

5.11 Mineral Resources

5.11.1 Environmental Setting

Substantial quantities of the following mineral resources occur in Merced County (Merced County, 2011): sand and gravel, aragonite, calcite, chalcopryrite, copper, glauconite, gold, gypsum, hydromagne-site, jarosite, lawsonite, pumpellyite, soda niter, sphalerite, stibnite, and stilpnomelane.

Much of Merced County's mineral wealth is due to its proximity to the eastern and western foothill areas. Sand and gravel extraction are currently considered the most valuable mineral resources in the county and constitute the major portion of the County's mining activity by quantity of material produced. Cressey and Gallo Substations are located in potential sand and gravel resource areas associated with their proximity to the banks of the Merced River, as identified by the Merced County General Plan (Merced County, 2011). The project is not located within a mineral recovery site.

The California Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (SMARA) of 1975 requires that the State Geologist classify land into mineral resource zones (MRZs) according to the known or inferred mineral potential of the land. According to the State Mining and Geology Board's Mineral Land Classification and Designation under SMARA, MRZs have not been designated for the Merced County region (SMGB, 2008). The project area is in the Eastern Merced County aggregate availability study zone, with production estimated to supply half of the expected 50-year demand (Kohler, 2006).

5.11.2 Environmental Impacts and Assessment

MINERAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the State?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Significance criteria established by CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G.

a. Would the project result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the State?

NO IMPACT. The project alignment is not within a classified MRZ. There are no active mining operations along the power line alignment. Cressey and Gallo Substations are located in potential but not confirmed sand and gravel resource areas and no other known important mineral resources are in the immediate vicinity of the project corridor. No impact to known mineral resources would occur.

b. Would the project result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan?

NO IMPACT. There are no known locally important mineral resource recovery sites within the project area. There would be no impact to locally important mineral resources.

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