

4.13 POPULATION AND HOUSING**4.13.1 Introduction**

This section describes the existing and forecasted conditions of population and housing in the project area for the proposed 500 kV T/L route and Alternative 1. The Alternative 1 route roughly parallels the proposed route, approximately 2-3 miles to the west. Both routes begin in the City of Lancaster at the Antelope 220 kV substation, and end in the City of Santa Clarita at the Pardee 220 kV substation. The land between the two cities is largely open space through the Angeles National Forest. Therefore, there are no substantial differences in population or housing conditions for the proposed and alternative routes. The Alternative 1 route does pass to the west of the community of Green Valley.

Population and housing conditions were evaluated by reviewing the Los Angeles County General Plan, as well as the City of Lancaster and City of Santa Clarita General Plans. Demographic and economic data were also obtained from statistical reports from the State of California Department of Finance, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the State of California Employment Development Department (EDD), and from the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG).

4.13.2 Population

The population of Los Angeles County was recorded to be 9,519,338 by the 2000 Census. This was a 7.4 percent increase in population from the 1990 Census. In 2004, the population is estimated to be 10,103,000, which is a 1.37 percent increase from 2003 (California Department of Finance, 2004b). The majority of the population throughout the County is White or of Hispanic or Latino origin. In Santa Clarita, however, the Hispanic population is approximately 22 percent, and in Lancaster the Hispanic population is approximately 24 percent.

The 25.6-mile-long proposed T/L route between the Antelope and Pardee substations begins at the west end of the City of Lancaster and ends at the west end of the City of Santa Clarita. These cities have consistently displayed high population growth over the past decade. The U.S. Census Bureau reports Santa Clarita and Lancaster as the second and third fastest-growing cities in Los Angeles County between 1990 and 2000, respectively. The City of Palmdale, which is located approximately 5 miles east from the northern end of the proposed T/L route/Antelope Substation, is currently the fastest growing City in the County, with a growth rate of 69.29 percent from 1990 to 2000. The state Department of Finance estimates Santa Clarita's population at 164,900 people and Lancaster's population at 129,200 people in 2004. The recent growth rate in these cities is summarized below.

City	2000 Census	1990 Census	Increase	Percent
Palmdale	116,670	68,917	47,753	69.29%
Santa Clarita	151,008	110,642	40,446	36.56%
Lancaster	118,718	97,291	21,427	22.02%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2004a.

SCAG projects the populations of Santa Clarita and Lancaster to reach 187,795 and 168,032, respectively, in 2010. This population analysis equally applies to the Alternative 1 route, as there are no substantial population differences between the two routes.

4.13.3 Housing

As of the year 2000, Los Angeles County had approximately 3,300,181 housing units, 47.9 percent of which were owner-occupied. The median value of owner-occupied housing units was approximately \$209,300 in 2000 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2004b). The proposed 500 kV T/L route is entirely within the County of Los Angeles, and the majority of the proposed corridor extends through unincorporated land between the cities of Lancaster and Santa Clarita. Much of this unincorporated land is mountainous and in areas of rugged terrain within the Angeles National Forest, lacking in basic sewer/water infrastructure. The high cost of providing the infrastructure for this outlying area renders potential future affordable housing development largely infeasible (Los Angeles County General Plan, Housing Element, 1979e).

More specific to the south end of the proposed T/L route, Santa Clarita had approximately 52,456 housing units in 2000, 37,891 of which were owner-occupied and about 2,800 were vacant. The median house value was approximately \$229,200. Lancaster had approximately 41,682 housing units in 2000, 23,394 of which were owner-occupied, and about 3,500 were vacant. The median house value was approximately \$103,700. (U.S. Census Bureau, 2004b). SCAG predicts the housing units in Santa Clarita to reach 62,837 by 2010, an increase of about 10,000 units from the year 2000. The SCAG prediction for Lancaster is 51,418 housing units by 2010, also an approximate 10,000-unit increase.

City	Households in 2000	2005 Projection	2010 Projection
Santa Clarita	52,456	55,614	62,837
Lancaster	41,682	42,673	51,418

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2004a and SCAG 2004b.

It is the public policy of California to ensure that local governments provide adequate sites to accommodate the construction of housing to meet the needs for all income groups. The Los Angeles County review process for granting entitlements for new residential development is

designed not only to ensure that a full range of adequate public services and facilities, including water and sewage, are available for each new project, but also to ensure that hazards are avoided or mitigated and vital natural resources are preserved or protected.

Population growth has outpaced housing production in the County during the past decade, a trend expected to continue into the future. Population growth within the unincorporated area has continued at a steady pace over the past decade. The unincorporated area that is most likely to experience high population growth in the immediate future is the Santa Clarita Valley. According to the SCAG, over 51,000 new housing units would be needed in the unincorporated area during the 1998-2005 planning period for the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA). Through the housing element process, the County would demonstrate that it has the capacity to provide suitable housing sites with adequate water and sewer services to meet the identified housing need.

This housing analysis equally applies to the Alternative 1 route, as there are no substantial housing differences between the two routes.