

3.0 Environmental Setting

Introduction

This chapter presents the environmental and regulatory settings and draft significance criteria for each of the following resource areas:

- 3.1, Aesthetics
- 3.2, Agriculture and Forestry Resources
- 3.3, Air Quality
- 3.4, Biological Resources
- 3.5, Cultural, Paleontological, and Tribal Cultural Resources
- 3.6, Geology, Soils, and Mineral Resources
- 3.7, Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- 3.8, Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- 3.9, Hydrology and Water Quality
- 3.10, Land Use and Planning
- 3.11, Noise
- 3.12, Population and Housing
- 3.13, Public Services and Utilities
- 3.14, Recreation
- 3.15, Traffic and Transportation

Information included for each resource area was compiled from the applicants' application, including the Proponents Environmental Assessment (November 2015), the applicants' Amended Application (March 2016), subsequent deficiency and data request responses (November 2015 through March 2018), and the California Public Utilities Commission's subsequent preliminary Draft Environmental Impact Report sections.

Resource Area Format

Each resource area section is organized under the following headings:

- Environmental Setting;
- Regulatory Setting;
- Draft Significance Criteria;
- Draft Analytical Figures (if figures are cited in the Environmental Setting); and
- References of sources cited.

Environmental Setting

Each resource area section contains a discussion of the environmental setting (the existing environmental conditions in the vicinity of the proposed project) and identifies the baseline physical conditions.

Regulatory Setting

Laws, ordinances, regulations, standards, and policies applicable to the proposed project and resource areas are discussed in the regulatory setting sections for each resource area. Laws and regulations may also specify permits and approvals necessary for authorization or evaluation and require agency consultation.

Draft Significance Criteria

Had an impact analysis been completed for the proposed project, significance criteria would likely have been based on California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines (CEQA) Appendix G. Therefore, CEQA Guidelines Appendix G significance criteria are listed for each resource area.

Draft Analytical Figures

Draft analytical figures cited in the environmental setting are provided at the end of each resource area section for reference. Map figures are from the California Public Utilities Commission's preliminary Draft Environmental Impact Report sections and illustrate the results of initial research of the existing environmental conditions for each resource area.