B.3.17 Utilities and Service Systems

UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b. Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c. Require or result in the construction of new stormwater drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d. Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e. Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	☐	☐	☒	☐
f. Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?	☐	☐	☒	☐
g. Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Significance criteria established by CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G.

B.3.17.1 Setting

Utility and service system facilities associated with electricity, domestic (potable) water, stormwater, solid waste, communications, and natural gas are provided and maintained by a variety of local purveyors, including the city of Ridgecrest, counties, special districts, water agencies, and private companies. Utilities such as domestic water, wastewater and stormwater sewers, and natural gas are usually transmitted via underground pipelines or conduits. Electrical and telecommunication services can be installed underground or overhead on utility poles. Most urban utility and public service infrastructure exists within public rights of way. The existing Downs Substation, the subtransmission lines, and the fiber optic telecommunication cable upgrades would be located within the city of Ridgecrest and the unincorporated communities of Inyokern, China Lake Acres, Argus, and Trona in the Counties of Kern and San Bernardino. Table B.3.17-1 lists applicable utility providers, and Table B.3.17-2 provides the capacity of the Ridgecrest Landfill, which would be used for solid waste disposal for the Proposed Project.

Table B.3.17-1. Utility Providers

Natural gas – Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E), Southern California Gas Company, Amerigas Propane
Electricity – PG&E, Southern California Edison
Water – Indian Wells Valley Water District, Searles Domestic Water District
Wastewater – City of Ridgecrest Waste Water Treatment., Inyokern Community Services District
Telephone – Verizon
Solid Waste – Ridgecrest Sanitation, Benz Sanitation
Landfills Used: Ridgecrest Landfill, Trona-Argus Transfer Station

Sources: City of Ridgecrest, 2011; Ridgecrest Chamber of Commerce, 2011

Table B.3.17-2. Landfill Capacity

Landfill Name	Total Capacity (cubic yards)	Remaining Capacity (cubic yards)	Remaining Capacity (percent)	Maximum Throughput (tons/day)
Ridgecrest Landfill	5,992,700	5,000,898	83.4	701

Source: CIWMB, 2011.

B.3.17.2 Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

a. Would the project exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. The Project area is within the jurisdiction of the South Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB). Currently, the substation expansion site is undeveloped vacant land that does not generate wastewater. Minimal wastewater would be generated by workers during construction, primarily for dust control. However, the construction-related increase in wastewater would be temporary and represent a very small fraction of the permitted flow for the wastewater treatment capability within the city of Ridgecrest. Therefore, construction related to the proposed substation expansion and the routing of the subtransmission line would not adversely affect the treatment plant that would receive the wastewater. Similarly, construction activities associated with the fiber optic telecommunication cable upgrades would generate minimal wastewater as a result of watering for dust control. Upon completion of construction, the Proposed Project would not generate wastewater because the proposed substation would be an unstaffed, automated facility. Therefore, volume and quality of Project wastewater would not exceed the treatment requirements of the RWQCB, and this impact would be less than significant.

b. Would the project require, or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. Construction of the Proposed Project would generate minimal water demand, primarily resulting from water used for dust control. Water for dust control would be obtained by an SCE contractor from the Indian Wells Valley Water District (IWVWD), most likely from a metered connection (i.e., a hydrant) located within a half mile from the existing Downs Substation. In addition, as noted above under Section B.3.17.2(a), the wastewater generated by construction of the Proposed Project (this includes the expansion of the substation, rerouting of the subtransmission line, and the fiber optic telecommunication system upgrades) would be less than significant.

Upon completion of construction, the Proposed Project would not generate a significant demand for water or wastewater treatment, as the proposed substation would be an unstaffed, automated facility; however, landscaping and irrigation would be installed. Water service would be provided by the IWVWD via an existing 5/8-inch service connection at the Downs Substation. During the operation period, the routing of the subtransmission line and the telecommunication system would not require water nor would they generate wastewater.

Existing wastewater and water treatment facilities are adequate to accommodate the demand generated by the Proposed Project (see Sections B.3.16.2(a) and (d)). Thus, the Project would not require or result in the construction or expansion of water or wastewater treatment facilities, and this impact would be less than significant.

c. Would the project require, or result in the construction of, new stormwater drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. Construction of the substation expansion would interrupt the existing drainage patterns throughout the Project site, which would be modified to divert drainage around the proposed expansion area and the existing Downs Substation to the existing discharge point adjacent to Downs Street along the east side of the property. The construction drainage would be designed to maintain or reduce discharge of stormwater runoff from the location through the use of an engineered detention basin, and would be in compliance with a construction Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), which would be required by the State Water Resources Control Board. Preparation of a SWPPP would include Project information, design features, and monitoring and reporting procedures. The SWPPP would be based on final engineering design for all of the Project components, which include the substation expansion, rerouting of the subtransmission line, and the fiber optic telecommunication system upgrades.

As such, stormwater drainage features incorporated into the design of the Downs Substation expansion, as well as compliance with the SWPPP, would manage all project-related stormwater without using off-site facilities. Therefore, no new or expanded drainage facilities would be required for the project, and this impact would be less than significant.

d. Would the project have sufficient water supplies available to serve the Proposed Project from existing entitlements and resources, or would new or expanded entitlements be needed?

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. During construction, the Proposed Project would generate minimal water demand or wastewater, which would primarily be from water use for dust control. The water for dust control would be obtained by an SCE contractor from the IWVWD, most likely from a metered connection (i.e., a hydrant) located within a half mile from the existing Downs Substation. The amount of water for dust suppression during construction is considered to be minimal in comparison to available municipal water supplies, and water use for construction would be temporary.

Upon completion of construction, the Proposed Project would cause minimal daily water demand, resulting only from landscaping irrigation needs at the substation. Water service from a 5/8 inch service connection to the water supply system at the IWVWD has been established at the existing Downs Substation. Therefore, the Proposed Project (including the substation expansion, the rerouting of the subtransmission line, and the fiber optic telecommunication system upgrades) would not be expected to exceed the existing available water supplies, and this impact would be less than significant.

e. Would the project result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that serves or may serve the Proposed Project that it has adequate capacity to serve the Proposed Project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. The Proposed Project would generate minimal wastewater during construction. As discussed in Section B.3.16.2(a) above, existing wastewater facilities would adequately accommodate the minor demand caused by Project construction while serving existing commitments. Therefore, this impact would be less than significant.

f. Would the project be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the Proposed Project's solid waste disposal needs?

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. The Proposed Project would generate construction-related debris and the removal of infrastructure components may require disposal. SCE would recycle all materials as appropriate, and materials that could not be recycled would be disposed of in accordance with federal, State, and local regulations. After the transfer of existing 115-kV subtransmission lines, distribution lines, and fiber optic telecommunication cable to the new structures, the existing poles that are not topped would be completely removed. Depending on their condition and original chemical treatment, any wood poles removed may be reused by SCE, returned to the manufacturer, disposed of in a Class I hazardous waste landfill, or disposed of in the lined portion of a RWQCB-certified municipal landfill.

The Ridgecrest Landfill would be used for disposal of solid waste during construction and operation of the Proposed Project. As shown in Table B.3.17-2, the remaining capacity for this landfill is 83.4 percent. The amount of solid waste generated by construction and operation of the Proposed Project is not expected to exceed the capacity of the Ridgecrest Landfill. Therefore, the impact of solid waste disposal would be less than significant.

g. Would the project comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

NO IMPACT. The California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 emphasizes resource conservation through reduction, recycling, and reuse of solid waste, and guides solid waste management. This regulation requires that localities conduct a Solid Waste Generation Study (SWGS) and develop a Source Reduction Recycling Element (SRRE). The Proposed Project would operate in accordance with these applicable Solid Waste Management Policy Plans by including recycling activities where feasible. During construction, all materials and debris would be removed from the area and recycled or properly disposed of at an off-site disposal facility in accordance with all applicable laws. In addition, as identified in Section B.3.16(f) above, the landfill serving the site would have sufficient capacity to accommodate the Project's construction solid waste disposal needs, and would not require the need for new or expanded landfill facilities. Therefore, the Proposed Project would comply with federal, State, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste disposal limits and landfill capacities. No impact would occur.