

# Environmental Minor Project Refinement Form



Project Name: West of Devers Upgrade Project Request Prepared By: Sylvia Granados

Date Approval Required: 6/6/2019 Variance Request No.: 28

Date Submitted: 5/30/2019 Location: 1X15-1X18 in Loma Linda; HLZ off Canyon Road in Loma Linda; 2N26 in Grand Terrace, T232-6S38 Access Road, 6N34-6S34 Access Road; San Bernardino Substation (see Description of Change and Justification section below and figures attached).

Landowner: Donald G Hunt, Jung Wu; AMG-RECHE LLC; Southern California Edison

Landowner Parcel Numbers: 0292-111-32, 0292-111-35; 0293-052-17; 0276-372-09, 0164-231-36; 0292-491-01, 0167-551-06

Current Vegetative Cover/Land Use: Agriculture; Developed/Disturbed; Grassland/Forbland

Existing Sensitive Resource? NO ☒ YES Specify: Coastal CAGN Critical Habitat; DETO habitat; Little Pocket Mice

Modifying (check as many as apply):

☐ MITIGATION MEASURE

☐ PLAN/PROCEDURE

☐ SPECIFICATION

☒ DRAWING

☐ PERMIT CONDITION

☐ OTHER

Specify Source (e.g., Mitigation Measure B.5): NTP #4 Work Areas/Conditions

## Description of Change and Justification (Attach additional sheets if needed.)

Attachments:

☒ CONSTRUCTION DRAWING ☐ ADDITIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS ☐ CORRESPONDENCE ☐ OTHER: \_\_\_\_\_

### Expansion of 1X15-1X18 for Wire Removal/Set-up

Supersite 1X15-1X18 will be expanded to the west in three areas within the SCE transmission line corridor, to provide adequate work space coverage below the existing transmission lines for activities associated with wire wreck-out as shown on Figure 1. No tree removal is required in the new work areas. The new work areas will be used for temporary material and equipment staging and wire wreck-out set-up activities.

The new work areas consist of approximately 2.89-acres of privately-owned agricultural land located within the SCE transmission line right-of-way in the City of Loma Linda. The work activities and schedule have been previously coordinated with the landowner in accordance with SCE's existing easement rights and agreements, as well as MM AG-3a.

### Segment 2 Helicopter Landing Zone

A 0.09-acre temporary helicopter landing zone (HLZ) will be located on the east side of Canyon Road, south of Hulda Crooks Park, in the City of Loma Linda (APN 0293-052-17). The HLZ will be used for helicopter-assisted wire wreck-out and wire set-up activities conducted in Segments 1 and 2, as shown on Figure 2. The HLZ may be grubbed prior to use.

The total temporary disturbance area associated with the HLZ consists of approximately 0.09-acre of developed/disturbed land, owned by the City of Loma Linda.

### 2X26 Wire Stringing Sites

Two new temporary work areas are required east and west of Supersite 2X26 to facilitate wire stringing activities associated with 2X26, as shown in Figure 3. The new work areas may be mowed and receive drive and crush impacts only.

The total temporary disturbance area associated with the work areas consists of approximately 1.29 acres of developed/disturbed land and 0.31 acre of grassland/forbland. The land is privately owned by AMG-RECHE LLC, but is located within the existing SCE transmission line right-of-way in the City of Grand Terrace.

### **Access Road between T232 and 6S38**

The use an existing access road between Joshua Road and Cholla Road in the community of Whitewater is required to connect Supersites T232 and 6S38 to enable construction personnel, material, and equipment to travel directly from one site to the other while minimizing travel within the residential neighborhood during transmission line construction. No improvements to the existing road are required for construction use, however the road will be maintained during construction use in accordance with the Project SWPPP and City requirements.

The public access road shown on Figure 4 is previously developed/disturbed and owned and maintained by the Community of Whitewater.

### **Access Road between 6N34-6S34**

The use an existing access road between Supersites 6N34 and 6S34 is required to enable construction personnel, material, and equipment to travel directly between the north and south transmission line alignments to minimize travel along approved access roads in the Coachella Valley during transmission line construction. No improvements to the existing road are required for construction use; however, the road will be maintained during construction use in accordance with the Project SWPPP and City requirements.

The access road shown on Figure 5 is previously developed/disturbed land located in the community of Whitewater.

### **Segment 1 Helicopter Landing Zone (HLZ)**

The temporary work area approved in TEWS #14 will be used to facilitate helicopter assisted activities associated with Segment 1 wire stringing and wreck-out throughout the project duration. The area will be used as an HLZ and a staging area for construction vehicles, materials, and equipment.

The temporary work space consists of approximately 1.96 acres of developed SCE owned and operated storage space located immediately adjacent to the north side of the San Bernardino Substation (APNs 0292-491-01, 0167-551-06), located in the City of Redlands, as shown in Figure 6.

### **Environmental Analysis**

No impacts to regulated trees, jurisdictional waters, biological, or cultural resources are anticipated during the use of the new work areas.

### **Biological Resources**

A desktop analysis was conducted for the new work areas using aerial imagery and project biological data. The new work areas were covered during previous surveys, including FRED Preconstruction Survey IDs 000068, 000063, 000132, 000114, 000167, and 000002:

**Desert Tortoise (DETO)** – The access road shown in Figure 5, between Supersites 6N34 and 6S34, is located within desert tortoise modeled habitat. No definitive signs of DETO were observed during the 2011 and 2012 protocol desert tortoise surveys of the area or during the active preconstruction survey. The existing north/south access road would shorten the drive taken by construction vehicles in mapped modeled DETO habitat by providing more direct access between the north and south transmission line alignments. With clearance surveys and monitoring, no impacts to DETO are anticipated.

The other new work areas are not located within the range of the DETO; therefore, no impacts to DETO are anticipated at those locations.

**Special-status Terrestrial Herpetofauna** – A Red-diamond Rattlesnake was observed within 670-feet of the new access road at 6S38. No other special-status terrestrial herpetofauna were observed within the other new work areas. However, many species have the potential to occur throughout the project area. Therefore, a preconstruction survey for each work area will be conducted prior to use. With implementation of the mitigation measures and biological monitoring during construction, no impacts to special-status terrestrial herpetofauna are anticipated.

**Burrowing Owl** – Burrowing owl habitat is widespread in the project area. Although burrowing owls are not anticipated to occur within the work areas, active burrowing owl burrows, if found during preconstruction surveys and/or monitoring, will be mitigated for in accordance with the Burrowing Owl Management and Passive Relocation Plan.

**Nesting Birds** – Suitable substrates for nesting birds protected by the California Fish and Game Code and Migratory Bird Treaty Act, including trees, shrubs, man-made structures, and the ground surface, can be found throughout the project area. No active nest buffers intersect the work areas at this time. Preconstruction surveys, including surveys for nesting birds during the avian breeding season (Jan 1 – Aug 31) will be conducted prior to the initiation of construction use in each area. If active nests are identified, avoidance buffers will be established in accordance with the Nesting Bird Management Plan. With implementation of the NBMP, no impacts are anticipated.

**Listed Riparian Birds** – No suitable habitat for riparian birds (least Bell's vireo [LBVI]/Southwestern willow flycatcher [SWFL]) occurs within 500 feet of the work areas. Therefore, no impacts are anticipated.

**Coastal California Gnatcatcher** – The access road to supersite 2X26 traverses USFWS-designated Critical Habitat Unit 10 for coastal California gnatcatcher (CAGN). However, no suitable habitat occurs along the road. Since the road is existing, no impacts to primary constituent elements of critical habitat will occur.

The 2X26 wire stringing sites are located adjacent to suitable habitat for the CAGN. Focused surveys for CAGN were conducted in March and April 2018, and several rounds of protocol surveys were conducted in the years preceding construction. No CAGN birds or nests were observed within the survey area during these preconstruction surveys. Due to a history of negative CAGN survey results in the area, San Bernardino County is considered unoccupied by CAGN at this time and no impacts to CAGN are anticipated. Preconstruction surveys, including surveys for nesting birds, will be conducted in all new work areas during the avian breeding season (Jan 1 – Aug 31).

The wire sites are located within USFWS-designated critical habitat for the CAGN. However, the habitat is comprised of grassland/forbland and developed/disturbed land which is not breeding habitat for the species. Nonetheless, the wire sites will feature drive and crush impacts only. Temporary impacts are subject to restoration upon completion of construction.

**Golden Eagle** – Based on aerial habitat assessments and protocol surveys conducted for the project, no suitable nesting habitat for golden eagles is located within 2 miles of the work areas. Therefore, no impacts are anticipated.

**Stephens' Kangaroo Rat** – The Segment 2 HLZ is located within mapped SKR suitable habitat to the east. No Stephens' kangaroo rats were captured during previous surveys, including the trapping survey conducted in the area in 2018. Based on a lack of historic data, habitat conditions, and negative results over several years of surveys, Stephens' kangaroo rat are not expected. However, the activities will be limited to existing disturbed areas to the extent possible.

The other new work areas are not located within the range of this species; therefore, no impacts are anticipated.

**Special-status Bats** – No suitable bat roosting habitat or buffers occur within the work areas; therefore, no impacts are anticipated.

**Special-status Small Mammals** – Special-status small mammals such as the pallid San Diego pocket mouse, northwestern San Diego pocket mouse, American badger, desert kit fox, San Diego desert woodrat, and/or San Diego black-tailed jackrabbit can occur in many parts of the project area. Ringtail and Palm Springs round-tailed ground squirrel are not expected. The work areas are located outside the known range of the Palm Springs pocket mouse. A historic San Diego desert woodrat occurrence is located within Supersite 2X26 and San Diego pocket mouse occurrences are located adjacent to the Segment 2 HLZ and within 550-feet of 6S38.

Suitable and occupied habitats for LAPM and PSPM (collectively "little pocket mice") occur throughout Segment 6. The project has been designed to minimize impacts to little pocket mice to the extent feasible. If any other special-status small mammal species are found during construction activities, potential impacts will also be addressed according to the Special-status Small Mammals Avoidance and Minimization Plan.

Sixteen active woodrat middens were observed within supersites 6S33, T239, and 6S34 or within 10 feet of the access roads (FRED Habitat Events 000151-000166). A 10-foot no-entry buffer was established around each midden using ESA signs. The avoidance buffers do not intersect with any of the new work areas or access roads in Segment 6. If construction determines avoidance of a buffer is not possible, a qualified biologist will relocate the midden in accordance with the Special-status Small Mammal Avoidance and Minimization Plan.

**Special-status Plants** – The access road between 6N34 and 6S34 is located within Coachella Valley milk-vetch modeled habitat. Previous comprehensive surveys have been negative .

No special-status plants were observed within the other new work areas. If special-status plants are identified during future surveys or clearance sweeps/monitoring, ESA buffers will be established and special-status plants will be avoided to the extent feasible. Unavoidable impacts to special-status plants will be addressed in accordance with the Special-status Plant Salvage and Relocation Plan. A preconstruction survey for each work area will be conducted prior to use.

**Regulated Trees** – No tree trimming, or tree removal is required for construction activities within the new work areas.

**Jurisdictional Waters** – Wetland and non-wetland jurisdictional features are located throughout the project area. No jurisdictional features intersect the new work areas, therefore no impacts to jurisdictional features will occur during the use of the new work areas. BMPs will be implemented in accordance with the Project SWPPP. A preconstruction survey of the work areas will be conducted prior to use. Therefore, no impacts to jurisdictional waters are anticipated.

### **Cultural Resources**

The new work areas are located within the WOD APE and were covered within the record search data that was conducted during previous WOD surveys and studies. The record search and survey results for the new work areas were negative for cultural resources. Williams, Audry. 2016. *Cultural Resources Management Plan for Southern California Edison Company's West of Devers Transmission Line Upgrade Project*, Riverside and San Bernardino Counties, California.

### **Paleontological Resources**

The WOD Paleontological Resources Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (PRMMP) requires full-time, qualified paleontological construction monitoring in areas determined to have moderate (PFYC 3) to very high (PFYC 5) sensitivity. Sediments of unknown (PFYC U) sensitivity shall be monitored by a qualified paleontological monitor on a part-time basis and geologic units with very low (PFYC 1) or low (PFYC 2) sensitivity may be spot checked to confirm paleontological sensitivity.

Per the PRMMP, *the types of construction activities that require monitoring or spot-checking include:*

- Grading
- Drilling (if drill bit is greater than two feet in diameter)
- Excavation for retaining walls
- Excavation of construction areas

**Types of construction activities that will not require monitoring or spot-checking, regardless of paleontological sensitivity include:**

- Small diameter drill holes (less than two feet in diameter)
- Pile driving
- Project activities that do not involve ground disturbance

No ground disturbance activities requiring paleontological monitoring will occur in the Segment 1 HLZ, Segment 1 wire wreck-out areas, or along the existing access roads.

The Segment 2 HLZ and 2X26 Wire Stringing Sites are located in an area determined to have low PFYC 2 paleontological sensitivity, therefore the sites may initially be spot checked if grading is required, to confirm the PFYC 2 classification.

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### **Resources:**

Biological      NO SENSITIVE RESOURCES PRESENT    ☒ SENSITIVE RESOURCES PRESENT    ☐ N/A

New Survey Report Attached:    YES    ☒ NO

If No, Previous Biological Survey Reference: A preconstruction survey will be conducted prior to initiating work in each new work area. The new work areas were covered in FRED Preconstruction Survey IDs 000068, 000063, 000132, 000114, 000167, and 000002.

**Cultural :** ☒ NO RESOURCES PRESENT ☐ RESOURCES PRESENT WITH PROJECT APE: ☐ YES ☒ NO  
☒ (PAVED/GRAVEL AREA AND NO GROUND DISTURBANCE)

If in APE, Previous Cultural Survey Reference:

If not in APE, attach new survey report.

The new work areas are located within the WOD APE and were covered within the record search data that was conducted during previous WOD surveys and studies. The record search and survey results for the area were negative for cultural resources. Williams, Audry. 2016. Cultural Resources Management Plan for Southern California Edison Company's West of Devers Transmission Line Upgrade Project, Riverside and San Bernardino Counties, California.

**Other Potential Impacts:** (Check any potential changes to permitted impacts and provide details below. Attach additional sheets if needed.)

<input type="checkbox"/> AIR QUALITY	<input type="checkbox"/> LAND USE	<input type="checkbox"/> TRAFFIC
<input type="checkbox"/> BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES	<input type="checkbox"/> NOISE	<input type="checkbox"/> VISUAL
<input type="checkbox"/> CONTAMINATED SOILS	<input type="checkbox"/> PALEO RESOURCES	<input type="checkbox"/> WATER RESOURCES
<input type="checkbox"/> CULTURAL RESOURCES	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIOECONOMIC	<input type="checkbox"/> WETLANDS
<input type="checkbox"/> HAZARDOUS MATERIALS	<input type="checkbox"/> STORM WATER (SWPPP)	

NA

**CEQA and Permitting:** (Provide details for any "Yes" answer and attach additional information if needed.)

1. Will modification involve substantial changes that will require major changes to the CEQA document?  
☐ YES ☒ NO
2. Will modification result in new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified impacts?  
☐ YES ☒ NO
3. Additional agency notifications and/or permit modifications required? ☐ YES ☒ NO

**Conditions of Approval or Reasons for Denial:** (Attach additional information if needed.)

Required Signatures: (Attached email approvals may be used in lieu of signatures.)

X Chief Construction Inspector or Foreman: ☒ VARIANCE MODIFICATION IS NEEDED FOR SAFE AND EFFICIENT CONSTRUCTION

Name: Jeff Miller Signature: [Signature] Date: 5/30/2019

Environmental Inspector: ☒ FIELD REVIEW COMPLETE

Name: Lisa Amador Signature: [Signature] Date: 5/30/2019

X Land Agent: ☒ CONSISTENT WITH EXISTING RIGHTS ☐ NEW RIGHTS OBTAINED

Name: James Spence Signature: [Signature] Date: 5/30/2019

X Environmental Compliance Lead: ☒ APPROVED ☐ APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS (SEE CONDITIONS ABOVE) ☐ DENIED

Name: Sylvia Granados Signature: [Signature] Date: 5/30/2019

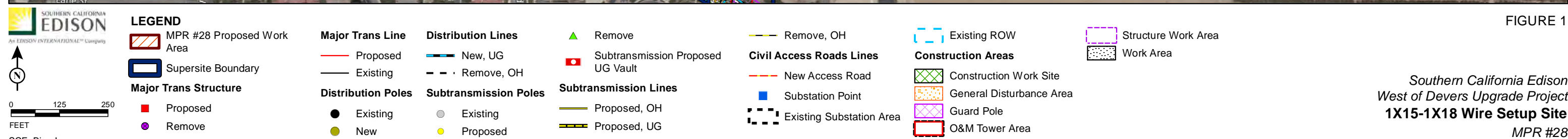
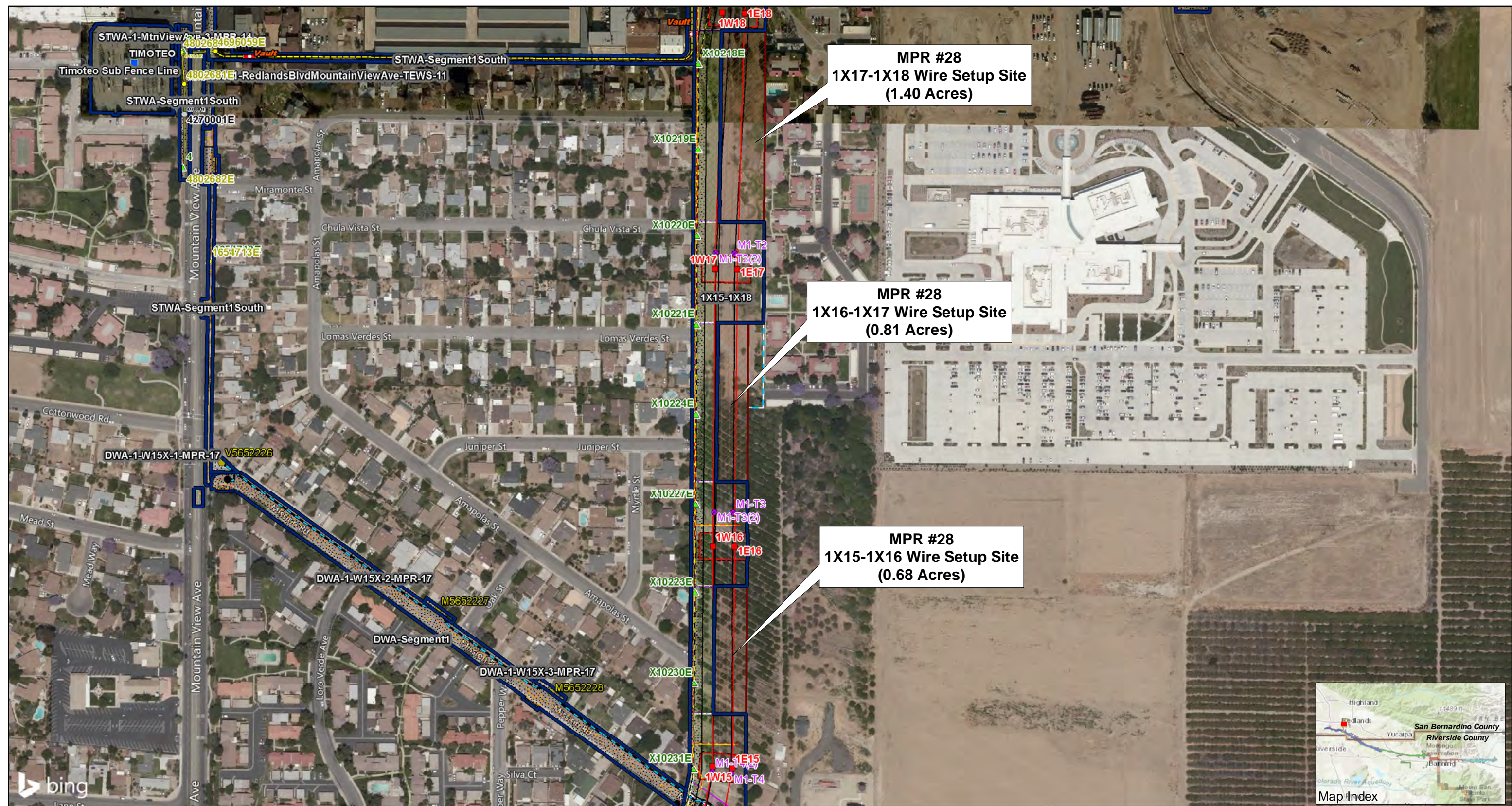


FIGURE 1

Southern California Edison  
West of Devers Upgrade Project  
**1X15-1X18 Wire Setup Site**  
MPR #28

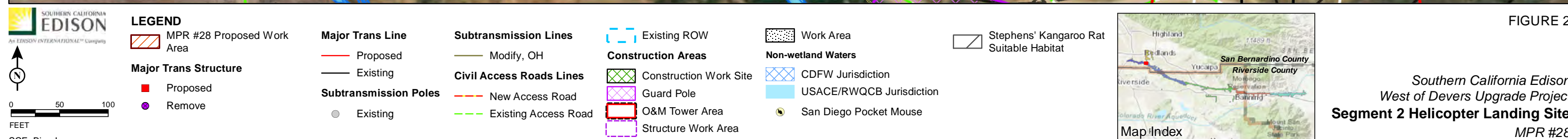
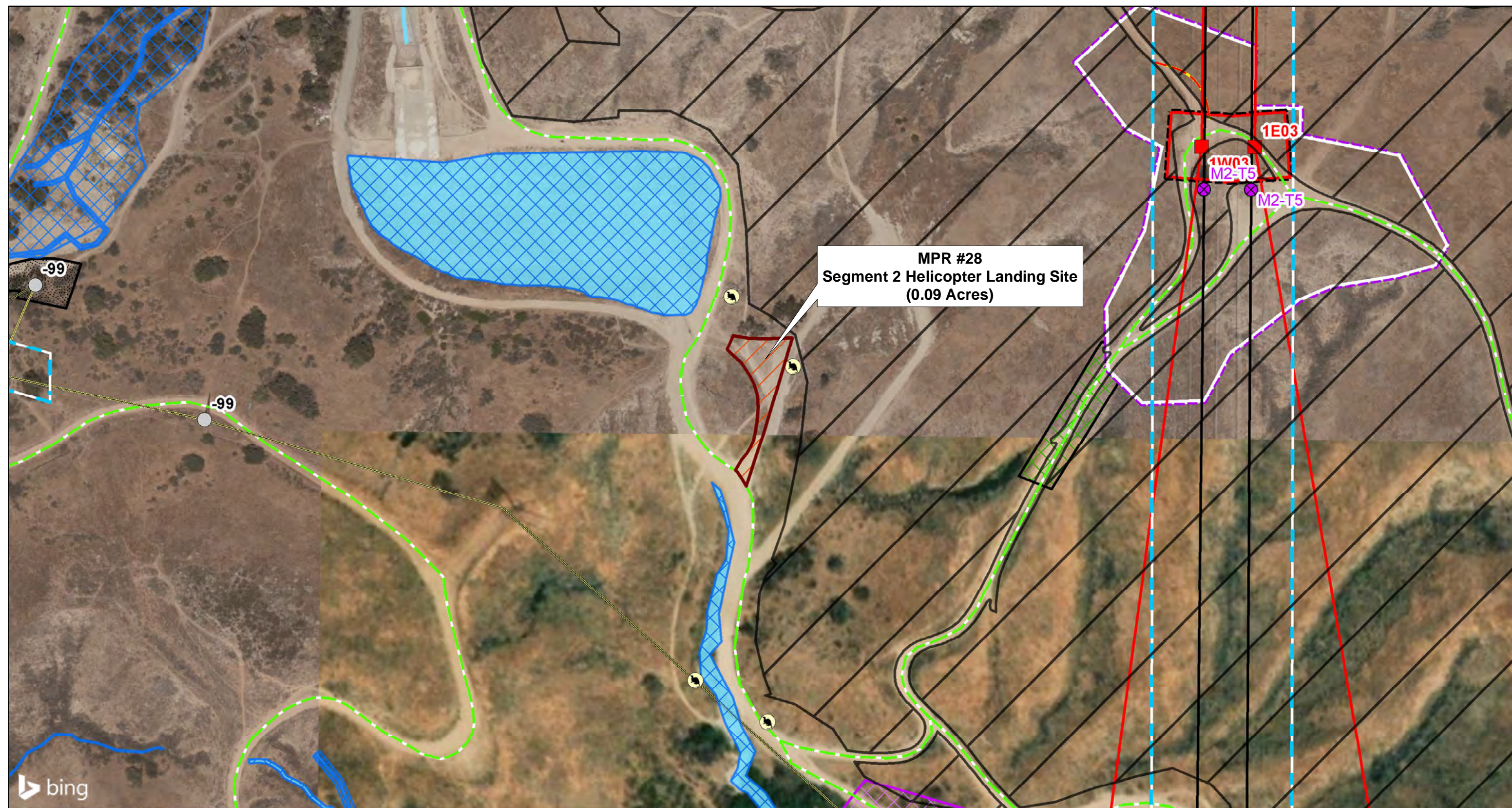


FIGURE 2

Southern California Edison  
West of Devers Upgrade Project  
**Segment 2 Helicopter Landing Site**  
MPR #28

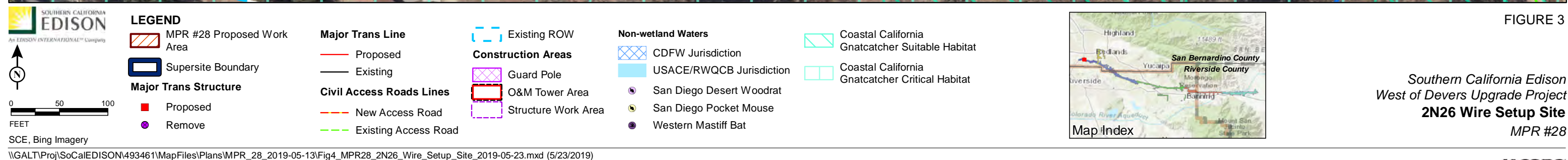
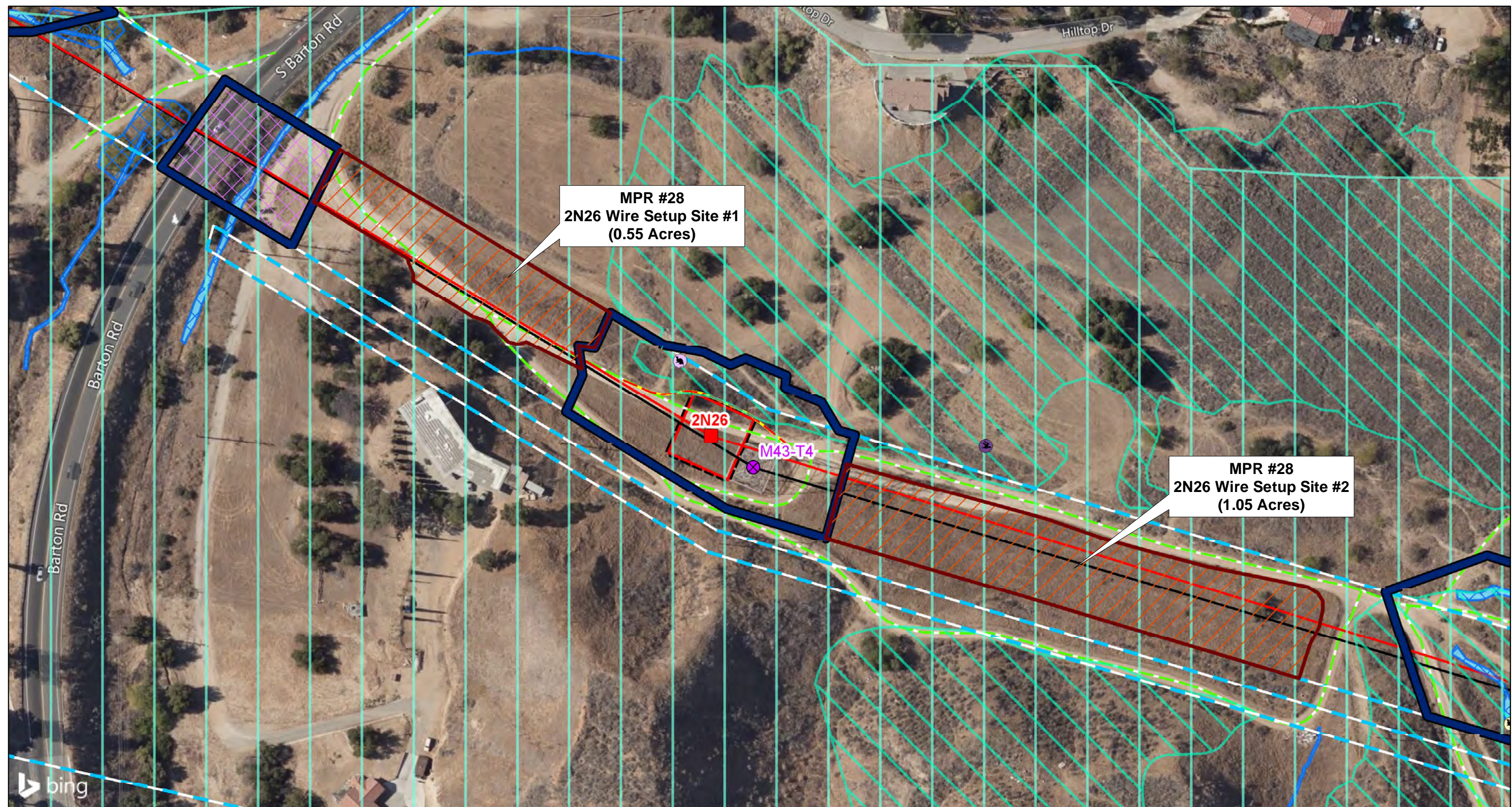
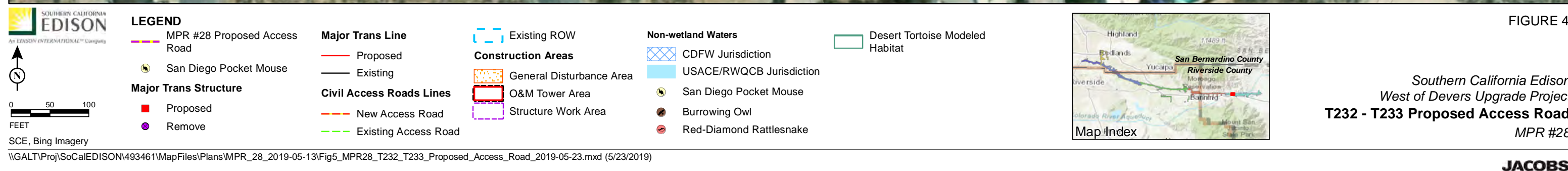
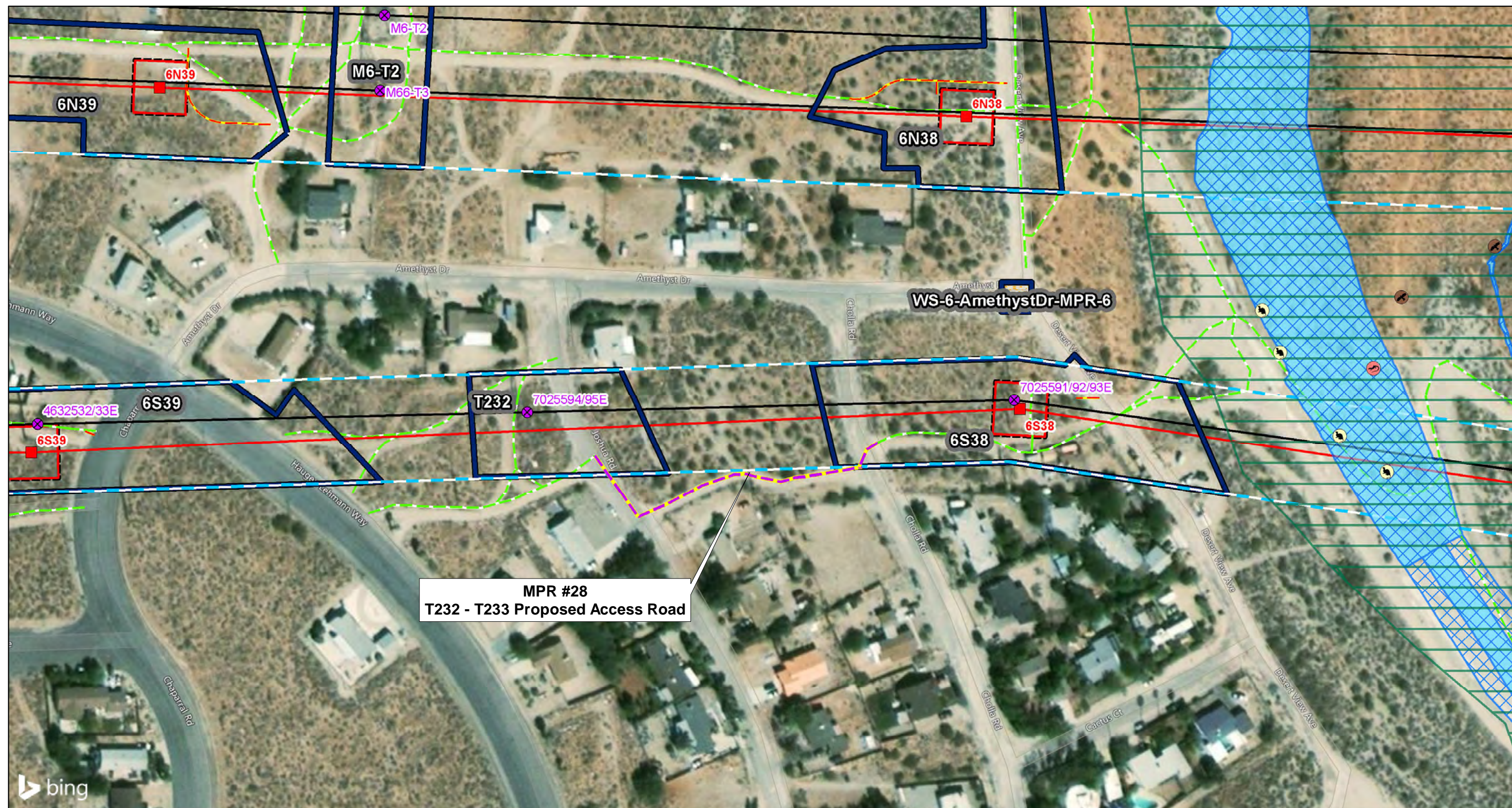
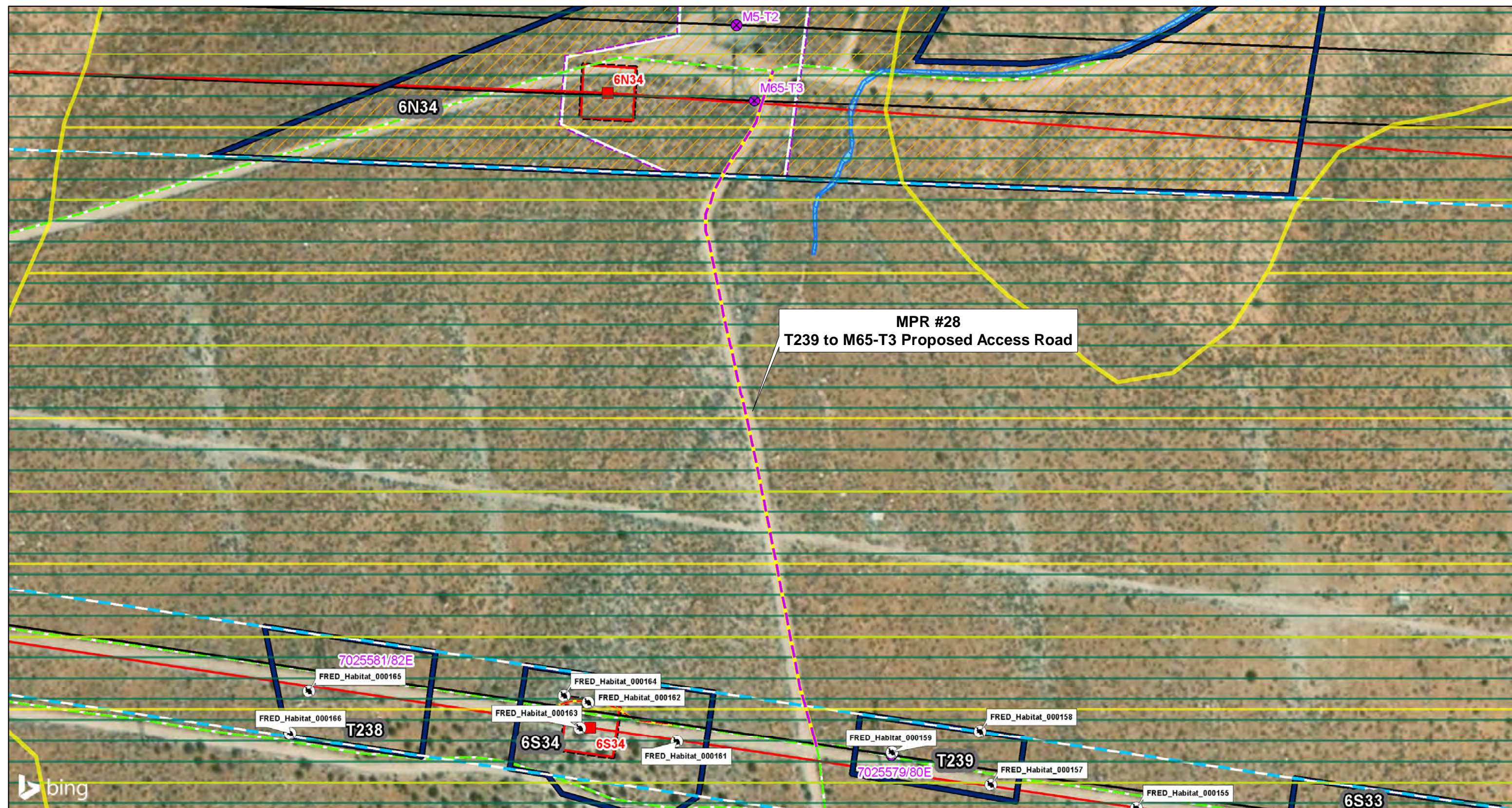



FIGURE 3


*Southern California Edison  
West of Devers Upgrade Project  
**2N26 Wire Setup Site**  
MPR #28*
























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EDISON**  
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0 50 100  
FEET

SCE, Bing Imagery

<p><b>LEGEND</b></p> <p> MPR #28 Proposed Access Road</p> <p> Supersite Boundary</p> <p><b>Major Trans Structure</b></p> <p> Proposed</p> <p> Remove</p>	<p><b>Major Trans Line</b></p> <p> Proposed</p> <p> Existing</p> <p><b>Civil Access Roads Lines</b></p> <p> New Access Road</p> <p> Existing Access Road</p>	<p><b>Construction Areas</b></p> <p> O&amp;M Tower Area</p> <p> Structure Work Area</p> <p> Wire Setup</p>	<p><b>Non-wetland Waters</b></p> <p> CDFW Jurisdiction</p> <p> USACE/RWQCB Jurisdiction</p> <p> Desert Woodrat (10ft Buffer)</p> <p> Coachella Valley Milk-Vetch Modeled Habitat</p>	<p> Desert Tortoise Modeled Habitat</p>
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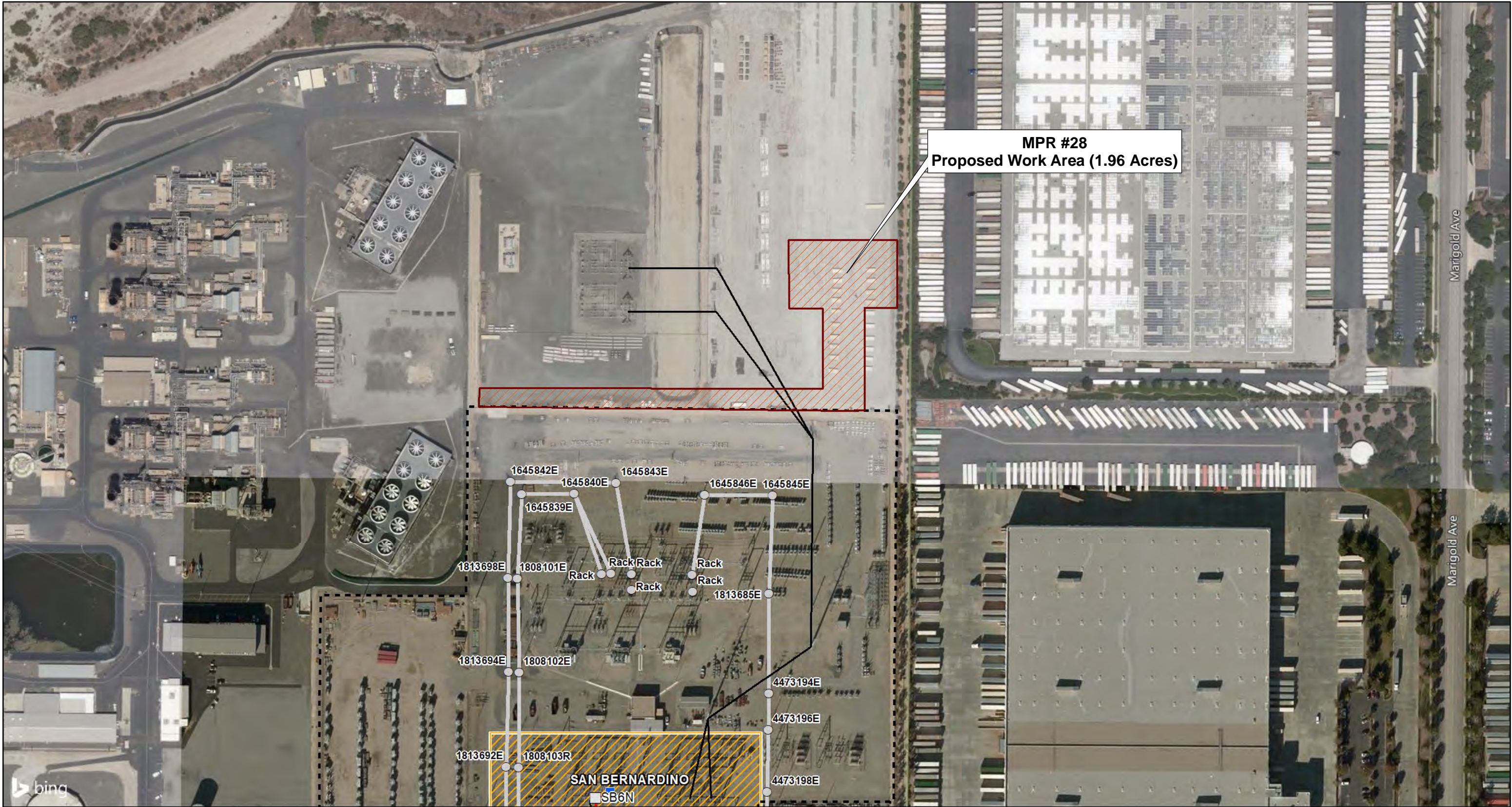
Map Index

\\GALT\Proj\SoCalEDISON\493461\MapFiles\Plans\MPR\_28\_2019-05-13\Fig6\_MPR28\_T239\_M65-T3\_Proposed\_Access\_Road\_2019-05-23.mxd (5/23/2019)

FIGURE 5

Southern California Edison  
West of Devers Upgrade Project  
**T239 to M65-T3 Proposed Access Road**  
MPR #28

**JACOBS**



FEET  
SCE, Bing Imagery

**LEGEND**

- MPR #28 Proposed Work Area
- Major Trans Structure**
- Existing
- Major Trans Line**
- Proposed

- Existing
- Subtransmission Poles**
- Existing
- Subtransmission Lines**
- Existing, OH
- Substation Fenceline
- Construction Areas**
- Wire Setup



FIGURE 6

*Southern California Edison*  
West of Devers Upgrade Project  
**San Bernardino Substation**  
**Helicopter Landing Zone**  
MPR #28