernmost extent, and constitute a permanent visual impact (Class I). Visual Resources (see Section D.3) and Noise (see Section D.8) mitigation measures would be recommended in an effort to reduce visual impacts and corona noise from the transmission line near the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail, but the presence of the project would diminish the value of the recreational experience, resulting in a significant and unavoidable impact (Class I). The full text of the visual and noise mitigation measures presented below is provided in Appendix 12, along with the full text of all other mitigation measures.

*Mitigation Measures for Impact WR-2: Presence of a transmission line or substation would change the character of a recreation area, diminishing its recreational value*

**V-3a Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors.**

**N-3a Respond to complaints of corona noise.**

*Impact WR-3: Presence of a transmission line would permanently preclude recreational activities (Class II)*

As described above, the southernmost 1.5 miles of the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail would be encompassed by the Stirling CSP site, precluding recreationists from these locations. Exact locations of project features have not been determined, and a contingency area of approximately 1,500 acres is planned in case certain areas of the site are determined to be unbuildable for geotechnical or other reasons. Project features could potentially be sited to avoid significant impacts to the National Historic Trail. This impact analysis, however, conservatively assumes that structures would be sited on or adjacent to the Trail. Impacts to existing recreational resources that resulted from locating project facilities on or immediately adjacent to the trail would be significant (Class II). Preclusion of the use of the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic trail could be mitigated to a less than significant level through implementation of mitigation measures listed below.

*Mitigation Measure for Impact WR-3: Presence of a transmission line would permanently preclude recreational activities*

**WR-3a Coordinate tower and road locations with the authorized officer for the recreation area.**

### D.5.12.2 IID Transmission System Upgrades

As part of Phase 2 of the Imperial Valley Study Group's development plan (see Section A.4.3), IID would construct a new 230 kV line from the Bannister Substation to a new San Felipe 500/230 kV Substation to interconnect to the proposed Imperial Valley to San Diego 500 kV line (i.e., the Sunrise Powerlink line). This San Felipe Substation could potentially provide an additional interconnection between the IID and CAISO systems, and thus another point for the delivery of renewable resources to Southern California loads. IID would construct, own, and operate these upgrades.

As described in Section B.6, the CPUC and BLM have determined that these IID Transmission System Upgrades are so closely related to the Proposed Project as to be considered “connected actions” under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Therefore, IID Transmission System Upgrades are discussed in this EIR/EIS in order to fully disclose the potential for a Bannister–San Felipe 230 kV transmission line and new San Felipe 500/230 kV Substation to be constructed as a result of the presence of the SRPL (if it is approved and constructed). Mitigation measures that would reduce significant impacts of the IID Transmission System Upgrades projects have been included in the environmental impact analysis below.

Approval of the SRPL would not result in automatic approval of the IID Transmission System Upgrades discussed below and shown on Figure B-45, and the projects would require applications by IID, compliance with CEQA and NEPA, followed by approvals from the BLM prior to construction on BLM lands.

### Environmental Setting

The area around the transmission line route and substation is characterized by diverse recreational opportunities within BLM and California State Park lands, including areas for Off-Road Vehicle (ORV) use, backpacking and wildlife observation. There are no WAs or WSAs that would be impacted by construction or operation of the 230 kV transmission line or substation. Recreational facilities that would be located near, or traversed by, the route include:

- **Arroyo Salada ORV Area.** Arroyo Salada ORV Area is located adjacent to the eastern boundary of Ocotillo Wells SVRA on 4,800 acres of public land managed by BLM. This area is designated as an “Open Area” and is a popular destination for ORV enthusiasts (BLM, 2006). The 230 kV transmission line route would be located approximately 0.7 miles south of the Arroyo Salada ORV area, near MP IID-15.
- **Ocotillo Wells State Vehicular Recreation area.** The Ocotillo Wells SVRA is an ORV park comprised of over 42,000 acres of desert terrain managed by the California Department of Parks and Recreation. Ocotillo Wells SVRA provides opportunities for ORV uses, camping and picnicking. The 230 kV transmission line route would be adjacent to the southern boundary of the recreation area along SR78, between MPs IID-8.2 and MP IID-15.2 (CDPR, 2006).
- **Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail.** The Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail is a 1,200-mile trail through Arizona and California administered by the National Park Service. The trail features campsites, and interpretive and historic sites (NPS, 2006). A total of 38 miles of the trail is within BLM lands in the Yuha Desert. The 230 kV transmission line route would intersect the trail near MP IID-17.

The Anza-Borrego Link encompasses the proposed SRPL through ABDSP. With over 600,000 acres, ABDSP is among the largest State parks in the contiguous United States. The Park has an annual average of 600,000 visitors, 85 percent of whom visit between November and April. Approximately 75 percent of Park visitation occurs north of SR78 (CDPR, 2005). Recreation and wilderness areas that would be located near the new San Felipe Substation site within ABDSP include:

- **Open Camping.** ABDSP has an open camping policy that allows backcountry camping throughout its 600,000 acres.
- **Desert Tours.** A variety of privately operated desert tours are available that offer a range of trip options. Because these tours cover a large portion of ABDSP and the surrounding area, the new transmission line and San Felipe Substation may be in the vicinity of tour routes. These tours are described in detail in Section D.5.2.

- **State Highway 78.** SR78 is an officially designated California State Scenic Highway through ABDSP that provides scenic desert vistas to motorists.
- **Vallecito Mountain Wilderness Area** (85,377 acres) is located south of SR78 and south and west of the new San Felipe Substation site beginning at the eastern ABDSP boundary.

### Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

There are no wilderness areas or WSAs that would be affected by the 230 kV route or substation site. As such, impacts to these resources would not occur (Impact WR-4: Presence of a transmission line in a designated wilderness or wilderness study area would result in loss of wilderness land).

### Construction Impacts

*Impact WR-1: Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to recreation or wilderness areas (Class II)*

The 230 kV line would traverse the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail near MP IID-17. The 230 kV line would be located parallel to the 500 kV SRPL in an existing transmission corridor, adjacent to the southern boundary of Ocotillo Wells SVRA along SR78, between MPs IID-8.2 and IID-15.2. There are no wilderness areas in the vicinity of the 230 kV line or San Felipe Substation. Project construction activities would not require the use of roads that serve as the primary access to these recreational facilities. Therefore, construction activities would not affect access to established recreation areas.

The noise and presence of heavy equipment associated with project construction may temporarily reduce visitation to recreational areas. Recreationists may cancel or schedule their visits to avoid construction periods thereby resulting in temporarily reduced visitation, especially to segments of the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail, where construction could pose a safety hazard to trail users. Such a disturbance to recreational resources would result in significant impacts (Class II). Construction-related impacts to recreational resources could be mitigated to a less than significant level through implementation of mitigation measures listed below.

*Mitigation Measures for Impact WR-1: Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to recreation or wilderness areas*

- WR-1a**     **Coordinate construction schedule and activities with the authorized officer for the recreation area.**
- WR-1b**     **Provide temporary detours for trail users.**
- WR-1c**     **Coordinate with local agencies to identify alternative recreation areas.**

### Operational Impacts

*Impact WR-2: Presence of a transmission line or substation would change the character of a recreation area, diminishing its recreational value (Class I)*

Large portions of BLM and State property within the IID project area are ORV areas, such as Ocotillo Wells SVRA and Arroyo Salada ORV Open Areas. The line would be located approximately 0.6 miles south of the Arroyo Salada ORV Open Area. Since the route currently is disturbed due to the presence of the existing IID transmission lines, the recreation areas themselves are highly disturbed from ORV use, and the transmission line would be located outside of the recreation area boundary, the IID Bannister-San Felipe 230 kV transmission line would not change the character of these specific recreation areas.

On BLM lands, dispersed camping is allowed within limited use areas outside of the ORV areas discussed above. Dispersed recreation occurs along the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail, which traverses the transmission route near MP IID-17. Many recreational resources, particularly in the desert, are valued for their solitude and expansive scenic setting. As described in Section D.3.5.1, Visual Resources, this portion of the project would be built in an area that does not presently contain structures of similar scale and character as the Proposed Project. Spans for a 230 kV transmission line (approximately 900-foot intervals) would be much shorter than for a 500 kV line (1,300 to 1,700 feet), and therefore, the tower and conductor locations would not be synchronized. Consequently, structures would be more noticeable and the corridor would appear to be more cluttered and would create a significant (Class I) permanent visual impact. Visual Resources (see Section D.3) and Noise (see Section D.8) mitigation measures would reduce recreation impacts along the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail, but the presence of the additional line would diminish the value of the recreational experience, resulting in a significant and unmitigable impact (Class I). The full text of the visual and noise mitigation measures presented below is provided in Appendix 12, along with the full text of all other mitigation measures.

*Mitigation Measures for Impact WR-2: Presence of a transmission line or substation would change the character of a recreation area, diminishing its recreational value*

**V-3a Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors.**

**N-3a Respond to complaints of corona noise.**

*Impact WR-3: Presence of a transmission line would permanently preclude recreational activities (Class II)*

As described above, the IID route would intersect the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail near MP IID-17. If transmission support structures were sited on or immediately adjacent to the trail, recreationists would be precluded from these locations. Exact locations of transmission support structures have not been determined. Although preliminary locations have been proposed, these may be modified based on site-specific environmental conditions (i.e., slope stability, presence of sensitive biological or cultural resources). This impact analysis, therefore, conservatively assumes that structures would be sited on trails. Impacts to existing recreational resources that resulted from locating new towers on or immediately adjacent to the trail would be significant (Class II). Preclusion of the use of the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic trail could be mitigated to a less than significant level through implementation of the mitigation measure listed below.

*Mitigation Measure for Impact WR-3: Presence of a transmission line would permanently preclude recreational activities*

**WR-3a Coordinate tower and road locations with the authorized officer for the recreation area.**

### D.5.12.3 Esmeralda–San Felipe Geothermal Project

An EIS is currently being prepared by BLM to analyze the leasing of geothermal resources exploration, development, and utilization in the Truckhaven Geothermal Leasing Area (Truckhaven) located in western Imperial County, California (refer to Figure B-46). Currently, BLM has non-competitive geothermal lease applications pending for portions of this land, including lease applications from Esmeralda Energy, LLC (Esmeralda); however, the land must first be assessed under NEPA regulations before granting leases. Under the Proposed Action analyzed in the EIS being prepared, BLM would approve the pending non-competitive leases and offer competitive leases for all other available lands at Truckhaven.

The Esmeralda–San Felipe Geothermal Project would develop 20 MW of geothermal resources within the Truckhaven Geothermal Leasing Area; however, Esmeralda is not able to submit a project application to BLM for the Esmeralda–San Felipe Geothermal Project until its pending lease applications with BLM for Truckhaven are approved. In the absence of a formal Project application, it is assumed that roughly half of the components identified under the Reasonably Foreseeable Development (RFD) scenario in BLM’s Truckhaven EIS would apply to the Esmeralda–San Felipe Geothermal Project. Additionally, the description of the environmental setting and likely impacts are partially adapted from the Draft EIS for the Truckhaven Geothermal Leasing Area (February 2007). The RFD describes the anticipated development that would occur at Truckhaven to facilitate geothermal resources exploration, development, and use should the leases be approved by BLM. Facilities would include new wells, a power plant, and transmission lines, as described in Section B.6.3. Geothermal energy from the earth is extracted through geothermal wells as steam or brine, which is then transported via pipeline to turbines, which generate electricity.

As described in Section B.6, the CPUC and BLM have determined that the Esmeralda–San Felipe Geothermal Project is so closely related to the Proposed Project as to be considered a “connected action” under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Therefore, the Esmeralda–San Felipe Geothermal Project is discussed in this EIR/EIS in order to fully disclose the potential for a new geothermal plant and associated linear to be constructed as a result of the presence of the SRPL (if it is approved and constructed). Types of mitigation that would likely reduce potentially significant impacts of the Esmeralda–San Felipe Geothermal Project have been included in the environmental impact analysis below; however, implementation of specific mitigation measures would be developed and executed by Esmeralda at the time of project permitting and approval.

Approval of the SRPL would not result in automatic approval of the Esmeralda–San Felipe Geothermal Project discussed below, and the project would require applications by Esmeralda Energy, LLC, and compliance with CEQA and NEPA, followed by approvals from the BLM prior to construction on BLM lands.

### Environmental Setting

Recreational opportunities within Truckhaven are available on BLM and CDPR land. The Truckhaven area has several hiking trails and primitive campgrounds that can only be accessed on foot or by ORV. Additionally, approximately 33,900 acres of Truckhaven is within the Ocotillo Wells State Vehicular Recreation Area. SVRAs are OHV parks operated by the Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Division of the CDPR on land owned by the California State Lands Commission. The Ocotillo Wells SVRA consists of over 80,000 acres and averages over 15,000 vehicle visits a year.

The Ocotillo Wells area is divided into several access classifications: Open-Use Zone, which is open to all types of ORV recreational uses; Trail-Use Only, ORV use on established trails only; and a 1-acre Closed Zone at Barrel Springs. Most of the BLM parcels in Truckhaven limit OHV use to designated trails; however, four parcels in the southwest portion of the area are open to cross-country travel.

There are no State or federal wilderness areas or wilderness study areas within or adjacent to Truckhaven. The nearest wilderness area is BLM’s Fish Creek Mountain Wilderness Area, approximately 7.5 miles southwest of Truckhaven.

## Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

As stated in BLM's Draft EIS for the Truckhaven Geothermal Leasing Area (February 2007), the following Best Management Practices (BMPs) and other mitigation measures would be included/considered in Plans of Operation, which are required for surface-disturbing activities, in order to minimize adverse impacts to resources and uses in the Truckhaven Geothermal Leasing Area, which includes the Esmeralda-San Felipe Geothermal Project area:

- Facilities would be located to avoid crossing or blocking routes or be buried under ORV routes if avoidance is not possible.
- If facilities cannot avoid or be buried to prevent impacts to ORV routes, the lessee would be required, with public participation and agency approval, to construct the re-routing of any impacted route(s), or construct additional routes/recreational opportunities of a similar or higher quality.
- Any necessary temporary route closures for construction would be coordinated with BLM and Ocotillo Wells SVRA before construction begins.
- Signs directing vehicles to alternative park access and parking would be posted in the event construction temporarily obstructs parking areas near trailheads.
- Signs and/or flagging that advise recreational users of construction activities would be posted in coordination with BLM and/or OWSVRA. Whenever active work is being performed, the area should be posted with "construction ahead" signs on any adjacent access roads or trails that might be affected.
- Construction-related traffic would be restricted to routes approved by the authorized agency(ies). New access roads or cross-country vehicle travel would not be permitted unless prior written approval is given by the authorized officer. Authorized roads used by the proposed action will be rehabilitated when construction activities are complete. The agency(ies) would work with the proponent to develop site-specific standards for route reconstruction.
- Whenever possible, construction activities would be avoided during high recreational use periods.

## Construction Impacts

### *Impact WR-1: Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to recreation or wilderness areas (Class II)*

The construction of pipelines, wells, storage yards, staging areas, power plants, transmission lines, and roads for the Esmeralda-San Felipe Geothermal Project would limit the amount of land available to recreationists for hiking, wildlife viewing, camping, and ORV riding within the Truckhaven area. Approximately 83 percent of the Truckhaven Geothermal Leasing Area is within the Ocotillo Wells SVRA. Most vehicles gain access to the SVRA through OHV routes accessible via SR78. Geothermal development in the area would restrict or reduce the opportunities for OHV vehicles to access certain areas of the SVRA during construction of geothermal wells and electric generation facilities. Such a disturbance to recreational resources would result in significant impacts (Class II). However, implementation of mitigation measures listed below would reduce this impact to a less than significant level.

*Mitigation Measures for Impact WR-1: Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to recreation or wilderness areas*

- WR-1a**     **Coordinate construction schedule and activities with the authorized officer for the recreation area.**
- WR-1b**     **Provide temporary detours for trail users.**
- WR-1c**     **Coordinate with local agencies to identify alternative recreation areas.**

#### Operational Impacts

*Impact WR-2GT: Presence of the project would change the character of a recreation or wilderness area, diminishing its recreational value (Class II)*

Recreational resources in the desert are valued for the opportunity for solitude and outdoor recreation activities they provide in a natural, scenic setting. The Esmeralda–San Felipe Geothermal Project would result in a long-term impact from the noise and vibration of the power plant and nearby pipelines, but this would be equally as disruptive as ORV use. Similarly, views of equipment or the addition or change of industrial structures such as pipelines, power lines, and power production facilities conflict with the natural background of these recreational resources and can also diminish users' recreational experiences on lands that remain open for recreation. Visual impacts and the loss of access for recreational use would adversely affect the recreational experience for many users, resulting in a significant impact (Class II). However, implementation of mitigation measures listed below would reduce this impact to a less than significant level. The full text of the visual and noise mitigation measures presented below is provided in Appendix 12, along with the full text of all other mitigation measures.

*Mitigation Measures for Impact WR-2GT: Presence of the project would change the character of a recreation or wilderness area, diminishing its recreational value*

- V-3a**        **Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors.**
- N-3a**        **Respond to complaints of corona noise.**

*Impact WR-3GT: Presence of the project would permanently preclude recreational activities (Class II)*

Geothermal energy exploration, development, and operations would preclude recreationists from portions of BLM and Ocotillo Wells SVRA land within the Truckhaven Leasing Area that are developed for geothermal resources. The land occupied by the geothermal facilities would no longer be available for recreational use. Impacts to existing recreational resources resulting from locating geothermal facilities on or immediately adjacent to trails Ocotillo Wells SVRA would be significant (Class II). However, implementation of mitigation measures listed below would reduce this impact to a less than significant level.

*Mitigation Measure for Impact WR-3GT: Presence of the project would permanently preclude recreational activities*

- WR-3a**     **Coordinate tower and road locations with the authorized officer for the recreation area.**

#### D.5.12.4 Jacumba Substation

In its testimony during the CPUC's Phase 1 hearings on the need and economics of the Proposed Project, SDG&E staff stated that a new 230/500 kV substation would be required to allow future wind generation projects to transmit generated power via the existing 500 kV Southwest Powerlink (SWPL)



transmission line. The SWPL currently has limited available capacity, but if the Sunrise Powerlink Project is approved and constructed, some electricity currently carried by the SWPL will be transmitted via Sunrise, making more capacity available on the SWPL. There are a number of possible new wind generation projects near the Jacumba area (about 5 miles west of the San Diego/Imperial County line), some in San Diego County (Crestwood wind area) and some in Mexico (La Rumorosa wind area). Therefore, the impacts of this substation are evaluated as part of the Proposed Project.

This 230/500 kV substation would allow incoming transmission lines at 230 kV from wind farms in either the Crestwood or La Rumorosa areas. The power would be transformed to 500 kV in order to allow it to be transmitted via the SWPL to the Miguel Substation in San Diego. The substation is assumed to occupy about 20 acres, and while its location has not been defined by SDG&E, for the purposes of this EIR/EIS it is assumed to be located just east of the point where the Interstate 8 Alternative diverges from the SWPL. Figure B-47 illustrates the approximate location and size of the substation area. The impacts of this substation are also evaluated as a part of the wind component of the Non-Wires In-Area Renewable Generation Alternative, as defined and analyzed in Section E.5. Approval of the SRPL would not result in automatic approval of the Jacumba Substation discussed below, and the project would require applications by SDG&E, and compliance with CEQA and NEPA.

### Environmental Setting

There are no State or Federal wilderness areas or wilderness study areas within or adjacent to the Jacumba 500/230 kV Substation as it is located on private land designated as rural lands (1 du/80 acres). The nearest wilderness area is the southern tip of the ABDSP, approximately 0.7 miles north of the substation. In addition there are no recreation areas within or adjacent to the Jacumba Substation as it would be located on private land.

### Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

There are no wilderness areas or WSAs that would be affected by the substation site. The substation is located on private land that would not interfere with any trails or public recreation areas that would be used for recreational purposes.

As such, Impact WR-1 (Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to recreation or wilderness areas) and Impact WR-2 (Presence of a transmission line or substation would permanently change the character of a recreation area, diminishing its recreational value) would not occur.

## D.5.12.5 SCE La Rumorosa Wind Project

### Environmental Setting

**United States.** A new 230 kV transmission line would be required to connect the “Rumorosa Wind Developers II” (RWD) to the existing 500 kV SWPL, at the Jacumba Substation. The 1.7 miles of new 230 kV transmission line would be sited on private land. There are no State or Federal wilderness areas or wilderness study areas within or adjacent to the proposed ROW. The nearest wilderness area is the southern tip of the ABDSP, approximately 0.7 miles north of the Jacumba Substation. In addition there are no designated recreation areas within or adjacent to the new ROW as it is located entirely on private land. Therefore, wilderness and recreation impacts to the U.S. will not be further discussed.

**Mexico.** The RWD wind farm and related facilities would be located approximately 1.4 miles east of the town of La Rumorosa, in the municipality of Tecate. It would include 20 miles of new 230 kV line following the existing Tijuana/Mexicali transmission line, and approximately 7 miles of 230 kV transmission line on new ROW up to the U.S./Mexico border. While this region is primarily natural and has a very low population density, there are no Mexican Federal wilderness areas, wilderness study areas, and nor official recreation areas. However, the area of La Rumorosa, adjacent to the proposed wind farm facilities, is visited frequently, especially during the summer months, for ecotourism and by national tourists primarily from Mexicali.

### Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Impacts WR-4 and WR-4B related to wilderness areas would not occur because there are no designated wilderness areas along the transmission line route or in the La Rumorosa area.

### Construction Impacts

#### *Impact WR-1: Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to recreation or wilderness areas (Class II)*

Construction of the RWD wind farm in Mexico would involve the use of local roads for construction vehicle access given the limited roadways in the area. Widening of these roadways would probably be necessary to accommodate construction vehicle sizes and necessary turnarounds. While there is no officially designated wilderness or recreation area, the town of La Rumorosa does receive a large number of tourists, especially during the summer months (Tecate Government, 2007). The location of construction equipment along roadways may temporarily preclude or constrain access to this region.

The noise, dust, and presence of heavy equipment associated with project construction may temporarily reduce visitation to the La Rumorosa area. Recreationists may cancel or schedule their visits to avoid construction periods thereby resulting in temporarily reduced visitation. Similarly, visitor use of the areas to be traversed or bordered by the transmission line and wind farm could be affected. Construction-related disturbances to recreational resources would result in significant impacts. Mitigation Measures WR-1a and WR-1c are required to reduce impacts to less than significant (Class II).

#### *Mitigation Measures for Impact WR-1: Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to recreation or wilderness areas*

**WR-LR1a Coordinate construction schedule and activities with the authorized officer for the recreation area.** No less than 60 days prior to construction, the applicant shall coordinate construction activities and the project construction schedule with the authorized officer for the recreation areas in the La Rumorosa region of Tecate, Baja California. The applicant shall schedule construction activities to avoid heavy recreational use periods in coordination with and at the discretion of the authorized officer. The applicant shall locate construction equipment to avoid temporary preclusion of recreation areas in accordance with the recommendation of the authorized officer. The applicant shall document its coordination efforts with the authorized officer and make this documentation available to the authorized officer for this region at least 30 days prior to construction.

**WR-LR1c Coordinate with local agencies to identify alternative recreation areas.** The applicant shall coordinate with the authorized officer for the applicable federal, State, or local parks and recreational facilities in the La Rumorosa region of Tecate, Baja California at least 60 days before construction in order to identify alternative recreation facilities that may be

used by the public during construction. The applicant shall post a public notice at recreation facilities that are to be closed or where access would be limited during project construction. The applicant shall document its coordination efforts with the parks and recreation departments and make this documentation available to the authorized officer for this region 30 days prior to construction.

## Operational Impacts

*Impact WR-2: Presence of a transmission line or substation would change the character of a recreation area, diminishing its recreational value (Class III)*

The RWD project would be located approximately 1.4 miles east of the town of La Rumorosa, in the municipality of Tecate. The 7 miles of 230 kV transmission line on new ROW would traverse primarily natural area. However, this region is not designated as wilderness or recreation area by the Mexican government so impacts to recreational areas would be less than significant (Class III.)

*Impact WR-2LR: Presence of the wind towers/turbines and associated facilities would change the character of a recreation area, diminishing its recreational value (Class I)*

The RWD project would be located approximately 1.4 miles east of the town of La Rumorosa, in the municipality of Tecate. The RWD wind farm footprint would be approximately 80 to 160 acres of land that was previously primarily natural in appearance. While this region receives a large amount of national tourists, especially during the summer months, it is not officially designated as a recreation area by the Mexican government. (Tecate Government, 2007)

The turbines would be visible at locations within the Sierra Juárez Mountains. Views of the wind tower/turbines from these recreational areas would be from distance of approximately one to ten miles or greater. Since these recreational areas are valued for their solitude and expansive scenic setting, presence of wind turbines would be contrary to the expectations of many recreationists in these areas.

With the exception of the existing La Rumorosa Substation and the existing 230 kV transmission line, the RWD project would not be collocated with industrial type structures, and would therefore introduce new structurally complex, industrial type features to a predominantly natural landscape. As described in Section D.3, Visual Resources, long-term, operational visual impacts would be experienced by viewers within and outside of the area. Additionally, the noise from the wind turbines would substantially elevate the ambient noise levels by more than 5 dBA within 500 feet of the edge of the wind turbine project area in the natural areas along the project sites (Contra Costa County, 2007). Refer to Section D.8.12.5 for additional information on RWD project noise impacts.

From an operational perspective, the nature or condition of this area would permanently change. While implementation of mitigation measures could reduce the impact of the wind turbines, transmission lines and structures on recreational areas, this impact cannot be mitigated to a less than significant level (Class I). Nevertheless, Mitigation Measures V-3a will be implemented to reduce impacts.

*Impact WR-2LR: Presence of the wind towers/turbines and associated facilities would change the character of a recreation area, diminishing its recreational value (Class I)*

**V-3a      Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors (second bullet of mitigation only applies).**

***Impact WR-3: Presence of a transmission line would permanently preclude recreational activities (No Impact)***

**Mexico.** The RWD project would be located approximately 1.4 miles east of the town of La Rumorosa, in the municipality of Tecate. The majority of the transmission line (20 miles) would be on existing ROW. The 7 miles of 230 kV transmission line on new ROW would traverse primarily natural area; however, this region is not designated as wilderness or recreation area by the Mexican government (No Impact).

***Impact WR-3LR: Presence of wind tower/turbines and associated facilities would permanently preclude recreational activities (Class III)***

**Mexico.** The RWD project would be located approximately 1.4 miles east of the town of La Rumorosa, in the municipality of Tecate. While the RWD wind farm is sited on approximately 750 to 2125 acres, the actual wind farm footprint would be approximately 37.5 to 212.5 acres of land. This region receives a large amount of national tourists, especially during the summer months; however, it is not officially designated as wilderness or recreation area by the Mexican government. (Tecate Government, 2007) While the nature of this area would permanently change, it would still be available for recreational activities that were associated with the town of La Rumorosa, or its outskirts and thus the impacts while adverse would not be significant (Class III).

## D.5.13 Overall Wilderness and Recreation Impacts of Proposed Project

### Construction Impacts

Construction of the SRPL transmission lines, the Future Transmission System Expansion, and the Connected Actions and Indirect Effects would result in temporary impacts associated with the reduction of access or visitation to recreation and wilderness areas. Construction noise, dust and the presence of equipment would create a temporary nuisance that may dissuade visitation or temporarily block access roads or trails. As described in the preceding sections, in some cases impacts would be reduced to less than significant levels through implementation of Mitigation Measures WR-1a (Coordinate construction schedule and activities with the authorized officer for the recreation area), WR-1b (Provide temporary detours for trail users) and WR-1c (Coordinate with local agencies to identify alternative recreation areas). Construction impacts within ABDSP would remain significant regardless of mitigation.

Construction of the proposed Central East Substation would not result in impacts to wilderness or recreation areas. Also, modification of existing substations (i.e., Imperial Valley, Sycamore Canyon, Peñasquitos, South Bay, and San Luis Rey Substations) would not result in impacts to recreation or wilderness areas.

### Operational Impacts

Presence of the SRPL transmission lines would result in significant, unmitigable (Class I) impacts to recreation and wilderness areas within the Imperial Valley, ABDSP, Central, and Inland Valley Links. Presence of the transmission line within State wilderness areas is inconsistent with the definition of wilderness and would require de-designation of the affected wilderness lands, thereby resulting in significant, unmitigable impacts. The Proposed Project would traverse six open space preserves, the Trans-County Trail, and the PCT, thereby significantly diminishing the character and value of these recreational resources and permanently precluding recreational activities, should project structures be sited on trails.

Operation of the proposed Central East Substation would not result in impacts to wilderness or recreation areas. Also, modification of existing substations (i.e., Imperial Valley, Sycamore Canyon, Peñasquitos, South Bay, and San Luis Rey Substations) would not result in impacts to recreation or wilderness areas.

The presence of the Future Transmission System Expansion would diminish the character and value of recreational resources, a significant unmitigable impact. Most of the future 230 kV lines follow existing 69 kV routes; however, their appearance would be more industrial in character. The potential 500 kV route traverse or be located adjacent to the Wildomar OHV Area and campground, hang gliding areas, various CNF campgrounds and trails, and the San Mateo Canyon Wilderness. The potential 500 kV transmission line would be built through a region that does not presently contain structures of similar scale and character as the 500 kV towers. As such, long-term, operational visual impacts would be experienced by viewers throughout most of the length of this route and would be a significant, unmitigable impact. Should these transmission lines be sited on trails this would permanently preclude recreational activities. Preclusion of the use of trails would be mitigated to a less than significant level through implementation of Mitigation Measure WR-3a (Coordinate tower and road locations with the authorized officer for the recreation area).

Operation of the Connected Actions and Indirect Effects would result in a permanent change to the character of a recreation area, diminishing its recreational value. The Stirling Energy Systems CSP site would encompass the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail for its southernmost 1.5 miles. This would create significant, unmitigable visual and noise impacts. The RWD project would permanently change the character of the La Rumorosa area, as it would add wind turbines and related structures that would increase the industrial nature of this region, a significant, unmitigable impact.

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## ***Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures for Alternatives Along Proposed Project Route***

Table D.5-4 summarizes the impacts that have been identified for the alternatives along the Proposed Project route.

**Table D.5-4. Impacts Identified – Alternatives – Wilderness and Recreation**

Impact No.	Description	Impact Significance
<b>FTHL Eastern Alternative (No Impacts)</b>		
<b>SDG&amp;E West of Dunaway Alternative</b>		
WR-1	Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to wilderness or recreation areas	Class II
WR-2	Presence of a transmission line or substation would permanently change the character of a recreation area, diminishing its recreational value	Class III
WR-3	Presence of a transmission line would permanently preclude recreational activities	Class III
<b>SDG&amp;E West Main Canal–Huff Road Modification Alternative (No Impacts)</b>		
<b>Partial Underground 230 kV ABDSP SR78 to S2 Alternative</b>		
WR-1	Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to wilderness or recreation areas	Class II
WR-2	Presence of a transmission line or substation would permanently change the character of a recreation area, diminishing its recreational value	Class I
WR-3	Presence of a transmission line would permanently preclude recreational activities	Class II
WR-4	Presence of a transmission line in a designated wilderness or wilderness study area would result in loss of wilderness land	Class I
<b>Partial Underground 230 kV ABDSP SR78 to S2 Alternative with All Underground Option</b>		
WR-1	Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to wilderness or recreation areas	Class II
WR-2	Presence of a transmission line or substation would permanently change the character of a recreation area, diminishing its recreational value	No Impact
WR-3	Presence of a transmission line would permanently preclude recreational activities	Class II
WR-4	Presence of a transmission line in a designated wilderness or wilderness study area would result in loss of wilderness land	No Impact
<b>Overhead 500 kV ABDSP within Existing ROW Alternative</b>		
WR-1	Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to wilderness or recreation areas	Class I
WR-2	Presence of a transmission line or substation would permanently change the character of a recreation area, diminishing its recreational value	Class I
WR-3	Presence of a transmission line would permanently preclude recreational activities	Class II
WR-4	Presence of a transmission line in a designated wilderness or wilderness study area would result in loss of wilderness land	No Impact
<b>Overhead 500 kV ABDSP within Existing ROW Alternative with East of Tamarisk Grove 150-Foot Option</b>		
WR-1	Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to wilderness or recreation areas	Class I
WR-2	Presence of a transmission line or substation would permanently change the character of a recreation area, diminishing its recreational value	Class I
WR-3	Presence of a transmission line would permanently preclude recreational activities	Class II

**Table D.5-4. Impacts Identified – Alternatives – Wilderness and Recreation**

<b>Impact No.</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Impact Significance</b>
WR-4	Presence of a transmission line in a designated wilderness or wilderness study area would result in loss of wilderness land	No Impact
<b>Santa Ysabel Existing ROW Alternative</b>		
WR-1	Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to wilderness or recreation areas	Class II
WR-2	Presence of a transmission line or substation would permanently change the character of a recreation area, diminishing its recreational value	Class I
WR-3	Presence of a transmission line would permanently preclude recreational activities	Class II
<b>Santa Ysabel Partial Underground Alternative</b>		
WR-1	Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to wilderness or recreation areas	Class II
<b>Santa Ysabel SR79 All Underground Alternative</b>		
WR-1	Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to wilderness or recreation areas	Class II
<b>SDG&amp;E Mesa Grande Alternative (No Impacts)</b>		
<b>CNF Existing 69 kV Route Alternative (No Impacts)</b>		
<b>Oak Hollow Road Underground Alternative (No Impacts)</b>		
<b>San Vicente Road Transition Alternative</b>		
WR-1	Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to wilderness or recreation areas	Class II
<b>Chuck Wagon Road Alternative (No Impacts)</b>		
<b>Pomerado Road to Miramar Area North</b>		
WR-1	Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to wilderness or recreation areas	Class II
WR-2	Presence of a transmission line or substation would permanently change the character of a recreation area, diminishing its recreational value	Class III
WR-3	Presence of a transmission line would permanently preclude recreational activities	Class II
WR-4	Presence of a transmission line in a designated wilderness or wilderness study area would result in loss of wilderness land	No Impact
<b>Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve–Mercy Road Alternative</b>		
WR-1	Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to wilderness or recreation areas	Class II
<b>Black Mountain to Park Village Road Underground Alternative (No Impacts)</b>		
<b>Coastal Link System Upgrade Alternative</b>		
WR-1	Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to wilderness or recreation areas	Class II
<b>Top of the World Substation Alternative</b>		
WR-1	Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to wilderness or recreation areas	Class II
WR-2	Presence of a transmission line or substation would permanently change the character of a recreation area, diminishing its recreational value	Class I
WR-3	Presence of a transmission line would permanently preclude recreational activities	Class II



## D.5.14 Imperial Valley Link Alternatives Impacts and Mitigation Measures

There are three alternatives analyzed in the Imperial Valley Link, the FTHL Eastern Alternative, the SDG&E West of Dunaway Alternative, and the SDG&E West Main Canal–Huff Road Modification Alternative.

As described in Section D.5.2.1, the Imperial Valley Link is characterized by recreational opportunities within BLM lands, including areas for ORV use and dispersed camping east of Seeley. Recreation areas within the Imperial Valley Link are shown in Figure D.5-1. There are no wilderness areas within the Imperial Valley Link.

### D.5.14.1 FTHL Eastern Alternative

This alternative was developed by the EIR/EIS team as a way to avoid almost 2 miles within the Flat-Tailed Horned Lizard (FTHL) Management Area. Instead the 500 kV overhead route would follow section lines within agricultural lands and would be approximately 1.5 miles shorter than the proposed route.

The FTHL Eastern Alternative would follow section lines north through agricultural land west of Seeley. There are no recreation or wilderness areas in the vicinity of this alternative route, as shown in Figure D.5-1. As such, construction or operational impacts to recreational resources or wilderness areas along this route would not occur.

### D.5.14.2 SDG&E West of Dunaway Alternative

This 6.1-mile alternative was suggested by SDG&E and approved by the proposed land use developer in the area. It would be an overhead 500 kV line, and would be 2.2 miles longer than the Proposed Project.

#### Environmental Setting

A 0.75-mile segment of the SDG&E West of Dunaway Alternative would be constructed within Plaster City East ORV Area on BLM land. In addition to ORV use, the Plaster City ORV complex allows primitive camping. This alternative would pass approximately 0.25 miles north of Dunaway Camp, within the Yuha Basin ACEC. The Yuha Basin ACEC also allows ORV use on designated trails. Refer to Section D.5.2.1 and Figure D.5-1 for additional information on these recreation areas.

#### Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

##### Construction Impacts

***Impact WR-1: Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to recreation or wilderness areas (Class II)***

Plaster City ORV Area is a designated Open Area, within which cross country travel (off existing trails) is allowed. The SDG&E West of Dunaway Alternative would be constructed in an area that is ordinarily used by OHV recreationists and would be closed during construction activities, thereby reducing access to this portion of the recreation area. In addition, Plaster City ORV Area is a popular destination for ORV enthusiasts and experiences an especially high concentration of usage during holiday weekends. Recreationists at the Plaster City ORV Area and Dunaway Camp may cancel or schedule their visit to avoid construction periods thereby resulting in temporarily reduced visitation. Without mitigation, a

temporary reduction in access or visitation to Plaster City ORV Area or Dunaway Camp would be considered significant. The following mitigation measures would be implemented to mitigate construction-related impacts to recreation areas on BLM lands: Mitigation Measure WR-1a (Coordinate construction schedule and activities with the authorized officer for the recreation area) and WR-1c (Coordinate with local agencies to identify alternative recreation sites).

Although SDG&E commits to providing advance notice and adequate signage, and to time construction activities to avoid major holidays through implementation of APMs R-APM-2a through 2f, Mitigation Measure WR-1a presents additional detail. Therefore, APMs R-APM-2a through 2f are superseded by Mitigation Measure WR-1a. The full text of the mitigation measures appears in Appendix 12.

*Mitigation Measures for Impact WR-1: Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to recreation or wilderness areas*

**WR-1a**     **Coordinate construction schedule and activities with the authorized officer for the recreation area.**

**WR-1c**     **Coordinate with local agencies to identify alternative recreation areas.**

Operational Impacts

*Impact WR-2: Presence of a transmission line or substation would change the character of a recreation area, diminishing its recreational value (Class III)*

The West of Dunaway Alternative would be constructed parallel to and northeast of the existing Southwest Powerlink (SWPL) 500 kV line, using the same types of transmission support structures (i.e., steel lattice towers) for the first 5.7 miles through the Yuha Basin ACEC. The existing SWPL 500 kV line and the proposed alternative 500 kV line are approximately 0.25 miles north of Dunaway Camp within the Yuha Basin ACEC and would pass by the Dunaway OHV Staging Area, which provides an access point to ORV trails within the ACEC. Presence of the West of Dunaway Alternative would not introduce a new feature to the area, although it would increase the industrial character of the landscape.

Plaster City ORV Area is highly disturbed due to cross-country ORV activity. Generally, visitors to this recreation area are not seeking the solitude or expansive scenic setting that characterizes other desert recreation areas. A transmission line through the ORV Area would introduce a new feature and increase the industrial character of this area.

Although impacts to visual resources in this area would be significant, as described in Section D.3.6.2, the presence of a transmission line would not diminish the recreational value of Plaster City ORV Area or the Yuha Basin ACEC. Impacts to the character of these recreation areas would be adverse but less than significant and no mitigation is required (Class III).

*Impact WR-3: Presence of a transmission line would permanently preclude recreational activities (Class III)*

The SDG&E West of Dunaway Alternative would be located in a designated Open Area within Plaster City ORV Area, where cross country travel by ORVs is allowed. Although the presence of transmission support structures would preclude ORV use within the structure footprint, this would comprise a relatively small amount of the total area of Plaster City ORV area. As such, impacts would be adverse but less than significant and no mitigation is required (Class III). This alternative would not preclude recreational activities within the Yuha Basin ACEC.

### D.5.14.3 SDG&E West Main Canal–Huff Road Modification Alternative

This 4.9-mile alternative would follow the IID Westside Main Canal to the east-northeast, and then turn north on Huff Road. Existing IID 92 kV transmission lines are located on the west side of Huff Road along most of this segment; however, where the IID line would turn northwest, this alternative would continue straight along Huff Road to reconnect with the Proposed Project 0.2 miles south of Wheeler Road (MP 15.9). The lengths of the alternative and the proposed routes would be essentially the same; however, this route would avoid direct effects to the Bullfrog Farms and also to the Raceway development.

The only recreation areas in the immediate vicinity of this alternative are Plaster City ORV Open Area, which is located immediately west of where this alternative would diverge from the Proposed Project (MP 10.8) to follow the IID West Main Canal, and the Superstition Mountain Open Area, which is located where the alternative route would rejoin the Proposed Project route. The alternative route would not be located within any recreation or wilderness areas, as shown in Figure D.5-1. As such, construction and operation of the SDG&E West Main Canal–Huff Road Modification Alternative would not result in significant impacts to recreation or wilderness areas.

## D.5.15 Anza-Borrego Link Alternatives Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Two alternatives are considered in the Anza-Borrego Link: the Partial Underground 230 kV ABDSP SR78 to S2 Alternative (also considered with an All Underground Option) and the Overhead 500 kV ABDSP within Existing ROW Alternative.

As described in Section D.5.2.2 the Anza-Borrego Link is characterized by recreational opportunities within ABDSP, including camping, desert tours, hiking, and scenic driving. There are 12 wilderness areas within ABDSP, three of which are near or would be traversed by the alternatives as shown in Appendix 11B. These are Grapevine Mountain Wilderness, Pinyon Ridge Wilderness, and Vallecito Mountain Wilderness, and are described in the following sections.

### D.5.15.1 Partial Underground 230 kV ABDSP SR78 to S2 Alternative

This alternative was developed by the EIR/EIS team and would include installation of a double-circuit bundled 230 kV line (as opposed to an overhead 500 kV with the Proposed Project) that would be installed underground in SR78 through ABDSP. The proposed Central East Substation would not be constructed with this alternative and approximately 2 miles of transmission line (one mile of 500 kV and one mile of 230 kV) to and from that substation would be eliminated. Instead a new 500 kV/230 kV substation would be constructed adjacent to the existing IID San Felipe Substation to accommodate the new transmission line.

There is also an All Underground Option considered for this alternative, in which the entire length of the 230 kV transmission line between the San Felipe Substation and the connection to the Proposed Project would be installed underground in Highways SR78 and S2.

#### Environmental Setting

The transmission line would be mostly underground along SR78, which is an officially designated California State Scenic Highway, with overhead portions near the junction of SR78 and S2, south and west of the San Felipe Hills WSA. Along SR78, this alternative would be underground immediately south of the Yaqui Well Primitive Camp Area and Tamarisk Grove Campground. Near the junction of

SR78 and S2, the transmission line would transition to overhead in order to span the Earthquake Valley Fault Zone. Several towers along this approximately one-mile overhead segment would be constructed within Grapevine Mountain Wilderness Area across the PCT (refer to Figure D.5-2). This alternative would transition underground at the intersection of SR78 and S2 and be constructed within S2 for three miles before transitioning overhead to follow the east side of S2 and rejoining the Proposed Project route at MP 92.7. Along the east side of S2, the Partial Underground 230 kV ABDSP SR78 to S2 Alternative would parallel the PCT for approximately 9 miles; this alternative would be constructed an average of 0.7 miles west of the PCT. The PCT runs generally northwest/southeast through the San Felipe Hills WSA. Additionally, this alternative would traverse approximately 3.5 miles of the northeastern portion of the San Dieguito River Park Planning area, an open space greenway and park system within the San Dieguito River Valley designed to protect natural waterways, cultural resources, and sensitive lands and resources while allowing compatible recreation and agricultural uses.

## Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

### Construction Impacts

#### *Impact WR-1: Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to recreation or wilderness areas (Class I)*

As previously described, portions of this alternative would be constructed underground within SR78, which would require temporary closure of this State-designated scenic highway. Additionally, construction activities would create a number of temporary conditions that may dissuade recreationists from visiting the park. For example, noise, dust and traffic generated during construction activities negatively affect a visitor's enjoyment of the recreation area. The location of construction equipment may temporarily preclude access to recreation areas, especially in the vicinity of SR78.

Although this impact would be temporary, it is possible that construction activities would occur throughout a person's visit to the Park. This chance would increase if construction occurs during the height of ABDSP's tourist season (November-April). In the reasonable foreseeable case that construction activities occur throughout a person's visit to the park, this impact would not seem temporary and would result in a significant decrease in park visitation overall, being that construction would occur along SR78, the primary access route to ABDSP. Temporary closure of SR78 would cause substantial disturbance to recreational activities and a temporary reduction of access and visitation to ABDSP, thereby resulting in a significant impact (Class I). Construction-related impacts to recreational resources in ABDSP, including the PCT would be lessened, albeit not to a less than significant level, through implementation of Mitigation Measures WR-1a (Coordinate construction schedule and activities with the authorized officer for the recreation area), WR-1b (Provide temporary detours for trail users), and WR-1c (Coordinate with local agencies to identify alternative recreation areas). Construction activities for the segment of this alternative that would be constructed along S2 would not reduce access to recreation or wilderness areas; this stretch of highway does not serve as an access route for recreation or wilderness areas within the Central Link. The full text of the mitigation measures appears in Appendix 12.

- WR-1a**     **Coordinate construction schedule and activities with the authorized officer for the recreation area.**
- WR-1b**     **Provide temporary detours for trail users.**
- WR-1c**     **Coordinate with local agencies to identify alternative recreation areas.**

Figure D.5-10. Digital Terrain Model/Viewshed Analysis in ABDSP: Partial Underground 230 kV  
ABDSP SR78 to S2

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## Operational Impacts

### *Impact WR-2: Presence of a transmission line or substation would change the character of a recreation area, diminishing its recreational value (Class I)*

Operation of the underground portions of the Partial Underground 230 kV ABDSP SR78 to S2 Alternative would not result in impacts to recreation or wilderness areas; however, the two overhead segments would traverse sensitive recreational resources, including the PCT, Grapevine Mountain Wilderness Area, and San Dieguito River Park Planning Area. In order to avoid the Earthquake Valley Fault Zone, this alternative would be constructed overhead for approximately one mile before transitioning underground. The one-mile segment of overhead would require towers and associated access roads to be constructed within the Grapevine Mountain Wilderness Area (direct impacts to wilderness are assessed under Impact WR-4, below). A digital terrain model was used to assess indirect impacts to ABDSP, including wilderness areas, by quantifying the number of acres from which the transmission towers would be visible. According to the model output, the SRPL towers would be visible from approximately 23,314 acres of State wilderness and 2,399 acres of non-wilderness ABDSP land within 5 miles of the overhead segment. Figure D.5-10 shows the portions of the wilderness areas in ABDSP from which the overhead portion of the Partial Underground 230 kV ABDSP SR78 to S2 Alternative would be visible. An explanation of the model and the parameters used are provided in Section D.5.6 (Impact WR-2).

Also, this span would cross the PCT east of S2 and would be constructed along SR78, a State-designated scenic highway. The segment of this alternative along the east side of S2 would parallel the PCT for approximately 8.8 miles, an average of 0.7 miles west of the PCT. As discussed in Section D.3.7.1, Visual Resources, long-term, operational visual impacts would be experienced by travelers and recreationists in the vicinity of SR78, S2 (including within San Felipe Hills WSA), and along the PCT.

Overall, the presence of the overhead portions of the Partial Underground 230 kV ABDSP SR78 to S2 Alternative would permanently change the character of this portion of San Felipe Valley, including western ABDSP, and would significantly diminish the recreational value of this area, resulting in a significant and unmitigable impact (Class I). Although it would not reduce the severity of the impact on recreation areas to less than Class I, Mitigation Measures V-3a (Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors) and V-8a (Structure design consultation in ABDSP) are presented in an effort to reduce impacts to the PCT, San Dieguito River Park, and recreational resources within ABDSP (see Section D.3.5.4). The full text of the visual mitigation measures presented below is provided in Appendix 12, along with the full text of all other mitigation measures.

### *Mitigation Measures for Impact WR-2: Presence of a transmission line or substation would change the character of a recreation area, diminishing its recreational value*

**V-3a      Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors.**

**V-8a      Structure design consultation in ABDSP.**

### *Impact WR-3: Presence of a transmission line would permanently preclude recreational activities (Class II)*

The overhead segment of this alternative would span the PCT east of S2. If transmission support structures were sited on or immediately adjacent to the trail, recreationists would be precluded from these locations. Exact locations of transmission support structures have not been determined. Although preliminary locations have been proposed, these may be modified based on site-specific environmental conditions (i.e., slope stability, presence of sensitive biological or cultural resources). This impact analysis,

therefore, conservatively assumes that structures would be sited on trails. Impacts to existing recreational resources that resulted from locating new towers on or immediately adjacent to the trail would be significant (Class II). Preclusion of the use of the PCT would be mitigated to a less than significant level through implementation of Mitigation Measure WR-3a (Coordinate tower and road locations with the authorized officer for the recreation area).

*Mitigation Measure for Impact WR-3: Presence of a transmission line would permanently preclude recreational activities*

**WR-3a Coordinate tower and road locations with the authorized officer for the recreation area.**

*Impact WR-4: Presence of a transmission line in a designated wilderness or wilderness study area would result in loss of wilderness land (Class I)*

The one-mile overhead segment of this alternative and associated ROW would require approximately 20 acres within the Grapevine Mountain Wilderness Area (assuming a 150-foot ROW), requiring de-designation of wilderness. As described in Section D.5.3, California State Wilderness has never been reclassified once established. Revoking the wilderness classification of 40 acres would result in a significant and unmitigable impact (Class I). As discussed in more detail in Section D.17, modification of State wilderness designated by SPRC would require a revision to the existing ABDSP General Plan. Although it would not reduce the severity of the impact of the Partial Underground 230 kV ABDSP SR78 to S2 Alternative on recreation and wilderness areas in ABDSP to less than Class I, Mitigation Measure WR-4a is presented below.

*Mitigation Measure for Impact WR-4: Presence of a transmission line in a designated wilderness or wilderness study area would require reclassification of the affected land*

**WR-4a Purchase additional State wilderness acreage.**

### San Felipe Substation

The ABDSP Partial Underground SR78/S2 Alternative would require the expansion of the existing IID San Felipe Substation to accommodate transition of the SRPL from 500 kV to 230 kV. All proposed modifications and associated staging and access requirements would be located within the previously disturbed area of the existing substation property. The substation is outside of ABDSP and not near any other recreation or wilderness areas. As such, no impacts to recreational resources or wilderness areas would occur.

### All Underground Option

Where the Partial Underground 230 kV ABDSP SR78 to S2 Alternative route would transition overhead 1.0 mile east of the SR78 intersection with S2 (San Felipe Road), the All Underground Option would continue underground in SR78. The underground route would cross and then roughly parallel the Earthquake Valley Fault and its Alquist-Priolo Fault Zone for approximately 1.0 mile. Just north of the SR78/S2 intersection, which is west of and outside ABDSP, the Option would rejoin the underground alternative route as it would continue underground to the north in S2. Where the Partial Underground 230 kV ABDSP SR78 to S2 Alternative route would transition overhead 3.0 miles west of the SR78 intersection with S2 (San Felipe Road), this All Underground Option would continue underground in S2. The underground route would roughly parallel the Earthquake Valley Fault and its Alquist-Priolo Fault Zone for approximately 8.8 miles. The Option would transition overhead immediately west of S2 at MP SR 35 to rejoin the Partial Underground 230 kV ABDSP SR78 to S2 Alternative route, which



would turn northwest and travel approximately 0.5 miles to rejoin the Proposed Project route southeast of the intersection of S2 and S22 (MP 92.7). Refer to Figures D.5-2 and D.5-3 for an illustration of this route option.

Installing the transmission line underground along Highway S2 would avoid degradation of the visual landscape and the resulting recreation impacts to the PCT and San Dieguito River Park Planning Area (Impact WR-2, Presence of a transmission line or substation would change the character of a recreation area, diminishing its recreational value). Impact WR-2 would not occur with this option.

By placing the entire 230 kV transmission line underground within ABDSP along SR78, this option would avoid direct impacts to the State-designated Grapevine Mountains Wilderness Area (Impact WR-4, Presence of a transmission line in a designated wilderness or wilderness study area would require reclassification of the affected land). Impact WR-4 would not occur with this option.

### D.5.15.2 Overhead 500 kV ABDSP within Existing ROW Alternative

The alternative would follow the same route as the proposed route, except for in the Grapevine Canyon area in the Angelina Springs Cultural District where the alternative would remain within the existing SDG&E 69 kV ROW/easement and towers would not be located on State-designated Wilderness. Undergrounding of the existing 69 kV and 92 kV lines would not occur with this alternative; however, the lines would be underbuilt on Delta lattice towers.

The *East of Tamarisk Grove Campground 150-Foot Option* was suggested by SDG&E in which the alternative would follow the Proposed Project route in the 150-foot proposed alignment, and not the existing ROW, between the eastern Park boundary (MP 60.9) to Tamarisk Grove Campground (MP 74.8) near the SR78/Highway S3 intersection. Similar to the Proposed Project described in Section B.2.2, SDG&E would underbuild and underground the existing 92 kV and 69 kV lines.

#### Environmental Setting

The Overhead 500 kV ABDSP within Existing ROW Alternative would be contained within the existing BLM easement through ABDSP. The environmental setting for this alternative would be identical to the Proposed Project (refer to Section D.5.2.2), except ROW would not be located within wilderness and the route would be located approximately 200 feet closer to Tamarisk Grove Campground. Refer to Figure D.5-2 for a map of the Overhead 500 kV ABDSP within Existing ROW Alternative and nearby recreation and wilderness areas.

#### Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

##### Construction Impacts

***Impact WR-1: Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to recreation or wilderness areas (Class I)***

Construction impacts would be similar to the Proposed Project (refer to Section D.5.5.2). Construction activities would create a number of temporary conditions that may dissuade recreationists from visiting the park. Noise, dust and heavy equipment traffic generated during construction activities would negatively affect a visitor's enjoyment of the recreation area. The location of construction equipment may temporarily preclude access to recreation areas, especially in the vicinity of SR78 and through Grape-

vine Canyon. Disturbances to recreational activities would cause a temporary reduction of access and visitation to portions of ABDSP during construction.

As described in Section D.5.5.2, although this impact would be temporary, it is possible that the construction activities would occur throughout the entire duration of a person's visit to the park. In the reasonably foreseeable case that construction activities occur for the entire duration of a person's visit to the park, these impacts would not seem temporary. A complete overlap of the construction schedule and tourist season for ABDSP would cause a reduction in visitation and access to recreation and wilderness areas, resulting in a significant and unmitigable impact (Class I). Although mitigation measures would not reduce the severity of the impact of the Overhead 500 kV ABDSP within Existing ROW Alternative on recreation areas in ABDSP to a less than significant level, Mitigation Measures WR-1a (Coordinate construction schedule and activities with the authorized officer for the recreation area), WR-1b (Provide temporary detours for trail users), and WR-1c (Coordinate with local agencies to identify alternative recreation areas) would be required.

*Mitigation Measures for Impact WR-1: Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to recreation or wilderness areas*

**WR-1a** Coordinate construction schedule and activities with the authorized officer for the recreation area.

**WR-1b** Provide temporary detours for trail users.

**WR-1c** Coordinate with local agencies to identify alternative recreation areas.

#### Operational Impacts

*Impact WR-2: Presence of a transmission line or substation would change the character of a recreation area, diminishing its recreational value (Class I)*

Recreational opportunities in the desert are especially valued for their solitude and natural setting, which characterize the majority of the park and define the park experience. A 500 kV transmission line creates a constant buzzing or crackling noise (corona noise) from the conductors, which would be a significant contrast to the current quiet experienced by visitors to ABDSP, especially campers at Tamarisk Grove Campground, Yaqui Wells Primitive Camp, and hikers in Grapevine Canyon, including Pinyon Ridge and Grapevine Mountain Wilderness Area. As described in Section D.8.5.2, Noise, corona noise caused by operation of the 500 kV transmission line would substantially elevate the current ambient noise levels in the natural areas of the park located within 500 feet of the ROW edge, thereby resulting in a significant and unmitigable impact (Class I).

In comparison to the Proposed Project, the tower heights for the Overhead 500 kV ABDSP within Existing ROW Alternative would be an average of approximately 30 feet taller with eight additional towers within ABDSP. The presence of this alternative would permanently change the character of this portion of ABDSP from an open space with minimal development to one that includes large industrial structures. The park experience would be dramatically diminished by the presence of the large, steel structures required to support the 500 kV transmission line.

As discussed in Section D.3.7.2, Visual Resources, presence of the 500 kV towers and conductors would result in long-term, operational visual impacts to travelers on SR78 and Yaqui Pass Road; visitors to Tamarisk Grove Campground, Yaqui Well Dispersed Camping Area, or Grapevine Canyon; and recreationists in the vicinity of the alternative route. A digital terrain model was used to assess indirect impacts to ABDSP, including wilderness areas, by quantifying the number of acres from which the transmission

towers would be visible. According to the model output, the towers would be visible from approximately 70,719 acres of State wilderness and 24,420 acres of non-wilderness ABDSP land within 5 miles of the overhead segment. Figure D.5-11 shows the portions of the wilderness areas in ABDSP from which the overhead portion of the Overhead 500 kV ABDSP within Existing ROW Alternative would be visible. An explanation of the model and the parameters used are provided in Section D.5.6 (Impact WR-2). Degradation of the visual landscape in ABDSP would directly impact the character of recreational resources within the park, resulting in a significant and unmitigable impact (Class I).

The Overhead 500 kV ABDSP within Existing ROW Alternative would locate a steel tower immediately adjacent to the southwest corner of the Tamarisk Grove Campground, approximately 40 feet from Campsite #5, as illustrated in Figure D.5-12. The campground is surrounded by a thick hedge of tamarisk trees, which provide shade and protection from the wind, and block the view of SR78 and the existing 69 kV transmission line. Construction and operation of this alternative would require the removal or thinning of the tamarisk trees, thereby exposing the interior of the campground and exacerbating visual and noise impacts.

Visual resource and noise impacts would directly and adversely affect the character of recreation areas within ABDSP. Presence of the proposed SRPL transmission line, including the large transmission support structures in a park with formerly vast scenic vistas and the constant corona noise in an ordinarily quiet desert environment, would irreparably diminish the recreational value of portions of the park. This alternative would not be located in wilderness because it would be within the existing ROW, therefore not requiring the additional 50-foot expansion needed by the Proposed Project and not routing around the Angelina Springs Cultural District within Grapevine Canyon. However, wilderness areas would be impacted by the visual and noise impacts along the wilderness boundaries.

One effect of the diminished value of the affected recreation areas within ABDSP could be a long-term reduction in park visitation, especially to Grapevine Canyon, Tamarisk Grove Campground, Yaqui Wells Primitive Camp and other areas along SR78. Due to presence of the SRPL, visitors may conclude that ABDSP does not provide the desired desert park experience (solitude, expansive natural vistas) and they may travel to other desert parks instead of visiting ABDSP.

Although mitigation measures would not reduce the severity of the impact of the alternative on recreation areas in ABDSP to a less than significant level, Visual Resources Mitigation Measures V-3a (Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors) and V-8a (Structure design consultation in ABDSP), Noise Mitigation Measure N-3a (Respond to complaints of corona noise), and Cultural Resources Mitigation Measure C-6a (Reduce adverse visual intrusions to historic built environment properties (i.e., Tamarisk Grove Campground)) are required to reduce impacts to recreational resources within ABDSP. The full text of the visual, noise, and cultural mitigation measures presented below is provided in Appendix 12, along with the full text of all other mitigation measures.

*Mitigation Measures for Impact WR-2: Presence of a transmission line or substation would change the character of a recreation area, diminishing its recreational value*

- V-3a      Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors.**
- V-8a      Structure design consultation in ABDSP.**
- N-3a      Respond to complaints of corona noise.**
- C-6a      Reduce adverse visual intrusions to historic built environment properties.**

***Impact WR-3: Presence of a transmission line would permanently preclude recreational activities (Class I and II)***

The Overhead 500 kV ABDSP within Existing ROW Alternative would be located along a 3-mile segment of the Trans-County Trail within Grapevine Canyon (near MP OH 20). If transmission support structures were sited on or immediately adjacent to the trail, recreationists would be precluded from using these areas. Exact locations of transmission support structures have not been determined. Although preliminary locations have been proposed, these may be modified based on site-specific environmental conditions (i.e., slope stability, presence of sensitive biological or cultural resources). This impact analysis, therefore, conservatively assumes that structures would be sited on trails. Impacts to existing recreational resources resulting from locating new towers on or immediately adjacent to trails within ABDSP would be significant (Class II). Potential preclusion of the use of the Trans-County Trail, and other trails within ABDSP would be mitigated to a less than significant level through implementation of Mitigation Measure WR-3a (Coordinate tower and road locations with the authorized officer for the recreation area).

Park officials have stated that Tamarisk Grove Campground would likely have to be closed and relocated outside of the 500 kV corridor, due to unmitigable impacts to the recreational quality of the campground as described under Impact WR-2. Although there is open camping allowed throughout the majority of ABDSP, closure of Tamarisk Grove Campground would result in the loss of 27 out of 170 improved and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-compliant camping facilities in ABDSP. Without mitigation, preclusion of the use of these camping facilities would result in a significant impact. Implementation of Mitigation Measure WR-3b would reduce this impact, but not to a less than significant level (Class I). Loss of revenue from reduced uses in ABDSP is discussed in Section D.14.6, Socioeconomics, Public Services, and Utilities.

***Mitigation Measure for Impact WR-3: Presence of a transmission line would permanently preclude recreational activities***

**WR-3a**     **Coordinate tower and road locations with the authorized officer for the recreation area.**

**WR-3b**     **Provide funding for planning and physically establishing replacement campsites and facilities.**

***Impact WR-4: Presence of a transmission line in a designated wilderness or wilderness study area would result in loss of wilderness land (No Impact)***

Except for SDG&E's current easement, the Grapevine Canyon area has been designated as Wilderness. The Overhead 500 kV ABDSP within Existing ROW Alternative would be located between but outside of Pinyon Ridge Wilderness and Grapevine Mountain Wilderness. This alternative route would not require new ROW within wilderness. As such, wilderness land would not be lost, and no direct impact would occur.

Figure D.5-11. Digital Terrain Model/Viewshed Analysis in ABDSP: Overhead 500 kV ABDSP  
within Existing ROW Alternative

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Figure D.5-12. Tamarisk Grove Campground  
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## East of Tamarisk Campground 150-foot Option

### Environmental Setting

The East of Tamarisk Campground 150-foot Option to the Overhead 500 kV ABDSP within Existing ROW Alternative would follow the Proposed Project route in a 150-foot alignment, and not the existing ROW, between the eastern park boundary (MP 60.9) to Tamarisk Grove Campground (MP 74.8) near the SR78/Highway S3 intersection. This option would move the line farther from SR78 and Tamarisk Grove Campground (refer to Figure D.5-12). West of Tamarisk Grove Campground, the 500 kV line would be located within the existing easement through Grapevine Canyon to the western boundary of ABDSP (MP 83.5). Similar to the alternative, this option would not require ROW within wilderness areas.

### Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Impacts to recreation and wilderness areas resulting from the East of Tamarisk Campground 150-foot Option would be identical to the Overhead 500 kV ABDSP within Existing ROW Alternative, with the exception of Impact WR-2 (Presence of a transmission line or substation would permanently change the character of a recreation area, diminishing its recreational value), which is analyzed below.

### Operational Impacts

***Impact WR-2: Presence of a transmission line or substation would change the character of a recreation area, diminishing its recreational value (Class I)***

Impacts to the character and recreational value of the Tamarisk Grove Campground resulting from the Overhead 500 kV ABDSP within Existing ROW Alternative would be reduced by the East of Tamarisk Campground 150-foot Option. This option would locate the ROW approximately 300 feet further south from Tamarisk Grove Campground, thereby reducing tree trimming around the campground. However, due to the remaining visual and noise impacts, which would be the same as the Overhead 500 kV ABDSP within Existing ROW Alternative, the impact to Tamarisk Grove Campground and other ABDSP recreation areas near SR78 is significant and unmitigable (Class I). Although mitigation measures would not reduce the severity of the impact to less than Class I, Visual Resources Mitigation Measures V-3a (Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors) and V-8a (Structure design consultation in ABDSP), Noise Mitigation Measure N-3a (Respond to complaints of corona noise), and Cultural Resources Mitigation Measure C-6a (Reduce adverse visual intrusions to historic built environment properties (i.e., Tamarisk Grove Campground)) would be required. The full text of the visual, noise and cultural mitigation measures presented below is provided in Appendix 12, along with the full text of all other mitigation measures.

***Mitigation Measures for Impact WR-2: Presence of a transmission line or substation would change the character of a recreation area, diminishing its recreational value***

- V-3a      Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors.**
- V-8a      Structure design consultation in ABDSP.**
- N-3a      Respond to complaints of corona noise.**
- C-6a      Reduce adverse visual intrusions to historic built environment properties.**

## D.5.16 Central Link Alternatives Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Four Central Link Alternatives are considered in this section: the Santa Ysabel Existing ROW Alternative, the Santa Ysabel Partial Underground Alternative, the Santa Ysabel SR79 All Underground Alternative, and the Mesa Grande Alternative.

As described in Section D.5.2.3, recreational opportunities within the Central Link include the multi-jurisdictional PCT and recreation areas under the jurisdiction of the San Dieguito River Park Joint Power Authority and San Diego County, as shown in Figure D.5-3 and described below. Additionally, the San Felipe Hills WSA is located within the Central Link.

### D.5.16.1 Santa Ysabel Existing ROW Alternative

This alternative would follow an existing 69 kV transmission line ROW on the west side of SR79 in the northern half and east of SR79, along the toe of the hill slope in the southern portion of the alternative. This route would pass east of the existing Santa Ysabel Substation and continue to follow the existing 69 kV line south of SR78 until it rejoins the proposed corridor.

#### Environmental Setting

The Santa Ysabel Existing ROW Alternative would be constructed entirely overhead and would deviate from the Proposed Project route at MP 100 and rejoin it at MP 110. The route would be along an existing 69 kV transmission line running along SR79. Initially, this alternative would be on the west side of SR79, before crossing to the east side of SR79 where the Santa Ysabel Valley begins to widen. The transmission line would continue along the east side of SR79 along the toe of the slope, going behind the Santa Ysabel Mission, through the Santa Ysabel Open Space Preserve, and east of the Santa Ysabel Substation before crossing SR78 in the town of Santa Ysabel. The route would continue south then southwest to rejoin the Proposed Project route at approximately MP 110.

This alternative route would traverse approximately 1.2 miles of the Santa Ysabel Open Space Preserve, including the West Vista Loop trailhead. Refer to Figure D.5-3 for a map of the Santa Ysabel Existing ROW Alternative and nearby recreation areas. There are no wilderness areas in the vicinity of this alternative route.

#### Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

##### Construction Impacts

***Impact WR-1: Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to recreation or wilderness areas (Class II)***

Construction of the Santa Ysabel Existing ROW Alternative may require temporary closure of the western portion of the West Vista Loop Trail, thereby reducing access to this recreational resource. Without mitigation, temporary reduction of access and visitation to portions of Santa Ysabel Open Space Preserve would be significant (Class II). Implementation of Mitigation Measures WR-1a (Coordinate construction schedule and activities with the authorized officer for the recreation area), WR-1b (Provide temporary detours for trail users), and WR-1c (Coordinate with local agencies to identify alternative recreation areas) would reduce impacts to less than significant levels. The full text of the mitigation measures appears in Appendix 12.

*Mitigation Measures for Impact WR-1: Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to recreation or wilderness areas*

- WR-1a**     **Coordinate construction schedule and activities with the authorized officer for the recreation area.**
- WR-1b**     **Provide temporary detours for trail users.**
- WR-1c**     **Coordinate with local agencies to identify alternative recreation areas.**

#### Operational Impacts

*Impact WR-2: Presence of a transmission line or substation would change the character of a recreation area, diminishing its recreational value (Class I)*

As described above, the Santa Ysabel Existing ROW Alternative would traverse 1.2 miles of the Santa Ysabel Open Space Preserve, including the West Vista Loop Trail. Within this area, construction of a 230 kV transmission line would introduce a new feature, much more industrial in character than the existing 69 kV lines that are currently in the ROW. As described in Section D.3.5.2, Visual Resources, the increase in structural complexity and industrial character resulting from presence of the an overhead 230 kV transmission line within the Santa Ysabel Valley would substantially contrast with the natural landscape.

Visual resource and noise impacts would directly adversely affect the character of recreation areas within the Central Link and result in a significant and unmitigable impact (Class I). Visual Resources Mitigation Measure V-3a (Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors) is presented to reduce impacts to the recreational value of Santa Ysabel Open Space Preserve within the Central Link, but the impact significance would remain the same for this recreation area. The full text of the visual mitigation measure presented below is provided in Appendix 12, along with the full text of all other mitigation measures.

*Mitigation Measures for Impact WR-2: Presence of a transmission line or substation would change the character of a recreation area, diminishing its recreational value*

- V-3a**        **Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors.**

*Impact WR-3: Presence of a transmission line would permanently preclude recreational activities (Class II)*

The Santa Ysabel Existing ROW Alternative would cross the West Vista Loop Trail. If transmission support structures were sited on or immediately adjacent to the trail, recreationists would be precluded from using these areas. Exact locations of transmission support structures have not been determined. Although preliminary locations have been proposed, these may be modified based on site-specific environmental conditions (i.e., slope stability, presence of sensitive biological or cultural resources). This impact analysis, therefore, conservatively assumes that structures would be sited on the West Vista Loop Trail. Impacts to existing recreational resources that resulted from locating new towers on or immediately adjacent to the trail would be significant (Class II). Potential preclusion of the use of the West Vista Loop Trail would be mitigated to a less than significant level through implementation of Mitigation Measure WR-3a (Coordinate tower and road locations with the authorized officer for the recreation area).

*Mitigation Measure for Impact WR-3: Presence of a transmission line would permanently preclude recreational activities*

- WR-3a**     **Coordinate tower and road locations with the authorized officer for the recreation area.**

### D.5.16.2 Santa Ysabel Partial Underground Alternative

This 230 kV alternative would begin at MP 105.5 where the proposed route would join Mesa Grande Road at the base of the hills at the western side of the Santa Ysabel Valley. The alternative would transition underground at the southern side of Mesa Grande Road and would travel underground in Mesa Grande Road, SR79 and then, south of SR78, following property lines for approximately one mile to rejoin the proposed route at approximately MP 109.5 where it would transition overhead. The route would be 0.7 miles longer than the proposed route.

#### Environmental Setting

The Santa Ysabel Partial Underground Alternative would deviate from the Proposed Project route at MP 105.3 and would transition underground within Mesa Grande Road and SR78 before transitioning overhead and rejoining the Proposed Project route at 109.5. The segment of this alternative route along SR78 would traverse the San Dieguito River Park Planning Area and would be constructed immediately west of the Santa Ysabel Open Space Preserve, which are described in Section D.5.2.3. This alternative would be constructed entirely underground thereby avoiding permanent impacts to these recreation areas. Temporary construction-related impacts are assessed below. Refer to Figure D.5-3 for a map of the Santa Ysabel Partial Underground Alternative and nearby recreation areas. There are no wilderness areas in the vicinity of the Santa Ysabel Partial Underground Alternative.

#### Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

##### Construction Impacts

***Impact WR-1: Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to recreation or wilderness areas (Class II)***

The West Vista Loop Trail within the Santa Ysabel Open Space Preserve is primarily accessed by SR78, south of Mesa Grande Road. Construction of the Santa Ysabel Partial Underground Alternative may require partial closure of SR78, thereby reducing access to this recreational resource. Temporary reduction of access and visitation to portions of Santa Ysabel Open Space Preserve would be significant without mitigation (Class II). Implementation of Mitigation Measures WR-1a (Coordinate construction schedule and activities with the authorized officer for the recreation area), WR-1b (Provide temporary detours for trail users), and WR-1c (Coordinate with local agencies to identify alternative recreation areas) would reduce impacts to less than significant levels.

***Mitigation Measures for Impact WR-1: Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to recreation or wilderness areas***

- WR-1a**     **Coordinate construction schedule and activities with the authorized officer for the recreation area.**
- WR-1b**     **Provide temporary detours for trail users.**
- WR-1c**     **Coordinate with local agencies to identify alternative recreation areas.**

### D.5.16.3 Santa Ysabel SR79 All Underground Alternative

This alternative would diverge from the Proposed Project at MP 100, just south of the crossing of SR78. It would start as an overhead 230 kV line, which would then transition to an underground route

on private property, west of SR79. It would be underground along existing dirt roads and within hay fields and SR79 through the Santa Ysabel Valley, rejoining the proposed route south of SR78.

Affected recreation areas and impacts for the Santa Ysabel SR79 All Underground Alternative are the same as Santa Ysabel Partial Underground Alternative, as described in Section D.5.8.2 and illustrated in Figure D.5-3.

### Environmental Setting

The Santa Ysabel SR79 All Underground Alternative would deviate from the Proposed Project route at MP 100 and would transition underground within unpaved dirt roads and SR78 before transitioning overhead and rejoining the Proposed Project route at 109.5. The segment of this alternative route along SR78 would traverse the San Dieguito River Park Planning Area and would be constructed immediately west of the Santa Ysabel Open Space Preserve, which are described in Section D.5.2.3. This alternative would be constructed entirely underground thereby avoiding permanent impacts to these recreation areas. Temporary construction-related impacts are assessed below. There are no wilderness areas in the vicinity of the Santa Ysabel SR79 All Underground Alternative.

### Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

#### Construction Impacts

***Impact WR-1: Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to recreation or wilderness areas (Class II)***

The West Vista Loop Trail within the Santa Ysabel Open Space Preserve is primarily accessed by SR78, south of Mesa Grande Road. Construction of the Santa Ysabel SR79 All Underground Alternative may require partial closure of SR78, thereby reducing access to this recreational resource. Without mitigation, temporary reduction of access and visitation to portions of Santa Ysabel Open Space Preserve would be significant (Class II). Implementation of Mitigation Measures WR-1a (Coordinate construction schedule and activities with the authorized officer for the recreation area), WR-1b (Provide temporary detours for trail users), and WR-1c (Coordinate with local agencies to identify alternative recreation areas) would reduce impacts to less than significant levels.

***Mitigation Measures for Impact WR-1: Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to recreation or wilderness areas***

**WR-1a**     **Coordinate construction schedule and activities with the authorized officer for the recreation area.**

**WR-1b**     **Provide temporary detours for trail users.**

**WR-1c**     **Coordinate with local agencies to identify alternative recreation areas.**

#### D.5.16.4 SDG&E Mesa Grande Alternative

This alternative to a one-mile portion of the proposed overhead 230 kV route was proposed by the landowner and also by SDG&E in order to reduce the visibility of the overhead line west of Mesa Grande Road. It would diverge from the proposed route at MP 102.2, and rejoin it before MP 104.

The SDG&E Mesa Grande Alternative would deviate from the Proposed Project for approximately one mile. There are no recreation or wilderness areas in the vicinity of this alternative route, as shown in

Figure D.5-3. As such, construction or operation-related impacts to recreation or wilderness areas would not occur.

## D.5.17 Inland Valley Link Alternatives Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Four alternatives are considered within the Inland Valley Link: the CNF Existing 69 kV Route Alternative, the Oak Hollow Road Underground Alternative, the San Vicente Road Transition Station Alternative, and the Chuck Wagon Road Alternative.

As described in Section D.5.2.4, the Inland Valley Link is characterized by recreational opportunities at San Diego County open space preserves, including the Mt. Gower and Barnett Ranch Open Space Preserves. In addition, a portion of the Cleveland National Forest is located within the Inland Valley Link. Refer to Figures D.5-5 for a map of recreation areas in the Inland Valley Link. There are no wilderness areas in the Inland Valley Link.

### D.5.17.1 CNF Existing 69 kV Route Alternative

This 0.5-mile alternative segment would start at MP 111.3 where the proposed 230 kV and existing 69 kV transmission lines would be routed west for 0.5 miles and then south for approximately 0.5 miles to avoid Cleveland National Forest (CNF). The alternative would remain in the existing 69 kV ROW heading southwest through Cleveland National Forest to rejoin the proposed route at MP 111.8. This alternative would be 0.5 miles shorter than the Proposed Project and the existing 69 kV transmission line would not need to be relocated out of the existing ROW.

There are no recreation or wilderness areas in the vicinity of this 0.5-mile segment across National Forest property, as shown in Figure D.5-5. As such, construction or operation-related impacts from the CNF Existing 69 kV Route Alternative to recreation or wilderness areas would not occur.

### D.5.17.2 Oak Hollow Road Underground Alternative

The purpose of this alternative would be to extend the proposed underground to the east of Mount Gower County Open Space Preserve so the line would be underground through the valley area. The alternative would require 0.6 miles of additional underground 230 kV transmission line, and the existing 69 kV would remain overhead.

This segment would be located outside of the Mt. Gower Open Space Preserve and would not be located near any other recreation or wilderness area, as shown in Figure D.5-5. As such, construction or operation-related impacts from the Oak Hollow Road Underground Alternative to recreation or wilderness areas would not occur.

### D.5.17.3 San Vicente Road Transition Alternative

The alternative would move the transition structure from its proposed location along San Vicente Road (MP 121.9) approximately 0.3 miles west to MP 122.2. The underground line would follow San Vicente Road within a 60-foot ROW for an additional 2,100 feet and would cross under an existing Creelman–Los Coches 69 kV transmission line, before it would turn north and would travel through open space for approximately 200 feet to the overhead transition point.

## Environmental Setting

The San Vicente Road Transition Alternative would require construction of the transition structure to be relocated from the proposed location along San Vicente Road (MP 121.9) approximately 0.3 miles west to MP 122.2. This alternative would consist of a 1.5-mile overhead transmission line segment and a 0.3-mile underground transmission line segment within Barnett Ranch Open Space Preserve, whereas the Proposed Project would be constructed entirely overhead within the Preserve. The following section discusses environmental impacts and associated mitigation measures for the 0.3-mile underground segment within the Barnett Ranch Open Space Preserve. This alternative would be constructed entirely underground thereby avoiding permanent operational impacts to this recreation area. Construction impacts are discussed below. Refer to Figure D.5-5 for a map of the San Vicente Road Transition Alternative and nearby recreation areas. There are no wilderness areas in the vicinity of this alternative route.

## Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

### Construction Impacts

#### *Impact WR-1: Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to recreation or wilderness areas (Class II)*

Overhead and underground portions of the San Vicente Road Transition Alternative would be constructed within the Barnett Ranch Open Space Preserve. Project construction activities would create a number of temporary impacts that would diminish the value of the open space preserve. Noise, dust and traffic generated during construction activities would negatively affect a visitor's enjoyment of these recreation areas. Recreationists may be less likely to visit these resources during project construction.

In addition, the Barnett Ranch Open Space Preserve may temporarily close some of its recreational facilities in order to ensure the safety of recreationists during construction. Temporary closure would cause a temporary reduction of access and visitation and thus would result in significant impacts (Class II). Construction-related impacts to recreation at the open space preserves would be mitigated to a less than significant level through implementation of Mitigation Measures WR-1a (Coordinate construction schedule and activities with the authorized officer for the recreation area), WR-1b (Provide temporary detours for trail users) and WR-1c (Coordinate with local agencies to identify alternative recreation areas). The full text of the mitigation measures appears in Appendix 12.

**WR-1a**     **Coordinate construction schedule and activities with the authorized officer for the recreation area.**

**WR-1b**     **Provide temporary detours for trail users.**

**WR-1c**     **Coordinate with local agencies to identify alternative recreation areas.**

### D.5.17.4 Chuck Wagon Road Alternative

This alternative would diverge from the proposed route in San Vicente Boulevard, turning south in Chuck Wagon Road approximately 0.2 miles east of the proposed transition point at MP 121.7. It would continue south for approximately 1.6 miles before passing under the existing Creelman-Los Coches 69 kV transmission line ROW. At this point, the route would transition to overhead and turn west for approximately 1.2 miles to rejoin the proposed route at MP 125.6.

This alternative would be located outside of the Barnett Ranch Open Space Preserve and would not be located near any other recreation or wilderness area, as shown in Figure D.5-5. As such, construction or operation-related impacts from the Chuck Wagon Road Alternative to recreation or wilderness areas would not occur.

## D.5.18 Coastal Link Alternatives Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Four alternatives are considered within the Coastal Link: the Pomerado Road to Miramar Area North Alternative, the Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve and Mercy Road Alternative, the Black Mountain to Park Village Road Underground Alternative, and the Coastal Link System Upgrade Alternative.

As described in Section D.5.2.5, recreational opportunities within the Coastal Link are provided by various urban parks managed by the City of San Diego and/or the County of San Diego Parks and Recreation Department. There are no wilderness areas within the Coastal Link.

### D.5.18.1 Pomerado Road to Miramar Area North

This alternative would be underground with the exception of the east and west ends where the line is overhead within existing SDG&E transmission ROWs. This alternative would exit the Sycamore Substation at MCAS Miramar overhead westerly within an existing ROW toward Pomerado Road. The line would transition to underground beneath Pomerado Road in the vicinity of Legacy Road, then continuing underground in Miramar Road, Kearny Villa Road, Black Mountain Road, Activity Road, Camino Ruiz, Miralani Drive, Arjons Drive, Trade Place, Camino Santa Fe, Carroll Road/Carroll Canyon Road and Scranton Road. At the western end, the line would transition to overhead and would be located within the existing 230 kV ROW heading northward into the Peñasquitos Substation.

#### Environmental Setting

The majority of the Pomerado Road to Miramar Area North Alternative is underground within major roads with the exception of the east and west ends where the line is overhead within existing ROW. Along Scranton Road, the transmission line would transition to overhead and would be located within the existing 230 kV ROW heading northward into the Peñasquitos Substation. This overhead portion would be parallel to an existing 230 kV overhead transmission line within a utility corridor that also presently contains 138 kV and 69 kV circuits. This alternative would traverse approximately 0.5 miles of the western end of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, across two trails that allow hiking, biking, and equestrian use, the Preserve's western staging area, and east of the El Cuervo Adobe Ruin. The Preserve is located approximately 1.5 miles south of SR56 and less than 0.3 miles east of the junction of Interstate 5 and Interstate 805. Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve is the only recreation area traversed by or in the vicinity of this alternative.

#### Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

##### Construction Impacts

***Impact WR-1: Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to recreation or wilderness areas (Class II)***

Construction of the Pomerado Road to Miramar Area North Alternative may require closure of some of the western portion of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, thereby reducing access to this recreational



resource. Temporary reduction of access and visitation to portions of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve would be significant without mitigation (Class II). Implementation of Mitigation Measure WR-1a (Coordinate construction schedule and activities with the authorized officer for the recreation area), WR-1b (Provide temporary detours for trail users), and WR-1c (Coordinate with local agencies to identify alternative recreation areas) would reduce impacts to less than significant levels. The full text of the mitigation measures appears in Appendix 12.

*Mitigation Measures for Impact WR-1: Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to recreation or wilderness areas*

**WR-1a** Coordinate construction schedule and activities with the authorized officer for the recreation area.

**WR-1b** Provide temporary detours for trail users.

**WR-1c** Coordinate with local agencies to identify alternative recreation areas.

#### Operational Impacts

*Impact WR-2: Presence of a transmission line or substation would change the character of a recreation area, diminishing its recreational value (Class III)*

The Pomerado Road to Miramar Area North Alternative within the western portion of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve would consist of a 0.5-mile overhead segment. As described above, the overhead portion of this alternative within the Preserve would be sited in an existing utility corridor that presently contains three circuits on two sets of separate structures (230 kV and 69 kV on one set of structures, 138 kV and a vacant circuit on a second set of structures). The Pomerado Road to Miramar Area North Alternative would not introduce a new industrial use across an undeveloped recreational resource. Therefore, impacts would be adverse but less than significant and no mitigation is required (Class III).

*Impact WR-3: Presence of a transmission line would permanently preclude recreational activities (Class II)*

The Pomerado Road to Miramar Area North Alternative would cross two trails that allow hiking, biking, and equestrian use. If transmission support structures were sited on or immediately adjacent to the trails, recreationists would be precluded from using these areas. Exact locations of transmission support structures have not been determined. Although preliminary locations have been proposed, these may be modified based on site-specific environmental conditions (i.e., slope stability, presence of sensitive biological or cultural resources). This impact analysis, therefore, conservatively assumes that structures would be sited on trails. Impacts to existing recreational resources that resulted from locating new towers on or immediately adjacent to the trail would be significant (Class II). Potential preclusion of the use of trails within Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve would be mitigated to a less than significant level through implementation of Mitigation Measure WR-3a (Coordinate tower and road locations with the authorized officer for the recreation area).

*Mitigation Measure for Impact WR-3: Presence of a transmission line would permanently preclude recreational activities*

**WR-3a** Coordinate tower and road locations with the authorized officer for the recreation area.

### D.5.18.2 Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve–Mercy Road Alternative

This alternative route would bypass the Chicarita Substation and connect to existing ROW along Scripps Poway Parkway in the vicinity of Ivy Hill Drive. The line would then transition to underground and follow Scripps Poway Parkway/Mercy Road, Mercy Road, Black Mountain Road, and finally Park Village Drive, where the alternative route would rejoin the proposed route.

#### Environmental Setting

The Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve–Mercy Road Alternative would be located underground within Mercy Road, under I-15 and immediately south of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. At the intersection of Black Mountain Road, the route would follow Black Mountain Road then Park Village Road to rejoin the Proposed Project route at MP 144.2. Refer to Figure D.5-6 for a map of the alternative route and nearby recreation areas.

The east entrance to the Preserve, including a parking lot and ranger office, is located at the intersection of Black Mountain Road and Mercy Road. Additionally, Canyonside Park Driveway is an access road into the Preserve that intersects Black Mountain Road. Canyonside Park Driveway may be used to access Canyonside Community Park and ends in a parking lot, ranger office, and the historic Santa Maria de los Peñasquitos Adobe, which has been restored and tours are available (San Diego City DPR, 2006).

This alternative would be constructed entirely underground thereby avoiding permanent operational impacts to Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. Temporary construction-related impacts are assessed below. There are no wilderness areas in the vicinity of the Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve–Mercy Road Alternative.

#### Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

##### Construction Impacts

***Impact WR-1: Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to recreation or wilderness areas (Class II)***

The east entrance to the Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve is accessed by Black Mountain Road. Construction of the Santa Ysabel Partial Underground Alternative may require partial closure of Black Mountain Road, thereby reducing access to this recreational resource. Temporary reduction of access and visitation to portions of the Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve would be significant without mitigation (Class II). Implementation of Mitigation Measures WR-1a (Coordinate construction schedule and activities with the authorized officer for the recreation area), WR-1b (Provide temporary detours for trail users), and WR-1c (Coordinate with local agencies to identify alternative recreation areas) would reduce impacts to less than significant levels.

***Mitigation Measures for Impact WR-1: Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to recreation or wilderness areas***

- WR-1a**     **Coordinate construction schedule and activities with the authorized officer for the recreation area.**
- WR-1b**     **Provide temporary detours for trail users.**
- WR-1c**     **Coordinate with local agencies to identify alternative recreation areas.**

### D.5.18.3 Black Mountain to Park Village Road Underground Alternative

This alternative would deviate from the Proposed Project alignment where the route approaches Black Mountain Road. Under this alternative, the line would remain underground but would be located underneath Black Mountain Road and would turn west onto Park Village Drive, following the project alignment into the Peñasquitos Substation via the Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve.

This alternative would neither traverse any recreation or wilderness areas nor would it be constructed along any access routes to recreation areas, including Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. As such, construction or operation-related impacts from the Black Mountain to Park Village Road Underground Alternative to recreation or wilderness areas would not occur.

### D.5.18.4 Coastal Link System Upgrade Alternative

The Coastal Link System Upgrade Alternative would be a system modification to install a third 230/69 kV transformer at the existing Sycamore Canyon Substation. Expansion of the Sycamore Canyon Substation would occur within the existing substation easement. Additionally, SDG&E would either (a) install a new 230/138 kV transformer at the existing Encina Substation or (b) upgrade (reconductor) the existing Sycamore Canyon-Chicarita 138 kV circuit using 34 existing wood frame structures.

#### Environmental Setting

No wilderness areas occur and few urban parks are in the vicinity of the existing Sycamore Canyon Substation, the Miguel Substation, the Mission Substation, and the Escondido Substation, and the existing transmission facilities of Sycamore Canyon–Pomerado–Poway and Sycamore Canyon–Chicarita routes and lines between Sycamore Canyon and Mission. The existing 230 kV system between Sycamore Canyon and Mission traverses the Mission Trails Regional Park and the Mission Trails Golf Course, and other neighborhood parks may be near the existing transmission lines, as described in Section D.5.2.5.

#### Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

The Coastal Link System Upgrade Alternative would eliminate the impacts associated with the Proposed Project segment between Sycamore Canyon and Peñasquitos Substations. Because this alternative would upgrade existing transmission facilities without introducing new structures, the alternative would not change the character of a recreation area, diminishing its recreational value (Impact WR-2) or preclude recreational activities (Impact WR-3). Because this alternative would not affect any designated wilderness or wilderness study area, no impact to a wilderness area would occur (Impact WR-4).

#### Construction Impacts

***Impact WR-1: Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to recreation or wilderness areas (Class II)***

Overhead transmission upgrades would be constructed within the Mission Trails Regional Park, and construction activities would create a number of temporary impacts that would temporarily diminish the value of the open space. Noise, dust and traffic generated during construction activities would negatively affect a visitor's enjoyment, and recreationists may be less likely to visit these resources during construction. If needed to ensure the safety of recreationists during construction, temporary closure

would cause a temporary reduction of access and visitation and thus would result in significant impacts (Class II). Construction-related impacts to recreation at the open space preserves would be mitigated to a less than significant level through implementation of Mitigation Measures WR-1a (Coordinate construction schedule and activities with the authorized officer for the recreation area), WR-1b (Provide temporary detours for trail users) and WR-1c (Coordinate with local agencies to identify alternative recreation areas).

**WR-1a**     **Coordinate construction schedule and activities with the authorized officer for the recreation area.**

**WR-1b**     **Provide temporary detours for trail users.**

**WR-1c**     **Coordinate with local agencies to identify alternative recreation areas.**

## D.5.19 Top of the World Substation Alternative Impacts and Mitigation Measures

The substation site would be located approximately one mile west of the proposed Central East Substation on Vista Irrigation District land. The transmission line routes into the substation would follow the Proposed Project route to approximately MP 92.7, then the alternative 500 kV route would turn west for 1.1 miles to enter the alternative site. Exiting the substation the line would travel southwest for 400 feet and then west and north-northwest to rejoin the Proposed Project around MP 95.

### Environmental Setting

The Top of the World Substation is proposed as an alternative to the Central East Substation. The transmission line routes into the substation would follow the Proposed Project route to approximately MP 92.7. At this point, the alternative 500 kV route would turn west for 1.1 miles to enter the alternative substation. Exiting the substation, the 230 kV line would travel southwest for 400 feet and then west and north-northwest to rejoin the Proposed Project at MP 95. This alternative substation would require approximately 3 miles of access roads and a 37-acre pad on Vista Irrigation District property. Additionally, lay down yards comprising approximately 15 acres would be required to facilitate construction activities.

The transmission lines entering and exiting the substation would be visible from several areas within the Mataguay Scout Ranch and would cross the High Adventure Backpack Trail, which connects to the PCT. Recreational opportunities available at the Mataguay Scout Ranch are described in Section D.5.2.3.

### Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

#### Construction Impacts

***Impact WR-1: Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to recreation or wilderness areas (Class II)***

Construction activities along the Mataguay Scout Ranch trails (i.e., High Adventure Backpack Trail) would create a hazard to recreationists and a temporary closure of these trails during project construction would result in a significant impact (Class II). In order to allow for continued use of the trails, Mitigation Measure WR-1b (Provide temporary detours for trail users) would be implemented. Additionally, implementation of Mitigation Measures WR-1a (Coordinate construction schedule with the authorized officer for the recreation area) and WR-1c (Coordinate with local agencies to identify alternative recreation

areas) would reduce construction-related impacts to recreational resources to less than significant levels. The full text of the mitigation measures appears in Appendix 12.

Although SDG&E commits to providing advance notice and adequate signage, and to time construction activities to avoid major holidays through implementation of APMs R-APM-2a through 2f, Mitigation Measure WR-1a presents additional detail. Therefore, APMs R-APM-2a through 2f are superseded by Mitigation Measure WR-1a.

*Mitigation Measure for Impact WR-1: Construction activities would temporarily reduce access and visitation to recreation or wilderness areas*

**WR-1a**     **Coordinate construction schedule and activities with the authorized officer for the recreation area.**

**WR-1b**     **Provide temporary detours for trail users.**

**WR-1c**     **Coordinate with local agencies to identify alternative recreation areas.**

### Operational Impacts

*Impact WR-2: Presence of a transmission line or substation would change the character of a recreation area, diminishing its recreational value (Class I)*

Although the substation may be visible at a far distance from Lake Henshaw and Mt. Palomar, which are approximately 6 and 10 miles northwest of the Top of the World Substation Alternative, respectively, the presence or operation of the substation would not adversely affect these recreational resources. However, as described in Section D.3.19, Visual Resources, views of the alternative substation site would be available from the higher elevation Fun House Rock climbing area and the 230 kV transmission lines exiting the substation would be visible from several areas on the Mataguay Scout Ranch property where gaps in vegetation allow an unobstructed sightline to the transmission support structures. Additionally, the transmission lines entering and exiting the substation would be visible from the hiking trails that extend from the main Scout Ranch facilities in Mataguay Valley and would cross the High Adventure Backpack Trail, which connects to the PCT.

Visitors to the Scout Ranch expect a predominantly rural inland valley landscape. The addition of developed industrial features (i.e., substation and transmission towers) would adversely alter the visual landscape in several areas within the Mataguay Scout Ranch. Presence of the Top of the World Substation Alternative would be contrary to the desired recreational experience of visitors to Mataguay Scout Ranch, thereby diminishing the recreational value of this resource and resulting in a significant and unmitigable impact (Class I). Although these would not reduce the severity of the impact, Mitigation Measure V-3a (Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors), V-7a (Reduce visual contrast associated with ancillary facilities), V-7b (Screen ancillary facilities), and V-53a (Reduce visibility of the 230 kV transmission line connection exiting the Top of the Work Alternative Substation to the west) are presented. A full description of these mitigation measures is presented in Appendix 12, along with the full text of all other mitigation measures.

The corona noise from the proposed 500 kV segment would substantially elevate the ambient noise levels within 500 feet of the edge of the 500 kV ROW in the natural areas in the vicinity of the Top of the World Substation. There are no recreation areas within 500 feet of the edge of the 500 kV ROW.

*Mitigation Measures for Impact WR-2: Presence of a transmission line or substation would change the character of a recreation area, diminishing its recreational value*

- V-3a      Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors.**
- V-7a      Reduce visual contrast associated with ancillary facilities.**
- V-7b      Screen ancillary facilities.**
- V-53a     Reduce visibility of the 230 kV transmission line connection exiting the Top of the World Alternative Substation to the west.**

*Impact WR-3: Presence of a transmission line would permanently preclude recreational activities (Class II)*

As described above, the transmission lines exiting the Top of the World Substation would cross the Mataguay Scout Ranch's High Adventure Backpack Trail, which ultimately connects to the PCT. If transmission support structures were sited on or immediately adjacent to the trail, recreationists would be precluded from these locations. Exact locations of transmission support structures have not been determined. Although preliminary locations have been proposed, these may be modified based on site-specific environmental conditions (i.e., slope stability, presence of sensitive biological or cultural resources). This impact analysis, therefore, conservatively assumes that structures would be sited on trails. Impacts to existing recreational resources that would result from locating new towers on or immediately adjacent to the trail would be significant (Class II). Preclusion of the use of the High Adventure Backpack Trail would be mitigated to a less than significant level through implementation of Mitigation Measure WR-3a (Coordinate tower and road locations with the authorized officer for the recreation area).

*Mitigation Measure for Impact WR-3: Presence of a transmission line would permanently preclude recreational activities*

- WR-3a     Coordinate tower and road locations with the authorized officer for the recreation area.**

*Impact WR-4: Presence of a transmission line in a designated wilderness or wilderness study area would result in loss of wilderness land (No Impact)*

The Top of the World ROW would not traverse any wilderness areas or WSAs. As such, direct impacts to these resources would not occur.

## D.5.20 Mitigation Monitoring, Compliance, and Reporting Table

Table D.5-5 presents the mitigation monitoring, compliance and reporting table for Wilderness and Recreation. Mitigation measures not originating in this section do not appear in the table; they appear only in the mitigation monitoring, compliance and reporting table for the section in which they were originally recommended. For a summary of all impacts and their respective mitigation measures, please see the Impact Summary Tables at the end of the Executive Summary.

Sections D.5.11 and D.5.12 recommend mitigation measures for the projects described under Future Transmission System Expansion and Connected Actions/Indirect Effects. Those mitigation measures are presented for consideration by the agencies that will issue permits for construction of the connected and future projects. Because those projects would not be constructed as a result of approval of the Sunrise Powerlink Project, the recommended mitigation measures are not included in this mitigation monitoring table.

**Table D.5-5. Mitigation Monitoring Program – Wilderness and Recreation**

<b>MITIGATION MEASURE</b>	<p><b>WR-1a: Coordinate construction schedule and activities with the authorized officer for the recreation area.</b> No less than 60 days prior to construction, SDG&amp;E shall coordinate construction activities and the project construction schedule with the authorized officer for the recreation areas listed below. SDG&amp;E shall schedule construction activities to avoid heavy recreational use periods in coordination with and at the discretion of the authorized officer. SDG&amp;E shall locate construction equipment to avoid temporary preclusion of recreation areas in accordance with the recommendation of the authorized officer. SDG&amp;E shall document its coordination efforts with the authorized officer and provide this documentation to the CPUC, BLM, and affected park jurisdictions at least 30 days prior to construction.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BLM Dunaway Camp</li> <li>• Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail</li> <li>• ABDSP (Open Camping, Tamarisk Grove Campground, Yaqui Well Campground, Cactus Loop Trail, Yaqui Well Nature Trail, Bill Kenyon Overlook Trail, Trans-County Trail, Vallecito Mountain Wilderness Area Pinyon Ridge Wilderness Area, Grapevine Mountain Wilderness Area)</li> <li>• Desert Tours (California Overland, La Casa del Zorro, Sky Trail)</li> <li>• California State Scenic Highway 78</li> <li>• Trans-County Trail</li> <li>• Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail</li> <li>• Santa Ysabel Open Space Preserve</li> <li>• San Dieguito River Park</li> <li>• Mt. Gower Open Space Preserve</li> <li>• San Vicente Resort and Golf Club</li> <li>• Barnett Ranch Open Space Preserve</li> <li>• Boulder Oaks Open Space Preserve</li> <li>• San Vicente Highlands Open Space Preserve</li> <li>• Sycamore Canyon Open Space Preserve</li> <li>• Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve</li> <li>• Mission Trails Regional Park</li> </ul>
<b>Location</b>	Construction activity in or adjacent to the recreation areas listed above.
<b>Monitoring / Reporting Action</b>	CPUC, BLM, and affected park jurisdictions verify that SDG&E submits documentation of coordination efforts with the authorized officers for the listed recreation areas.
<b>Effectiveness Criteria</b>	Construction activities are scheduled to avoid heavy recreational use periods; construction equipment is located to avoid temporary preclusion of recreation areas.
<b>Responsible Agency</b>	CPUC; BLM; affected park jurisdictions.
<b>Timing</b>	Submit documentation of coordination efforts to CPUC, BLM, and affected park jurisdictions no less than 30 days prior to construction.

Table D.5-5. Mitigation Monitoring Program – Wilderness and Recreation

MITIGATION MEASURE	<p><b>WR-1b: Provide temporary detours for trail users.</b> No less than 60 days prior to construction, SDG&amp;E shall coordinate with the authorized officer of the trails listed below to establish temporary detours of the trails to avoid construction area hazards, if the trail is deemed unsafe to use during construction. Should new trail segments be constructed as detours during construction, the temporary new trail segments would be sited to avoid sensitive resources, in coordination with the authorized officer of the trail or recreation area, and would be restored to pre-construction condition by SDG&amp;E when SRPL construction is complete, if required by the authorized officer of the trail or recreation area. SDG&amp;E shall post a public notice of the temporary trail closure and information on the trail detour. SDG&amp;E shall document its coordination efforts with the authorized officer and submit this documentation to the CPUC, BLM, and affected park jurisdictions at least 30 days prior to construction.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail</li> <li>• ABDSP Trails (Cactus Loop Trail, Yaqui Well Nature Trail, Bill Kenyon Overlook Trail)</li> <li>• Trans-County Trail</li> <li>• Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail</li> <li>• San Dieguito River Park Trails</li> <li>• Mission Trails Regional Park (Fortuna, Rim, and Quarry Loop Trails)</li> </ul>
Location	Construction activity in or adjacent to the trails listed above.
Monitoring / Reporting Action	CPUC, BLM, and affected park jurisdictions verify that SDG&E submits documentation of coordination efforts with the authorized officers of the listed trails.
Effectiveness Criteria	Temporary detours of the trails are established to avoid construction area hazards; temporary new trail segments are sited to avoid sensitive resources and restored to pre-construction condition when construction is complete; public is notified of trail closures and detours.
Responsible Agency	CPUC; BLM; affected park jurisdictions.
Timing	Submit documentation of coordination efforts to CPUC, BLM, and affected park jurisdictions no less than 30 days prior to construction.
MITIGATION MEASURE	<p><b>WR-1c: Coordinate with local agencies to identify alternative recreation areas.</b> SDG&amp;E shall coordinate with the authorized officer for the applicable federal, State, or local parks and recreational facilities listed below at least 60 days before construction in order to identify alternative recreation facilities that may be used by the public during construction. SDG&amp;E shall post a public notice at recreation facilities that are to be closed or where access would be limited during project construction. SDG&amp;E shall document its coordination efforts with the parks and recreation departments and provide this documentation to the CPUC, BLM, and all affected park jurisdictions 30 days prior to construction.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BLM Dunaway Camp</li> <li>• Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail</li> <li>• ABDSP (Open Camping, Tamarisk Grove Campground, Yaqui Well Campground, Cactus Loop Trail, Yaqui Well Nature Trail, Bill Kenyon Overlook Trail, Vallecito Mountains Wilderness Area, Pinyon Ridge Wilderness Area, Grapevine Mountain Wilderness Area)</li> <li>• Desert Tours (California Overland, La Casa del Zorro, Sky Trail)</li> <li>• California State Scenic Highway 78</li> <li>• Trans-County Trail</li> <li>• Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail</li> <li>• Santa Ysabel Open Space Preserve</li> <li>• San Dieguito River Park</li> <li>• Mt. Gower Open Space Preserve</li> <li>• San Vicente Resort and Golf Club</li> <li>• Barnett Ranch Open Space Preserve</li> <li>• Boulder Oaks Open Space Preserve</li> <li>• San Vicente Highlands Open Space Preserve</li> <li>• Sycamore Canyon Open Space Preserve</li> <li>• Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve</li> <li>• Mission Trails Regional Park</li> </ul>



**Table D.5-5. Mitigation Monitoring Program – Wilderness and Recreation**

<b>Location</b>	Construction activity in all segments.
<b>Monitoring / Reporting Action</b>	CPUC, BLM, and affected park jurisdictions verify that SDG&E submits documentation of coordination efforts with the authorized officers of the listed parks and recreational facilities.
<b>Effectiveness Criteria</b>	Alternative recreation facilities are identified for use by public during construction; public notice is posted at recreation facilities that are closed or have limited access during construction.
<b>Responsible Agency</b>	CPUC; BLM; affected park jurisdictions.
<b>Timing</b>	Submit documentation of coordination efforts to CPUC, BLM, and affected park jurisdictions no less than 30 days prior to construction.

<b>MITIGATION MEASURE</b>	<p><b>WR-3a: Coordinate tower and road locations with the authorized officer for the recreation area.</b> Where the Proposed Project crosses the recreation areas listed below, SDG&amp;E shall coordinate with the authorized officer for the recreation area to determine specific tower site and spur road locations in order to minimize impacts to recreational resources. In consultation with the authorized officer of the trail or recreation area, access roads shall not be located on trails (i.e., PCT, Trans-County Trail) unless the authorized officer determines that the construction of new access roads would result in greater impacts than modifying the trail for use as an access road. This coordination shall occur no less than 60 days prior to the start of construction. SDG&amp;E shall document its coordination with the authorized officer and shall submit this documentation to the CPUC, BLM, and ABDSP, at least 30 days prior to project construction.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail</li> <li>• Anza-Borrego Desert State Park</li> <li>• Trans-County Trail</li> <li>• Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail</li> <li>• San Dieguito River Park</li> <li>• Mt. Gower Open Space Preserve</li> </ul>
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<b>Location</b>	Central Link; Anza-Borrego Link; Inland Valley Link
<b>Monitoring / Reporting Action</b>	CPUC, BLM, and ABDSP verify that SDG&E submits documentation of coordination efforts with the authorized officers of the listed recreation areas.
<b>Effectiveness Criteria</b>	Tower sites and spur road locations minimize impacts to recreation resources; roads are not located on trails unless there would be greater impacts from doing otherwise.
<b>Responsible Agency</b>	CPUC, BLM, and ABDSP.
<b>Timing</b>	Submit documentation of coordination efforts to CPUC, BLM, and ABDSP no less than 30 days prior to construction.

<b>MITIGATION MEASURE</b>	<p><b>WR-3b: Provide funding for planning and physically establishing replacement campsites and facilities.</b> Should Tamarisk Grove Campground or other established recreation facility in ABDSP be closed by CDPR due to public safety concerns or a significant reduction of recreational value resulting from construction of the Proposed Project or alternative, then SDG&amp;E shall provide full funding for planning and developing replacement campsites and facilities at a location in ABDSP identified by CDPR that are of comparable quality and capacity to the closed campsite and/or facility. SDG&amp;E shall document its payment to and coordination efforts with CDPR officials and provide this documentation to the CPUC, BLM at least 30 days prior to initiating any SRPL construction that would affect the subject park facility.</p>
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<b>Location</b>	Anza-Borrego Link.
<b>Monitoring / Reporting Action</b>	CPUC and BLM verify that SDG&E submits documentation of payment to and coordination with CDPR.
<b>Effectiveness Criteria</b>	Funding is provided for planning and developing replacement campsites and facilities; location identified by CDPR in ABDSP is of comparable quality and capacity as the closed campsite and/or facility.
<b>Responsible Agency</b>	CPUC; BLM.
<b>Timing</b>	Submit documentation of payment and coordination efforts to CPUC and BLM no less than 30 days prior to any SRPL construction.

Table D.5-5. Mitigation Monitoring Program – Wilderness and Recreation

MITIGATION MEASURE	<b>WR-4a: Purchase additional State wilderness acreage.</b> As partial compensation for declassification of existing wilderness within ABDSP, following construction, SDG&E shall acquire lands as partial compensation for the loss of wilderness within ABDSP. The land to be acquired shall be at least five and one half times greater than the acreage of land removed from currently designated wilderness areas. The specific location of the acquired land shall be determined by CDPR officials. Acquired lands must be consistent with the definition of wilderness as defined in Public Resources Code §§ 5019.68, 5093.33(c). The lands shall be transferred to the State within 6 months after the start of operation and shall be administered by CDPR.
Location	Anza-Borrego Link.
Monitoring / Reporting Action	CDPR verifies that SDG&E acquires and pays for wilderness acreage.
Effectiveness Criteria	Acquired lands to compensate for loss of wilderness within ABDSP is: consistent with definition of wilderness, five and one half time greater than the acreage of land removed from currently designated wilderness areas, and administered by CDPR.
Responsible Agency	CDPR.
Timing	The lands shall be transferred to the State within 6 months after the start of operation.
MITIGATION MEASURE	<b>WR-4b: Minimize area of project facilities within wilderness lands.</b> Segments of the Proposed Project ROW and temporary pull sites located within State wilderness shall be minimized by relocating project components to fully use existing ROW or locate project facilities outside of State wilderness lands, where technically feasible. Modifications to the proposed SRPL ROW and pull sites in wilderness areas are presented in Table D.5-3. Figures D.5-9a and D.5-9b show additional detail maps comparing proposed and modified ROW segments. At least 60 days prior to construction, SDG&E shall prepare and submit design plans for the modified SRPL facilities to the CPUC, BLM, and ABDSP for review and approval. Should complete relocation outside of wilderness lands be infeasible due to engineering or environmental constraints, a full feasibility analysis shall be prepared and submitted to CPUC, BLM, and ABDSP with adequate justification for review and approval.
Location	Anza-Borrego Link.
Monitoring / Reporting Action	CPUC, BLM, and ABDSP verify SDG&E submits design plans, and full feasibility analysis if necessary, for review and approval.
Effectiveness Criteria	As feasible, project components are relocated to fully use existing ROW or be located outside of State wilderness lands.
Responsible Agency	CPUC; BLM; ABDSP.
Timing	Submit design plants at least 60 days prior to construction.

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