

Environmental Minor Project Refinement Form



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

Date Approval Required: 7/24/2020 **Variance Request No.:** 39

Date Submitted: 7/21/2020 **Locations:** East of 4X56 in Calimesa; East of 6N39 in Whitewater; East of 6N15 in Riverside; West of the West of Devers Interim Substation in Riverside, east of 3X39 in Redlands (see Description of Change and Justification section below and figures attached).

Landowners and Associated Parcel Numbers:

Proposed Work Area	Property Owner	Assessor's Parcel Number
WSS-4-4X56-MPR-39 (Figure 1, page 1)	Rivers & Land Conservancy	413-290-011
GS-6-6X39-MPR-39 (Figure 1, page 2)	James Gollaz	517-211-008
	Juleon Rabbani	517-211-024
	Kevin Carrington	517-211-023
WSS-6-6N15-MPR-39 (Figure 1, page 3)	Southern California Edison	668-211-017
WA-6-6N09-MPR-39 (Figure 1, page 4)	Southern California Edison	668-100-005
WA-3-3X39-MPR-39 (Figure 1, page 5)	Henrietta Chavez	473-020-017

Current Vegetative Cover/Land Use: Developed/Disturbed, Desert Scrub, Chaparral

Existing Sensitive Resource? NO ☒ YES Specify: DETO modeled habitat

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: _____

WSS-4-4X56-MPR-39 (Figure 1, page 1)

A new temporary 0.22-acre work area east of 4X56 along the east side of the approved access road is required to safely stage material and equipment needed to facilitate wire stringing activities associated with towers 4N55 and 4N56. The area may be cleared and leveled prior to use.

The new work area, shown on Figure 1, page 1, is located within the existing SCE transmission line right-of-way and consists of approximately 0.21-acres of chaparral and 0.01-acre of developed/disturbed land in the city of Calimesa.

GS-6-6X39-MPR-39 (Figure 1, page 2)

A new temporary 0.39-acre work space located east of 6N39 is required to safely stage material and equipment associated with wire stringing and wreck-out activities. The new work area may be cleared and leveled prior to use. The new work area will be accessed from the existing access road and SWA-6-M6T2-M66T3, as shown on Figure 1, page 2.

The new work area is privately owned, consists of approximately 0.34-acres of desert scrub and 0.05-acre developed/disturbed land located entirely within the SCE transmission line right-of-way in Whitewater, Riverside County.

WSS-6-6N15-MPR-39 (Figure 1, page 3)

A new temporary 0.61-acre work space located east of 6N15 and west of Worsley Road is required to safely stage material and equipment associated with wire stringing activities between 6N14 and 6N15. The work area will be accessed from the approved access road and Supersite 6N15, as shown on Figure 1, page 3. The new work area may be cleared and leveled so that guard poles can be installed in the new work area to protect a live distribution line in the event of a wire drop.

The new work area is owned by SCE and consists of approximately 0.52-acre desert scrub and 0.09-acre developed/disturbed land located entirely within the SCE transmission line right-of-way in Riverside County.

WA-6-6N09-MPR-39 (Figure 1, page 4)

A new temporary 0.05-acre work space immediately west of the West of Devers Interim Substation is required to stage material and equipment to facilitate the installation of underground telecommunication conduit. The work area will be accessed from the approved access road, as shown on Figure 1, page 4.

The new work area is owned by SCE, consists of approximately 0.05-acre desert scrub, and is located entirely within the SCE transmission line right-of-way in Riverside County.

WA-3-3X39-MPR-39 (Figure 1, page 5)

A new temporary 0.23-acre work area is required to safely stage a crane and other material and equipment associated with the shoofly wire installation and wire wreck-out activities associated with SF-3-SF305, as shown on Figure 1, page 5. The new work area will be cleared and leveled prior to use and will be accessed from existing access roads.

The total temporary disturbance area is privately owned and consists of approximately 0.23-acre of coastal sage scrub located within the SCE transmission line right-of-way, in the City of Redlands.

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, publicly available data, and project biological data. The new work areas were covered during previous surveys, including FRED Preconstruction Survey IDs 000041; 000171; 000104, 000179; 000142; 000082.

Desert Tortoise – WSS-6-6N15-MPR-39 and WA-6-6N09-MPR-39 are located within desert tortoise (DETO) modeled habitat (Figure 1, pages 3 and 4). No definitive signs of DETO were observed in the vicinity of these new work areas during project protocol surveys, nor were DETO or sign observed during preconstruction surveys or clearance sweeps conducted in the areas. Preconstruction surveys and clearance sweeps will be conducted prior to construction in these new work areas. With implementation of mitigation measures and biological monitoring during construction, no impacts to DETO are anticipated. However, to offset additional impacts to DETO modeled habitat subject to mitigation, unused portions of approved disturbance areas also located in DETO modeled habitat, within WSS-6-6S30, will be removed from the project data upon approval of this MPR. The final impact calculations for the project will account for these changes.

The other new work areas are not located within the range of desert tortoise, however an inactive canid burrow (FRED_000241) was observed under a creosote bush within the temporary disturbance limits of Construction Area 6N38, located approximately 660-feet east of GS-6-6X39-MPR-39 (Figure 1, page 2). The burrow is deteriorated with no sign of recent use (class 5). With implementation of mitigation measures and biological monitoring during construction, no impacts to DETO are anticipated.

Special-status Terrestrial Herpetofauna – No special-status terrestrial herpetofauna have been observed within the new work areas during project-related surveys. However, many species have the potential to occur throughout the project area. For instance, including a rosy boa (*Charina trivirgata*) was observed on April 30, 2020 approximately 180 southwest of WA-6-6N09-MPR-39 (FRED_000500) as shown on Figure 1, page 4. A preconstruction survey of the new work areas will be conducted prior to use. With implementation of mitigation measures and biological monitoring during construction, no significant impacts to special-status terrestrial herpetofauna are anticipated.

Burrowing Owl – Burrowing owl (BUOW) habitat in the form of annual and perennial grasslands and scrublands characterized by low-growing vegetation is present throughout the project area. No occupied burrows or associated buffers currently intersect the proposed work areas. However, an adult burrowing owl (FRED_000497) was observed on

January 6, 2020 at an active burrow during preconstruction surveys approximately 300-feet north of WSS-6-6N15-MPR-39 (Figure 1, page 3). The burrow is located at base of creosote bush under a piece of a black synthetic plastic.

Active owl burrows observed during preconstruction surveys and during construction would be mitigated in accordance with the Burrowing Owl Management and Passive Relocation Plan. With implementation of mitigation measures, including appropriate avoidance buffers and biological monitoring during construction, no impacts to burrowing owls are anticipated.

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. None of the new work areas currently intersect nesting bird buffers. As shown on Figure 1, pages 1, 3 and 4, observations of special-status bird species (e.g., White-tailed Kite, Cooper's Hawk, Loggerhead Shrike, Peregrine Falcon) have been made in the vicinity of the new work areas. However, the observations were ephemeral and are not associated with active nests.

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 in the new work areas. If active nests are identified, avoidance buffers will be established in accordance with the Nesting Bird Management Plan. With implementation of mitigation measures, including appropriate avoidance buffers and biological monitoring during construction, no impacts to nesting birds 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 new work areas. Therefore, no impacts are anticipated.

Coastal California Gnatcatcher [CAGN] – No suitable habitat for CAGN occurs within 500 feet of the new work areas. Therefore, no impacts are anticipated.

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 new work areas. Protocol aerial surveys conducted for the project in 2019 showed no golden eagle nests within 2 miles of the new work areas. Therefore, no impacts are anticipated.

Stephens' Kangaroo Rat – None of the new work areas intersect suitable SKR habitat, however suitable SKR habitat is mapped northwest of WSS-4-4X56-MPR-39 (Figure 1, page 1) and northwest of WA-3-3X39-MPR-39 (Figure 1, page 5). A habitat assessment, pedestrian surveys, and several consecutive years of trapping surveys have been conducted within the SKR suitable habitat areas of the Project. Based on a lack of historic data, habitat conditions, and negative results over several years of surveys, SKR are not expected. With implementation of mitigation measures and biological monitoring during construction, no impacts to SKR are anticipated.

Special-status Bats – No suitable bat roosting habitat or buffers occur within the new work areas; therefore, no impacts to special-status bats 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 anticipated to occur within the project area.

Three desert woodrat middens (FRED Habitat Events 00825, 000550, and 00549) were observed approximately 630-feet east of GS-6-6X39-MPR-39 (Figure 1, page 2) however none were observed within the new work area. Several desert woodrat middens have been observed in the areas surrounding WSS-6-6N15-MPR-39 (Figure 1, page 3), as well as in the areas west of WA-6-6N09-MPR-39 (figure 1, page 4). The existing 10-foot buffers will be avoided during construction activities associated with the work areas and potential impacts to desert woodrat midden will be addressed in accordance with the Small Mammals Avoidance and Minimization Plan. With implementation of the plan, no significant impacts are anticipated.

Special-status Plants – Plummer's mariposa lily (*Calochortus plummerae*; CRPR 4.2) populations were observed in the area between 4S55 and the Palmer Ave construction entrance during focused plant surveys in 2017, approximately 600-feet east of WSS-4-4X56-MPR-39. A Plummer's mariposa lily plant was also documented immediately north of WA-3-3X39-

MPR-39 along the access road during focused surveys in 2017 (Figure 1, page 5). No sign of the target species was observed in either area during subsequent preconstruction surveys of the areas. No special-status plants were observed in the vicinity of the other new work areas.

If special-status plants are later identified during preconstruction surveys/clearance sweeps/monitoring, they 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.

Regulated Trees – No tree trimming or tree removal is required for construction activities within the new work areas. Therefore, no impacts are anticipated.

Jurisdictional Waters

Wetland and non-wetland jurisdictional features are located throughout the project area. No jurisdictional features intersect the new work areas. ESA signs will be established at the edges of jurisdictional waters located outside the work areas and BMPs will be implemented in accordance with the SWPPP. No impacts to jurisdictional features are expected to result from use of the new work areas.

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 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. Prepared by Southern California Edison.*

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*

The following work areas are located within areas of low PFYC 2 paleontological sensitivity, therefore, the sites may be spot checked to confirm paleontological sensitivity if a hole larger than 2-feet in diameter is drilled or if grading is required:

- GS-6-6X39-MPR-39
- WSS-6-6N15-MPR-39
- WA-6-6N09-MPR-39

The following work area is located within an area of moderate PFYC 3 paleontological sensitivity, therefore, the site requires full-time qualified paleontological construction monitoring if holes larger than 2-feet in diameter are drilled or if grading is required:

- WSS-4-4X56-MPR-39

The following work area is located within an area of very high PFYC 5 paleontological sensitivity, therefore, the site requires full-time, qualified paleontological construction monitoring if holes larger than 2-feet in diameter are drilled or if grading is required:

- WA-3-3X39-MPR-39

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 the new work areas. The new work areas were covered during active FRED Preconstruction Survey IDs 000041; 000171; 000104, 000179; 000142; 000082.

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 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.

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.)

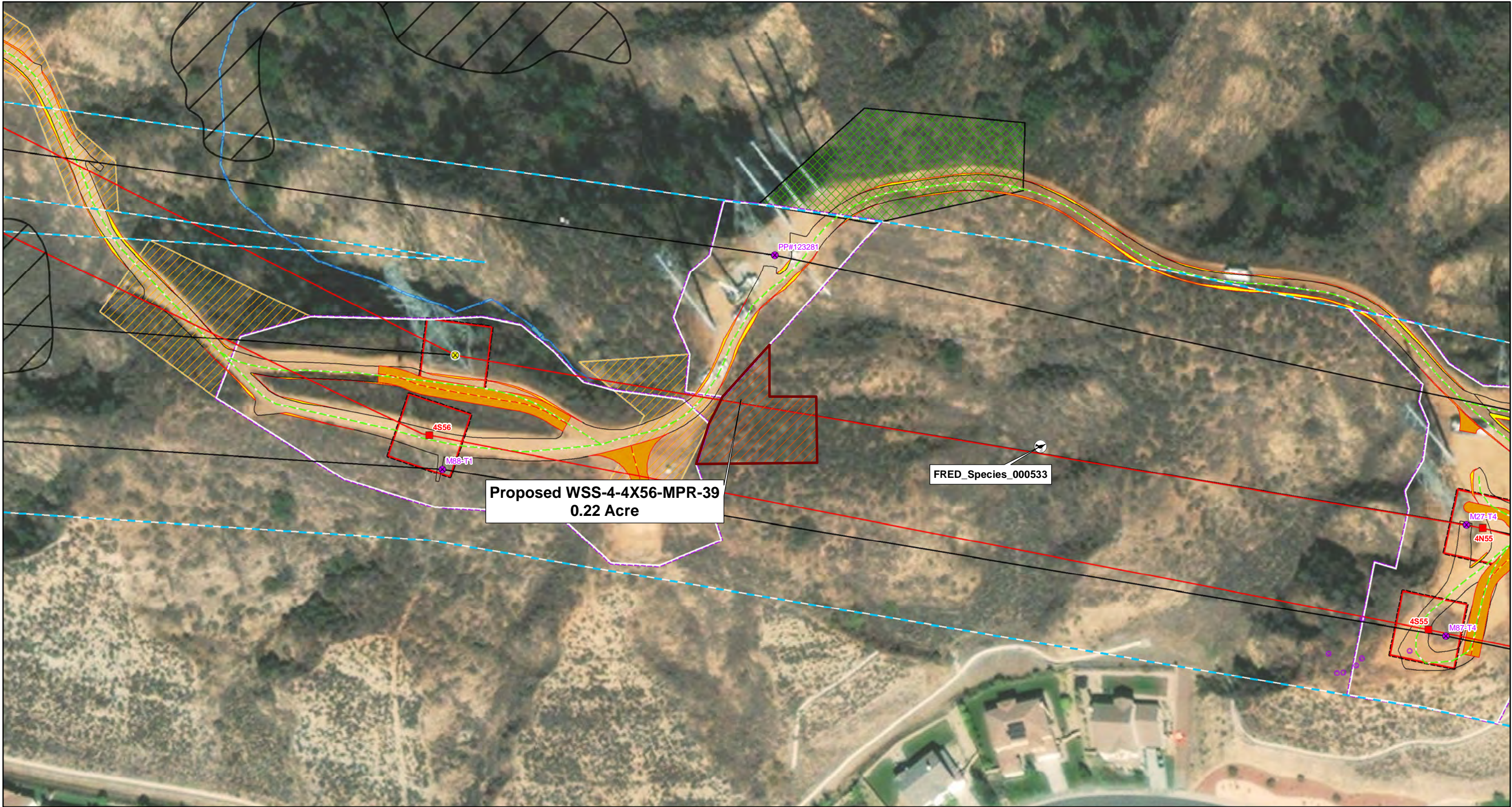
Required Signatures: (Attached email approvals may be used in lieu of signatures.)


X Chief Construction Inspector or Foreman: ☒ VARIANCE MODIFICATION IS NEEDED FOR SAFE AND EFFICIENT CONSTRUCTION
Name: Jeff Miller Signature:  Date: 7/21/2020

Environmental Inspector: ☒ FIELD REVIEW COMPLETE
Name: Lisa Amador Signature:  Lisa Amador Date: 7/21/2020

X Land Agent: ☒ CONSISTENT WITH EXISTING RIGHTS ☐ NEW RIGHTS OBTAINED
Name: James Spence Signature: james.spence@sce.com Date: 7/21/2020
Digitally signed by james.spence@sce.com
DN: cn=james.spence@sce.com
Date: 2020.07.21 13:36:52 -0700

X Environmental Compliance Lead: ☒ APPROVED ☐ APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS (SEE CONDITIONS ABOVE) ☐ DENIED
Name: Sylvia Granados Signature:  Date: 7/21/2020





LEGEND

- MPR #39 Work Area
- Plummer's Mariposa Lily
- Stephens' Kangaroo Rat Suitable Habitat
- FRED Species Event
- White-tailed Kite
- Non-wetland Waters
- CDFW Jurisdiction

Major Trans Structure

- Proposed
- Modify
- Remove

Major Trans Line

- Proposed

USACE/RWQCB Jurisdiction

- Existing

Civil Access Roads Lines


- New Access Road
- Existing Access Road

Civil Access Road Areas

- Existing Road Edge
- Designed Road Boundary

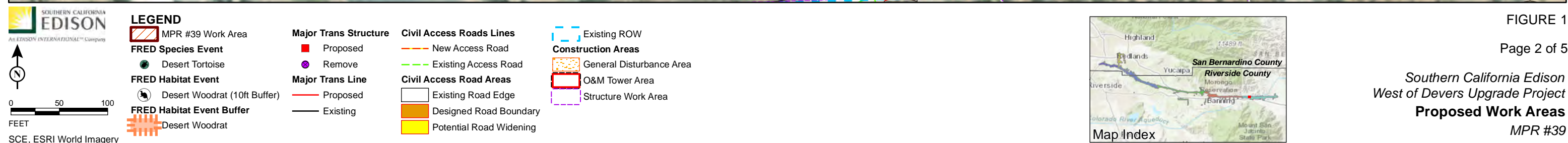
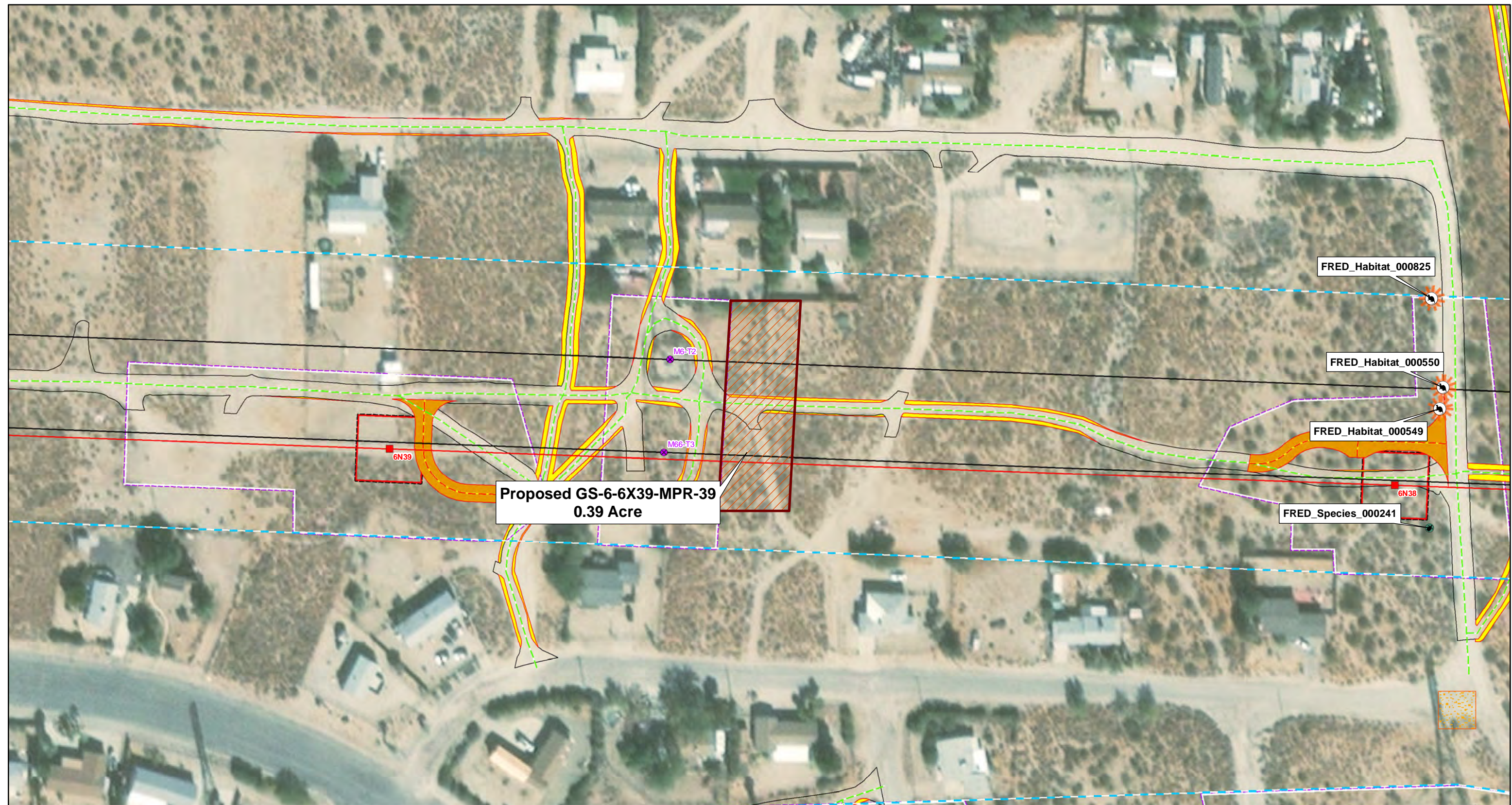
Construction Areas

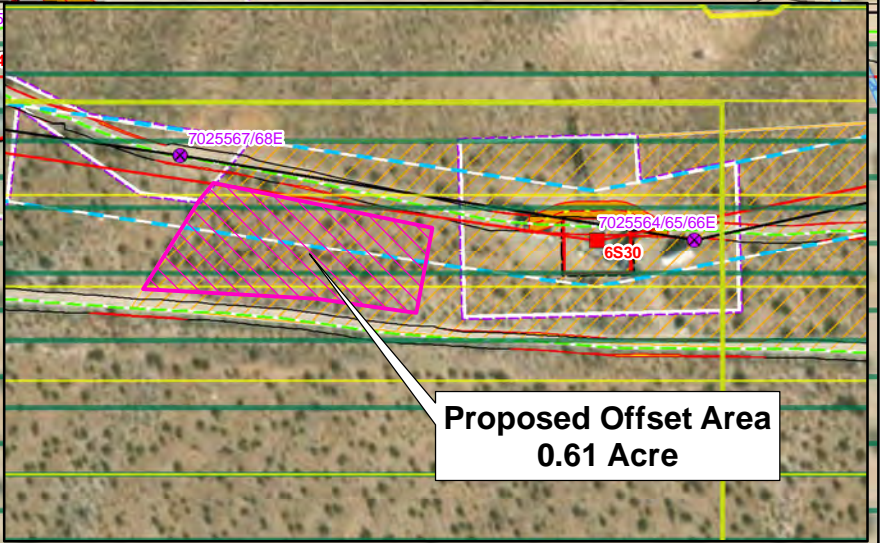
- Potential Road Widening
- Existing ROW
- Construction Work Site
- O&M Tower Area
- Structure Work Area
- Wire Setup



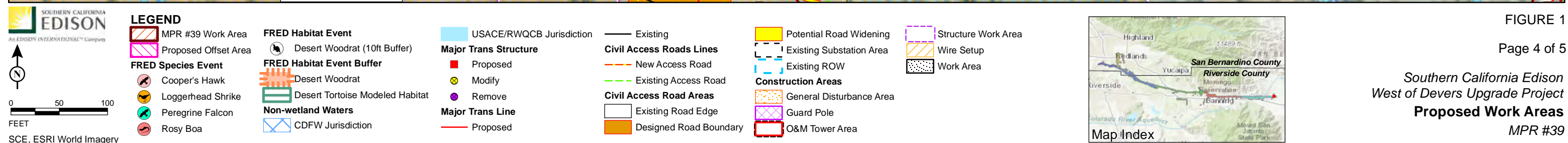
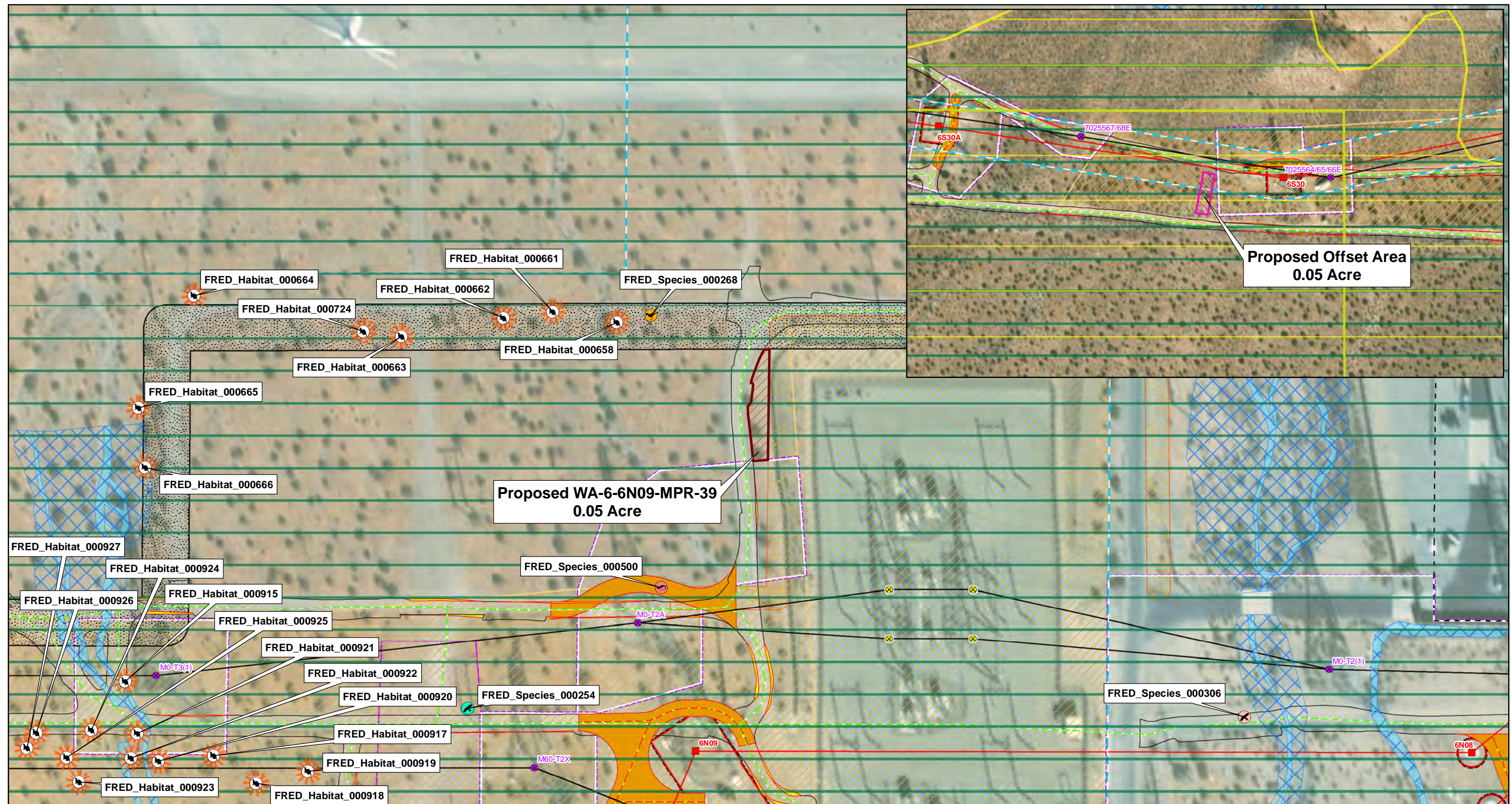
Map Index

FIGURE 1





Southern California Edison
West of Devers Upgrade Project
Proposed Work Areas
MPR #39



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FIGURE 1

