

# Environmental Minor Project Refinement Form

Project Name: West of Devers Upgrade Project Request Prepared By: Sylvia GranadosDate Approval Required: March 21, 2022 Variance Request No.: 54Date Submitted: March 14, 2022 Location: Supersite 3X48 in Redlands, San Bernardino County; Supersite 3X64 in Loma Linda, San Bernardino County; Supersite 4X34 in Beaumont, Riverside County; Supersite 4X52 in Beaumont, Riverside County; Supersite 6X35 in Whitewater, Riverside County.**Landowners and Associated Parcel Numbers:**

Proposed MPR Area	Property Owner	Assessor's Parcel Number
WA-3-3X48-MPR-54 - (Figure 1, page 1)	TRUST 88 TRUST	294-08-128
WA-3-3X64-MPR-54 - (Figure 1, page 2)	CITY OF LOMA LINDA	0294-011-30
WA-4-4X34-MPR-54 - (Figure 1, page 3)	CREEK, NOBEL MEADOWS	400-250-008
WA-4-4X52-MPR-54 - (Figure 1, page 4)	SAN GORGONIO LAND	413-290-070
WA-6-6X35-MPR-54 - (Figure 1, page 5)	MICHEL, BENITO	516-060-032

Current Vegetative Cover/Land Use: Chaparral, Coastal Sage Scrub, Grassland Forbland, Desert ScrubExisting Sensitive Resource? NO ☒ YES Specify: Mapped Suitable CAGN habitat, Modeled DETO 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 - Transmission**Description of Change and Justification (Attach additional sheets if needed.)****Attachments:**
☒ CONSTRUCTION DRAWING
 ☐ ADDITIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS
 ☐ CORRESPONDENCE
 ☐ OTHER: MODIFICATION TO NTP #4  
 PROJECT DESCRIPTION
**WA-3-3X48-MPR-54 - (Figure 1, page 1)**

A new impact area (0.19-acre) is required along a portion of the west side of the approved disturbance area for supersite 3X48, to perform various soil surface erosion repairs along the flow line from the west access road shown in Figure 1, page 1. These improvements, including the repair and replacement of an existing McCarthy Drain and extension of the flume and dissipator approximately 100 feet to the toe of the slope, will be made to better capture, divert and channel storm flow from the access road through the McCarthy drain extension and rip rap apron to control erosion.

The new work area required to complete these soil surface erosion repairs consists of 0.19-acre of grassland forbland vegetation located entirely within the SCE transmission line right-of-way on private property.

**WA-3-3X64-MPR-54 - (Figure 1, page 2)**

A new impact area (0.021-acre) is required north of 3N64, south of Canyon Road, and adjacent to the previously approved MPR #38 work area to stage equipment required to repair an erosion gully. The erosion gully will be filled, compacted, and hydroseeded to control future erosion. Excess sediment will also be removed from the area (Figure 1, page 2).

The new work area required to complete these soil surface erosion repairs consists of 0.021-acre of grassland forbland vegetation located within the City of Loma Linda.

#### **WA-4-4X34-MPR-54 - (Figure 1, page 3)**

A new impact area (0.14-acre) is required along a portion of the northwest side of the approved disturbance area for supersite 4X34, to perform various soil surface erosion repairs along the flow lines from the tower pad shown in Figure 1, page 3. These improvements, including the repair of 3 sinkholes, will be made to better capture, divert and channel storm flow from the tower pad to control erosion.

The new work area required to complete these soil surface erosion repairs consists of 0.13-acre of Coastal Sage Scrub and 0.01-acre of grassland forbland vegetation located entirely within the SCE transmission line right-of-way.

#### **WA-4-4X52-MPR-54 – (Figure 1, page 4)**

A new impact area (0.29-acre) is required along the southern border of the transmission line right-of-way, from the south side of 4X52, and extending east towards the drainage structure located west of Palmer Avenue. Various soil surface erosion repairs along the flow line from 4X52 and along the southern border of the right-of-way will include the removal of erosion rilling and built-up sediment in the concrete v-ditches to the south of the site. (Figure 1, page 4). These improvements will be made to better capture, divert and channel storm flow from the tower to control soil erosion.

The new work area required to complete these soil surface erosion repairs consists of 0.29-acre of chaparral vegetation located entirely within the SCE transmission line right-of-way.

#### **WA-6-6X35-MPR-54 - (Figure 1, page 5)**

A new impact area (0.07-acre) is required along a portion of the east side of the approved disturbance area for supersite 6N35, to perform various soil surface erosion repairs along the flow line from the tower pad and access road shown in Figure 1, page 5. These improvements, including the installation of a McCarthy Drain and flume extending approximately 80 feet to the toe of the slope, will be made to better capture, divert and channel storm flow from the tower pad/access road through the McCarthy drain extension and rip rap apron to control erosion.

The new work area required to complete these soil surface erosion repairs consists of 0.07-acre of desert scrub vegetation located entirely within the SCE transmission line right-of-way, on private property.

#### **Environmental Analysis**

No additional 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 of publicly available data and relevant project data was conducted to determine the potential for special-status species to occur in the new work areas. The MPR 54 work areas were included within the study area for previous biological surveys (e.g., habitat assessments, protocol, and focused surveys).

The MPR 54 work areas were also covered during the following project preconstruction surveys:

WA-3-3X48-MPR-54 - (Figure 1, page 1)	<a href="#">FRED Survey ID 000070</a>
WA-3-3X64-MPR-54 - (Figure 1, page 2)	<a href="#">FRED Survey ID 000060</a>
WA-4-4X34-MPR-54 - (Figure 1, page 3)	<a href="#">FRED Survey ID 000177</a>
WA-4-4X52-MPR-54 - (Figure 1, page 4)	<a href="#">FRED Survey ID 000041</a>
WA-6-6X35-MPR-54 - (Figure 1, page 5)	<a href="#">FRED Survey ID 000170</a>

**Nesting Birds** – Suitable substrates for nesting birds protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and California Fish and Game Code, including transmission structures, trees, shrubs, and the ground surface, are located throughout the ROW. As shown on Figure 1, page 4 an observation of a special-status bird species (Peregrine Falcon; FRED Species Events 000091) was made in the vicinity of WA-4-4X52-MPR-54. However, the observation was ephemeral from 2018 and not associated with an active nest.

Preconstruction surveys, including surveys for nesting birds, will be conducted during the avian breeding season (Jan 1 – Aug 31) before the initiation of construction in the proposed work areas. If active nests are identified, avoidance buffers

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

### **Listed Riparian Birds**

The proposed work areas are not located within 500-feet of listed riparian bird habitat. With the implementation of nesting bird surveys during nesting season and project mitigation measures, no impacts to LBVI/SWFL or riparian habitat are anticipated.

### **Coastal California Gnatcatcher**

WA-4-4X34-MPR-54 is located within mapped suitable Habitat for Coastal California gnatcatcher (CAGN) as shown in Figure 1, page 3. In addition, WA-4-4X52-MPR-54 is located adjacent to suitable CAGN habitat, and WA-3-3X48-MPR-54 is located approximately 400 feet from suitable CAGN habitat (Figure 1, pages 1 and 4).

Protocol surveys in these areas occurred in March, April, and May of 2018. No CAGN were observed within these areas during 2018 protocol surveys. Furthermore, no CAGN were detected within CAGN habitat during the July 2019 survey. Due to a history of subsequently negative CAGN survey results in the area, no impacts to CAGN are anticipated and the Project area is considered unoccupied by CAGN at this time. If active CAGN nests or breeding territories are identified later within 500 feet of construction activities, avoidance buffers will be established and the nests will be monitored in accordance with the Wildlife Noise Monitoring Plan.

No suitable habitat for CAGN occurs within 500 feet of WA-3-3X64-MPR-54 or WA-6-6X35-MPR-54. Therefore, no impacts are anticipated with the implementation of preconstruction surveys and mitigation measures.

### **Stephens' Kangaroo Rat**

WA-3-3X48-MPR-54, WA-3-3X64-MPR-54, and WA-4-4X34-MPR-54 are located within mapped suitable habitat for Stephens' kangaroo rat (SKR) (Figure 1, pages 1-3). A habitat assessment, pedestrian surveys, and trapping surveys were conducted in Segments 3 and 4 during the last trapping season in 2018. No SKR were captured. Based on a lack of historic data, habitat conditions, and negative results over several years of surveys, SKR are not expected. With the implementation of mitigation measures, preconstruction surveys, clearance sweeps, and biological monitoring during construction, no impacts to SKR are anticipated.

No SKR habitat is mapped within 500 feet of WA-4-4X52-MPR-54 or WA-6-6X35-MPR-54; therefore, no impacts to SKR are anticipated at these work areas.

### **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, and/or black-tailed jackrabbit can occur in many parts of the project area, however, Ringtail and Palm Springs round-tailed ground squirrel are not expected. Little pocket mouse (including Palm Springs pocket mouse [PSPM] subspecies) occupied habitat is widespread throughout Segment 6.

Los Angeles Pocket Mouse (LAPM) suitable habitat is not located within 500 feet of the work areas within Segments 3 or 4. However, a deceased LAPM was identified at 4N34 approximately 90 feet southeast of WA-4-4X34-MPR-54 (FRED Species Event 000260, FRED Mortality Event 000069; Figure 1, page 3). With the implementation of mitigation measures and biological monitoring during construction, no impacts to LAPM or other special-status small mammals are anticipated. If any special-status small mammals are found, potential impacts will be addressed in accordance with the Small Mammals Avoidance and Minimization Plan.

No active woodrat middens have been observed within 10 feet of the proposed work areas. Therefore, no impacts are anticipated.

### **Special-status Bats**

No suitable bat roosting habitat or buffers occur within the proposed work areas; therefore, no impacts to special-status bats are anticipated.

### **Special-status Plants**

Modeled habitat for Coachella Valley milk-vetch (*Astragalus lentiginosus* var. *coachellae* [CVMV]; FE, CRPR 1B.2) is located adjacent to WA-6-6X35-MPR-54 (Figure 1, page 5). The other proposed work areas do not intersect special-status plant habitat. No CVMV or other special-status plants have been observed in or near the four proposed work areas over several

years of surveys; therefore, no impacts to special-status plants are anticipated. If special-status plants are later identified during clearance sweeps/survey/monitoring, they will be avoided to the extent feasible. Unavoidable impacts will be addressed in accordance with the Special-status Plant Salvage and Relocation Plan.

### **Burrowing Owl**

Burrowing owl habitat is widespread in the project area. Burrowing owls only have a moderate potential to occur within 500 feet of the proposed work areas. No owl buffers currently intersect the work areas. Active owl burrows observed during preconstruction surveys and during construction will be mitigated in accordance with the Burrowing Owl Management and Passive Relocation Plan. With the implementation of mitigation measures, including appropriate avoidance buffers and biological monitoring during construction, no impacts to burrowing owls are anticipated.

### **Desert Tortoise**

WA-6-6X35-MPR-54 is located within modeled desert tortoise (DETO) habitat; however, no DETO or sign have been observed in the vicinity (Figure 1, page 5). With monitoring, no impacts are anticipated.

The other proposed work areas are not located within the range of DETO; therefore, no impacts to this species 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 proposed work areas in Segments 3 and 4 and only limited suitable nesting habitat was identified within 2 miles of WA-6-6X35-MPR-54. Protocol aerial surveys conducted for the project in 2019 also showed no golden eagle nests within 2 miles of the new work areas. Therefore, no impacts are anticipated.

### **Regulated Trees**

No tree trimming or tree removal is required for the proposed activities.

### **Special-status Terrestrial Herpetofauna**

No special-status terrestrial herpetofauna have been observed within the proposed work areas during project-related surveys. However, an orange-throated whiptail (FRED Species Events 000059; Figure 1, page 4) was observed approximately 50 feet north of WA-4-4X52-MPR-54 during construction monitoring. With biological monitoring and implementation of project mitigation measures, no impacts are anticipated.

### **Jurisdictional Waters**

The MPR 54 work areas do not intersect jurisdictional waters. Therefore, no additional non-permitted impacts to jurisdictional features are anticipated.

### **Cultural Resources**

The proposed work areas and project components are located within the WOD APE and were covered within the record search data that was conducted during previous WOD surveys and studies *West of Devers: Cultural Resources Assessment and Class III Inventory* (LSA, 2013) and *Area of Potential Effects for the Engineering Refinements Survey and Recommendation of Eligibility for Cultural Resources with Southern California Edison Company's West of Devers Project* (ASM, 2015). The record search and survey results for the areas were negative for cultural resources.

### **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 the 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

Below are the proposed components of MPR 54, with associated PFYC class:

WA-3-3X48-MPR-54 - (Figure 1, page 1)	Class 5 - Very High
WA-3-3X48-MPR-54 - (Figure 1, page 2)	Class 2 – Low
WA-4-4X34-MPR-54 - (Figure 1, page 3)	Class 3 - Moderate
WA-4-4X52-MPR-54 - (Figure 1, page 4)	Class 5 - Very High
WA-6-6X35-MPR-54 - (Figure 1, page 5)	Class U - Unknown

### Resources:

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

New Survey Report Attached: ☐ YES ☒ NO

If No, Previous Biological Survey Reference: The proposed components of MPR 54 and the associated preconstruction biological surveys are listed in the table within the Biological Resources section.

**Cultural:** ☒ NO RESOURCES PRESENT ☐ RESOURCES PRESENT WITH PROJECT APE: ☐ YES ☒ NO

If in APE, Previous Cultural Survey Reference:

The proposed MPR 54 components 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 areas were negative for cultural resources. *West of Devers: Cultural Resources Assessment and Class III Inventory* (LSA, 2013) and *Area of Potential Effects for the Engineering Refinements Survey and Recommendation of Eligibility for Cultural Resources with Southern California Edison Company's West of Devers Project* (ASM, 2015).

If not in APE, cite new survey report:

**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: 3/14/2022

Environmental Inspector: ☒ FIELD REVIEW COMPLETE DocuSigned by: 52BD6CA909DE46E...

Name: Lisa Amador Signature:  Date: 3/14/2022

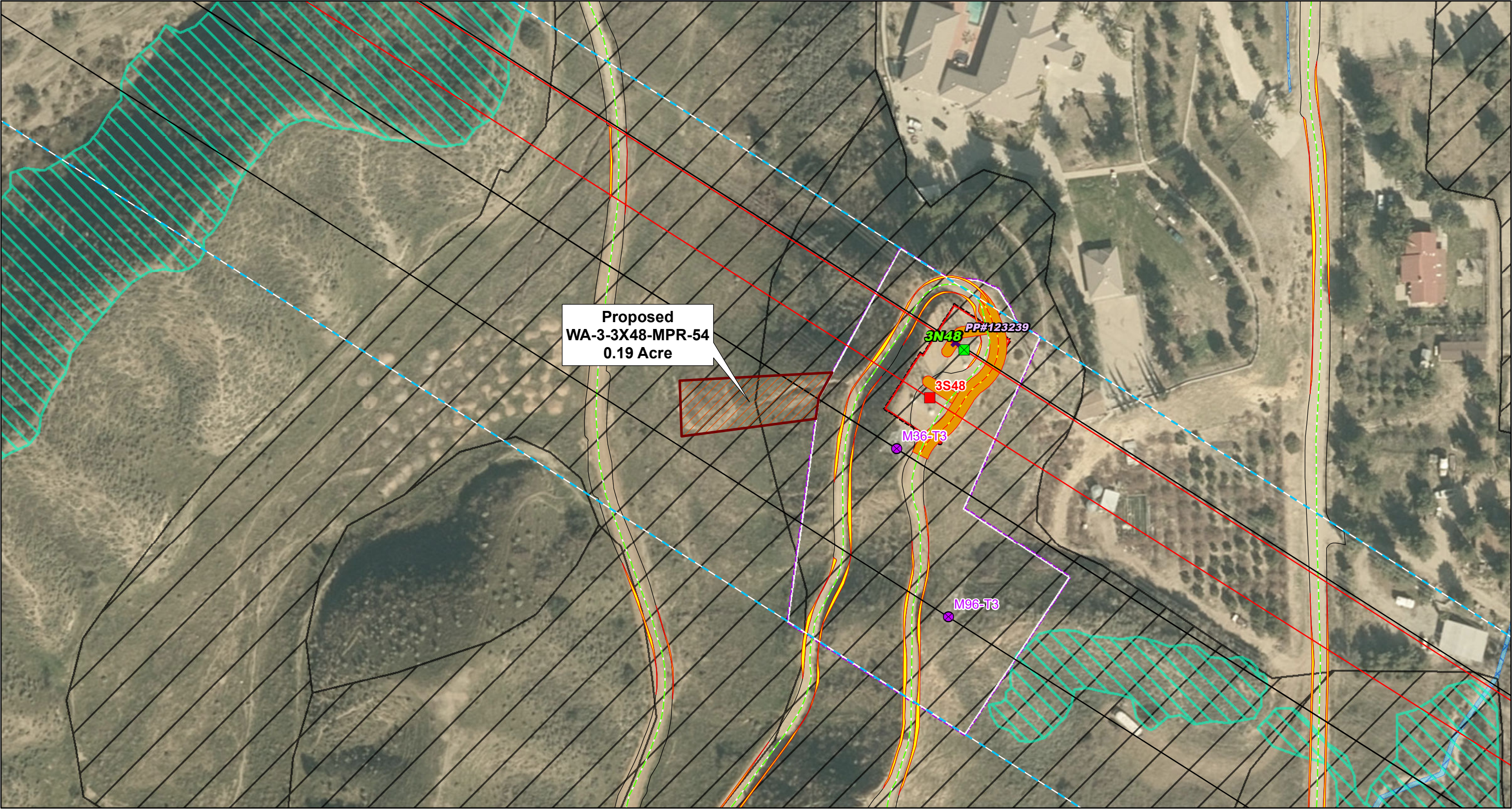
  X   Land Agent: ☒ CONSISTENT WITH EXISTING RIGHTS ☒ NEW RIGHTS OBTAINED


Name: James Spence Signature:  Date: 3/14/2022

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

Name: Sylvia Granados Signature:  Date: 3/14/2022












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**LEGEND**

 MPR #54 Proposed Work Area



**Major Trans Structure**

-  Removed
-  Constructed
-  Proposed
-  Remove


**Major Trans Line**


-  Proposed
-  Existing


**Civil Access Roads Lines**


-  New Access Road
-  Existing Access Road

**Civil Access Road Areas**




-  Existing Road Edge


 Designed Road Boundary

 Potential Road Widening



 Existing ROW


**Construction Areas**

-  O&M Tower Area
-  Structure Work Area
-  Coastal California Gnatcatcher Suitable Habitat

 Stephens' Kangaroo Rat Suitable Habitat

**Non-wetland Waters**

-  CDFW Jurisdiction
-  USACE/RWQCB Jurisdiction



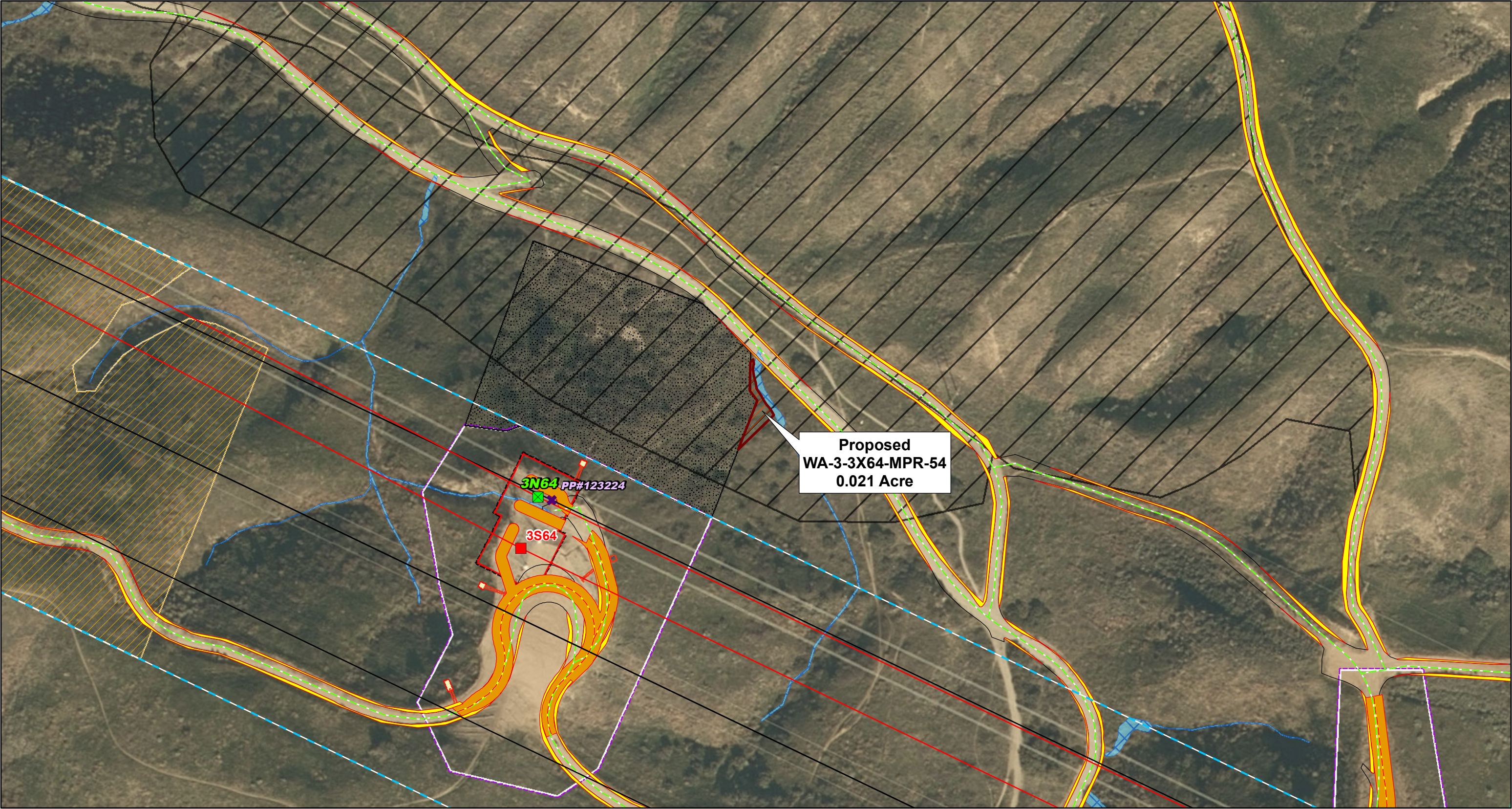
Map Index


**FIGURE 1**

Page 1

*Southern California Edison*  
*West of Devers Upgrade Project*  
**Proposed Work Area**  
MPR #54  
WA-3-3X48-MPR-54 Work Area










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
**LEGEND**

 MPR #54 Proposed Work Area


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
 Removed

 Constructed


 Proposed


**Major Trans Line**

 Proposed


 Existing


**Civil Access Roads Lines**


 New Access Road


 Existing Access Road

**Civil Access Road Areas**


 Existing Road Edge


 Designed Road Boundary


 Potential Road Widening


 Existing ROW

**Construction Areas**


 O&M Tower Area


 Structure Work Area


 Wire Setup


 Work Area

**Proposed Civil Drainage Area**


 Permanent, New, Gabion


 Permanent, New, Mac Drain Single


 Coastal California Gnatcatcher Suitable Habitat

 Stephens' Kangaroo Rat Suitable Habitat

**Non-wetland Waters**

 CDFW Jurisdiction

 USACE/RWQCB Jurisdiction

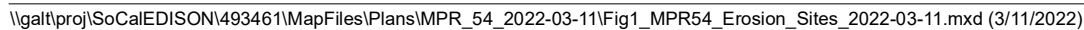


Map Index

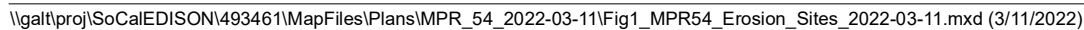
FIGURE 1  
Page 2

*Southern California Edison*  
*West of Devers Upgrade Project*  
**Proposed Work Area**  
MPR #54  
WA-3-3X64-MPR-54 Work Area













Southern California Edison  
West of Devers Upgrade Project  
**Proposed Work Area**  
MPR #54  
WA-6-6X35-MPR-54 Work Area

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Editor Delivery Events

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Signing Complete

Security Checked

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Completed

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Payment Events