D.3 Visual Resources

D.3.1 Regional Setting and Approach to Data Collection

D.3.1.1 Regional Setting

The eastern portion of the Proposed Project (east of Desert Center) is located within the Basin and Range physiographic province including sections of the Sonoran Desert. This area is characterized by rough, rocky mountains formed by northerly trending fault blocks. Typical of this province are desert basins and jagged ranges along with desert alluvial slopes (bajadas) and wide valleys that are interconnected across low divides (Hunt, 1974). Vegetation varies depending on landforms, and ranges from creosote flats to saguaro forests (SCE, 2005a). Views from travel routes within the eastern portion of the study area tend to encompass broad, sweeping desert expanses bordered by rugged mountain ranges. The western portion of the project area extends into the Transverse Ranges section of the Pacific Border Province. Here, the project passes through arid and semi-arid landscapes at the base of the east-west trending San Jacinto and San Bernardino Mountains into the more urbanized and rapidly developing residential, commercial, and industrial environs of west Riverside and San Bernardino Counties of Southern California. The Palm Springs and San Gorgonio Pass area is notable for the extensive wind farm development and concentration of energy infrastructure that dominate much of the landscape. Within this regional setting, the study area for the visual resources analysis was defined by the numerous viewpoints from which the Proposed Project would be seen. The viewshed is extensive given the relative openness of much of the landscape, the height of the proposed structures, and the availability of viewing opportunities from travel routes, recreational use areas, and nearby residential and commercial areas.

D.3.1.2 Methodology

Adding to the diversity of landscapes through which the Proposed Project would pass, are numerous jurisdictions to which the project would be subject. In general, the Visual Resources technical approach was differentiated according to: (1) federal lands administered by the United States Department of Interior Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and (2) other federal (non-BLM), non-federal public and private lands (see Table D.3-1). The technical approach for that portion of the project where lands are subject to administration by the BLM was based on the BLM's Visual Resource Management (VRM) system. This is a system that BLM requires for use on BLM-administered lands (located primarily along the eastern portion of the Proposed Project) but cannot be applied to non-BLM lands because the designations of visual character of land areas do not exist. The non-BLM portions of the project were analyzed using the Visual Sensitivity–Visual Change system. The results for both methodologies are summarized and presented as a series of foldout tables at the end of the Visual Resources section in Appendix VR-1 (see enclosed CD).

Table D.3-1. Visual Resources Approach

Land Category	BLM Visual Resource Management (VRM) Methodology	Visual Sensitivity – Visual Change Methodology
Federal Lands Administered by BLM	×	
Federal Lands not Administered by BLM (e.g., Kofa National Wildlife Refuge)		×
Native American Lands		×
State and Local Public Lands		×
Private Lands		×

Although both methods share similarities (comparing anticipated change to existing sensitivity) there are differences in both approach and terminology. The following sections describe the two methods.

BLM Visual Resource Management (VRM) Approach

Public lands crossed by the Proposed Project and administered by the BLM have a variety of visual values. These lands are subject to visual resource management objectives as developed using the BLM Visual Resource Management (VRM) System (BLM, 1984, 1986a, 1986b) and presented in the Resource Management Plan for a given unit. The BLM system identifies four VRM Classes (I through IV) with specific management prescriptions for each class. The system is based on an assessment of scenic quality, viewer sensitivity and viewing distance zones.

Scenic Quality

Scenic Quality is a measure of the overall impression or appeal of an area created by the physical features of the landscape, such as natural features (landforms, vegetation, water, color, adjacent scenery and scarcity), and built features (roads, buildings, railroads, agricultural patterns, and utility lines). These features create the distinguishable form, line, color, and texture of the landscape composition that can be judged for scenic quality using criteria such as distinctiveness, contrast, variety, harmony, and balance. Table D.3-2 presents the VRM scenic quality rating characteristics that are evaluated to arrive at one of three scenic quality ratings (A, B, or C) for a given landscape. The three scenic quality ratings can be described as follows:

- **Scenic Quality Class A** – Landscapes that combine the most outstanding characteristics of the region.
- **Scenic Quality Class B** – Landscapes that exhibit a combination of outstanding and common features.
- **Scenic Quality Class C** – Landscapes that have features that are common to the region.

Viewer Sensitivity

Viewer Sensitivity is a factor used to represent the value of the visual landscape to the viewing public, including the extent to which the landscape is viewed. For example, a landscape may have high scenic qualities but be remotely located and, therefore, seldom viewed. Sensitivity considers such factors as visual access (including duration and frequency of view), type and amount of use (See Table D.3-3), public interest, adjacent land uses, and whether the landscape is part of a special area (e.g., California Desert Conservation Area or Area of Critical Environmental Concern). The three levels of viewer sensitivity can generally be defined as follows:

- **High Sensitivity.** Areas that are either designated for scenic resources protection, or receive a high degree of use (includes areas visible from roads and highways receiving more than 45,000 visits [vehicles] per year). Typically within the foreground/middleground viewing distance (see Table D.3-4).
- **Medium Sensitivity.** Areas lacking specific, or designated, scenic resources protection, but are located in sufficiently close proximity to be within the viewshed of the protected area. Includes areas that are visible from roads and highways receiving 5,000 to 45,000 visits (vehicles) per year. Typically within the background viewing distance.
- **Low Sensitivity.** Areas that are remote from populated areas, major roadways, and protected areas or are severely degraded visually. Includes areas that are visible from roads and highways receiving less than 5,000 visits (vehicles) per year.

Table D.3-2. Visual Resource Management (VRM) Scenic Quality Rating

Component	Scenic Quality Rating		
Landform	High vertical relief (prominent cliffs, spires, or massive rock outcrops); severe surface variation, highly eroded formations (major badlands or dune systems); detail features dominant and exceptionally striking/ intriguing. 5	Steep canyons, mesas, buttes, cinder cones, and drumlins; or interesting erosional patterns or variety in size and shape of landforms; or detail features, which are interesting though not dominant or exceptional. 3	Low rolling hills, foothills, or flat valley bottoms; or few or no interesting landscape features 1
Vegetation	A variety of vegetative types as expressed in interesting forms, textures, and patterns. 5	Some variety of vegetation, but only one or two major types. 3	Little or no variety or contrast in vegetation. 1
Water	Clear and clean appearing, still, or cascading white water, any of which are a dominant factor in the landscape. 5	Flowing, or still, but not dominant in the landscape. 3	Absent or present, but not noticeable. 0
Color	Rich color combinations, variety or vivid color; or pleasing contrasts in the soil, rock, vegetation, water or snow fields. 5	Some intensity or variety in colors and contrast of the soil, rock, and vegetation, but not a dominant scenic element. 3	Subtle color variations, contrast, or interest; generally mute tones. 1
Influence of Adjacent Scenery	Adjacent scenery greatly enhances visual quality. 5	Some intensity or variety in colors and contrast of the soil, rock, and vegetation, but not a dominant scenic element. 3	Adjacent scenery has little or no influence on overall visual quality. 0
Scarcity	One of a kind; or unusually memorable, or very rare within region. Consistent chance for exceptional wildlife or wildflower viewing, etc. 5	Distinctive, though somewhat similar to others within the region. 3	Interesting within its setting, but fairly common within the region. 1
Cultural Modifications	Modifications add favorably to visual variety while promoting visual harmony. 2	Modifications add little or no visual variety to the area, and introduce no discordant elements. 0	Modifications add variety but are very discordant and promote strong disharmony. - 4
Scenic Quality Rating:	A = 19 or more	B = 12 to 18	C = 11 or less

Table D.3-3. Amount of Use Classifications

Type Area	High	Moderate	Low
Roads & Highways	More than 45,000 visits/yr	5,000 to 45,000 visits/yr	Less than 5,000 visits/yr
Rivers & Trails	More than 20,000 visits/yr	2,000-20,000 visits/yr	Less than 2,000 visits/yr
Recreation Sites	More than 10,000 visitor-days/yr	2,000-10,000 visitor-days/yr	Less than 2,000 visitor-days/yr

It should be noted that all of the BLM lands within the study area in California east of the Coachella Valley are located within the California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA). This designation imparts a High rating for Viewer Sensitivity for all lands within the CDCA.

Viewing Distance Zones

Landscapes are generally subdivided into three distance zones based on relative visibility from travel routes or observation points. The foreground/middleground (f/m)

Table D.3-4. Distance Zones

f/m (foreground/middleground)	0 to 3–5 miles
b (background)	5-15 miles
s/s	seldom seen areas

zone includes areas that are less than three to five miles from the viewing location. The foreground/middleground zone defines the area in which landscape details transition from readily perceived, to outlines and patterns. The background (b) zone is generally greater than 5, but less than 15, miles from the viewing location. The background zone includes areas where landforms are the most dominant element in the landscape, and color and texture become subordinate. In order to be included within this distance zone, vegetation should be visible at least as patterns of light and dark. The seldom-seen zone (s/s) includes areas that are usually hidden from view as a result of topographic or vegetative screening or atmospheric conditions. In some cases, atmospheric and lighting conditions can reduce visibility and shorten the distances normally covered by each zoned (BLM, 1986b).

Visual Resource Management Classes

The VRM Class for a given area is typically arrived at through the use of a classification matrix similar to that presented in Table D.3-5. By comparing the scenic quality, visual sensitivity, and distance zones, the specific VRM class can be determined. The exception to this process is the Class I designation, which is placed on special areas where management activities are restricted (e.g., wilderness areas).

Table D.3-5. Visual Resource Management (VRM) Classification Matrix

Visual Sensitivity Levels		High			Medium			Low
Special Areas		I	I	I	I	I	I	I
Scenic Quality	A	II	II	II	II	II	II	II
	B	II	III IV	III	III	IV	IV	IV
	C	III	IV	IV	IV	IV	IV	IV
Distance Zones		f/m	b	s/s	f/m	b	s/s	s/s

The objectives of each VRM classification as stated in the BLM VRM *Visual Resource Inventory Manual* are as follows:

- **VRM Class I.** The objective is to preserve the existing character of the landscape. This class provides for natural ecological changes; however, it does not preclude very limited management activity. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be very low and must not attract attention.
- **VRM Class II.** The objective is to retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be low. Management activities may be seen, but should not attract the attention of the casual observer. Any changes must repeat the basic elements of form, line, color, and texture found in the predominant natural features of the characteristic landscape.
- **VRM Class III.** The objective is to partially retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be moderate or lower. Management activities may attract attention but should not dominate the view of the casual observer. Changes should repeat the basic elements found in the predominant natural features of the characteristic landscape.
- **VRM Class IV.** The objective is to provide for management activities which require major modification of the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape can be high. These management activities may dominate the view and be the major focus of viewer attention. However, every attempt should be made to minimize the impact of these activities through careful location, minimal disturbance, and repeating the basic elements.

VRM Classes have been established in existing Resource Management Plans for all of the BLM lands crossed by the Proposed Project and alternatives in Arizona. Along the California portion of the project, VRM Classes have been established in existing BLM Plans only in a portion of the Coachella Valley. VRM classifications have not been established in Resource Management Plans for BLM lands east of Coachella Valley to the California-Arizona border. For those lands, Interim VRM Classes were developed using the above methodology. Scenic Quality Field Inventories for each Scenic Quality Rating Unit are presented in Appendix VR-2 (see enclosed CD).

As previously stated, all lands within the California Desert Conservation Area are assigned a High Visual Sensitivity Level. All of the inventoried lands are also within the foreground/middleground (f/m) viewing distance zone of one or more public viewing points or access roads. As a result, the Interim VRM Classes were tied directly to the Scenic Quality Classes. Areas with Class B Scenic Quality were assigned an Interim VRM Class II. Areas with Class C Scenic Quality were assigned an Interim VRM Class III. The VRM Class matrices for each Scenic Quality Rating Unit are presented in Appendix VR-3 (see enclosed CD).

Visual Sensitivity – Visual Change Methodology

Initially, the proposed and alternative routes were viewed from various public roads and vantage points to develop an overall assessment of the existing landscape character, visual quality, and viewing conditions by segment. In consultation with CPUC and BLM staff, a number of representative Key Viewpoints (KVPs — also commonly referred to as Key Observation Points [KOPs] under the BLM methodology) were established to assess the various factors that are considered in the evaluation of a landscape's existing visual resources. Key Viewpoints or KVPs are representative locations from which the visual analysis is focused and are generally selected to be representative of the most critical locations from which the project would be seen. KVPs are often located in an effort to evaluate existing landscapes and potential impacts on visual resources with various levels of sensitivity, in different landscape types and terrain, and from various vantage points. Typical KVP locations for the present project include (1) along major or significant travel corridors or points of visual access; (2) at key vista points; (3) at significant recreation areas; (4) in residential areas; and (5) at locations that provide good examples of the existing visual context. At each key viewpoint, the existing landscape was characterized and photographed. Each of the factors considered in the evaluation of the existing landscape under the Visual Sensitivity–Visual Change Methodology is generally expressed as low, moderate, or high as discussed in the following paragraphs.

Visual Quality is a measure of the overall impression or appeal of an area as determined by the particular landscape characteristics such as landforms, rockforms, water features, and vegetation patterns, as well as associated public values. The attributes of variety, vividness, coherence, uniqueness, harmony, and pattern contribute to visual quality classifications of indistinctive (low), common (moderate), and distinctive (high). Visual quality is studied as a point of reference to assess whether a given project would appear compatible with the established features of the setting or would contrast noticeably and unfavorably with them.

Viewer Concern addresses the level of interest or concern of viewers regarding an area's visual resources and is closely associated with viewers' expectations for the area. Viewer concern reflects the importance placed on a given landscape based on the human perceptions of the intrinsic beauty of the existing landforms, rockforms, water features, vegetation patterns, and even cultural features.

Viewer Exposure describes the degree to which viewers are exposed to views of the landscape. Viewer exposure considers landscape visibility (the ability to see the landscape), distance zones (proximity of

viewers to the subject landscape), number of viewers, and the duration of view. Landscape visibility can be a function of several interconnected considerations including proximity to viewing point, degree of discernible detail, seasonal variations (snow, fog, and haze can obscure landscapes), time of day, and presence or absence of screening features such as landforms, vegetation, and/or built structures. Even though a landscape may have highly scenic qualities, it may be remote, receiving relatively few visitors and, thus, have a low degree of viewer exposure. Conversely, a subject landscape or project may be situated in relatively close proximity to a major road or highway utilized by a substantial number of motorists and yet still result in relatively low viewer exposure if the rate of travel speed on the roadway is high and viewing times are brief, or if the landscape is partially screened by vegetation or other features. Frequently, it is the subject area's proximity to viewers or *distance zone* that is of particular importance in determining viewer exposure. Landscapes are generally subdivided into three or four distance zones based on relative visibility from travel routes or observation points. Distance zones typically include foreground, middleground, and background. The actual number of zones and distance assigned to each zone is dependent on the existing terrain characteristics and public policy and is often determined on a project by project basis.

Overall Visual Sensitivity is a concluding assessment as to an existing landscape's susceptibility to an adverse visual outcome. A landscape with a high degree of visual sensitivity is able to accommodate a lower degree of adverse visual change without resulting in a significant visual impact. A landscape with a low degree of visual sensitivity is able to accommodate a higher degree of adverse visual change without resulting in a significant visual impact. Overall visual sensitivity is derived from a comparison of existing visual quality, viewer concern, and viewer exposure.

D.3.2 Environmental Setting for the Proposed Project – Devers-Harquahala

The eastern portion of the Proposed Project from Devers Substation to Harquahala Switchyard is characterized by rough, rocky mountains with jagged ridgelines bordering desert basins and alluvial slopes. The wide, flat valley floors are typically interconnected across low divides. Vegetation throughout this portion of the study area varies depending on landforms, ranging from creosote flats to saguaro forests (SCE, 2005a). The western-most portion of this area, in the Coachella Valley, is rapidly developing with extensive residential subdivisions and golf courses approaching much of the Proposed Project right-of-way. Project viewing opportunities within the eastern portion of the study are numerous and include Interstate 10 (I-10), State highways, and local roads, 4WD access roads on public lands, recreational and visitor areas, and residential developments. The following sections provide descriptions of each of the sub-segments within the eastern study area. Within each sub-segment, one or more Key Viewpoints (KVPs) have been established from which detailed setting characterizations have been developed to represent the typical visual resources along that sub-segment. The location of each KVP is shown on Figures D.3-1A through D.3-1F (see enclosed CD).

D.3.2.1 Harquahala to Kofa National Wildlife Refuge

This portion of the Proposed Project extends from Harquahala Switchyard to the eastern boundary of the Kofa National Wildlife Refuge. Heading east and then north from Harquahala Switchyard, the route passes through State and private lands on the arid Harquahala Plain. This relatively flat, desert landscape supports a low diversity of vegetation, composed primarily of short grass and shrubs. Passing to the north of I-10, the route enters public lands administered by the BLM before turning west to pass through a gap between Burnt Mountain on the south and the more visually dominant Big Horn Mountains to the

north. The route continues north across the flat Harquahala Plain crossing Salome Highway and eventually converging on and then crossing to the south side of I-10 approximately 19 miles west of Burnt Mountain. The route continues to the southwest before turning to the west at the north end of the Eagletail Mountains. From here, the route continues west-southwest across the flat and equally visually non-distinct Ranegras Plain to the eastern border of Kofa Wildlife Refuge, approximately 18 miles west of the Eagletail Mountains.

Views of the Proposed Project would be available from I-10, Salome Highway, Avenue 75 East, Hovatter Road, Vicksburg Road, and numerous 4WD access roads on public lands. The landscape of the Harquahala and Ranegras Plains is very flat with the occasional low, isolated desert hill. The plains are surrounded by prominent, rugged mountain ranges including Saddle Mountain and the Eagletail Mountains to the south and the Big Horn Mountains Harquahala Mountains and Little Harquahala Mountain to the north. The area is relatively undeveloped and the linear form of I-10 is the prominent built feature in the landscape. The other notable built feature is the existing Devers–Palo Verde 1 500 kV Transmission Line (DPV1) with its prominent vertical structural forms and lines, which the proposed Devers–Palo Verde No. 2 (Proposed Project) would parallel.

Three areas of potential visual sensitivity were selected for detailed analysis: (1) views of Big Horn Mountain from just south of Big Horn Mountains Wilderness and north of I-10, (2) the crossing of I-10 as viewed from I-10, and (3) views from the points of access to the north end of the Eagletail Mountains and Wilderness (south of I-10). Therefore, three KVPs were selected to represent the visual setting along this route segment. The location of each of these KVPs is shown on Figure D.3-1A (see enclosed CD). The results of the visual analysis are summarized in table format in Appendix VR-1 (see enclosed CD). A discussion of the existing visual setting for each KVP is presented in the following paragraphs.

After each viewpoint heading, one of the following notations is made: (VRM) or (VS-VC). This designation indicates the methodology to which that particular viewpoint is subject — either the BLM's Visual Resource Management methodology or the Visual Sensitivity–Visual Change methodology.

Key Viewpoint 1 – Big Horn Mountains (VRM)

Key Viewpoint 1 was established on a 4-wheel drive (4WD) access road south of the Big Horn Mountains, immediately west of Burnt Mountain and north of I-10 (see Figure D.3-2A[1]; see enclosed CD). Viewing to the north-northwest toward the existing DPV1 line and the proposed route, this location was selected to generally characterize the existing landscape north of I-10 and immediately adjacent and to the south of the Big Horn Mountains Wilderness. Views to the north from the access roads in this area encompass a predominantly natural setting with the notable exception of the existing DPV1 line. The foreground landform of the Harquahala Plain appears flat and horizontal. The rugged, angular form of Big Horn Mountain provides a dramatic contrast to the Plain it backdrops. Landform colors range from tan to lavender and bluish hues at distance, while landform textures appear smooth to granular. Vegetation is patchy, consisting of low-growing grasses and shrubs with irregular to distinct forms (where defined by the floor of the plain). Vegetation colors include tans to pale yellow for grasses with muted greens for the shrubs. Vegetation exhibits a matte texture. The view from KVP 1 encompasses existing

[1] Figures showing existing setting are presented in Section D.3.6, along with simulations of the Proposed Project components.

DPV1 Towers A358 through A362.[2] At a viewing distance of approximately 2.75 miles, the DPV1 lattice structures are less discernible than the lighter-colored curvilinear arcs of the transmission line conductors. To the extent that they are noticeable, the lattice structures appear geometric and complex. Structural features appear gray in color and smooth in texture. The existing BLM scenic quality classification or viewer sensitivity are not available but the VRM Class Rating is III as identified in the Lower Gila Resource Area Management Plan. The VRM Class III Management Objective is as follows:

> ***VRM Class III.*** *To partially retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be moderate. Management Activities may attract attention but should not dominate the view of the casual observer. Changes should repeat the basic elements found in the predominant natural features of the characteristic landscape.*

Key Viewpoint 2 – Interstate 10 Crossing/Harquahala Plain (VS-VC)

Key Viewpoint 2 was established on westbound I-10, approximately 1.5 miles west of Avenue 75E and approximately 0.9 miles east of the Proposed Project's western crossing of I-10 on the Harquahala Plain (see Figure D.3-3A; see enclosed CD). Viewing to the west toward the existing DPV1 line (Towers A310 through A314) and the proposed route, this location was selected to generally characterize the existing landscape in the vicinity of the two I-10 crossings on the Harquahala Plain.

Visual Quality. Low-to-moderate. The foreground to background views from I-10 encompass a broad, open and predominantly undeveloped landscape consisting of a relatively non-descript, flat, grass-and shrub-covered plain, punctuated by the prominent vertical forms of utility towers with industrial character, and bisected by the prominent linear feature of I-10. Distant mountain ranges with undulating forms and irregular lines appear low on the horizon and add only slightly to the landscape's visual interest.

Viewer Concern. Moderate. Travelers on I-10 are provided panoramic views across a broad, flat plain with few distinctive features to distant mountain ranges. Although some travelers may anticipate the occasional energy infrastructure, any addition of industrial character to the predominantly natural appearing landscape or blockage of views to more valued landscape features (distant mountains) would be seen as an adverse visual change.

Viewer Exposure. High Lacking foreground screening features or background blending opportunities, the proposed route would be highly visible in the foreground of views from KVP 2 as it converges on and then crosses I-10. The number of viewers would be high and the duration of view would be extended given that the gradual convergence on (and divergence from) I-10 would result in several towers remaining within the primary cone of vision (45 degrees either side of the primary direction of view) for a considerable distance on approach to the crossing from either west- or eastbound I-10.

Overall Visual Sensitivity. Moderate. For travelers on I-10 in the vicinity of the crossings, the low-to-moderate visual quality, moderate viewer concern, and high viewer exposure lead to a moderate overall visual sensitivity of the visual setting and viewing characteristics.

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[2] Tower numbers are shown on detailed Devers-Harquahala maps in EIR/EIS Appendix 10 (included in the Draft EIR/EIS. Those maps are not included on the CDs with this Final EIR/EIS due to SCE security restrictions, but paper copies can be provided upon request).

Key Viewpoint 3 – Eagletail Mountains Access (VRM)

Key Viewpoint 3 was established on BLM access road YE047 at the north end of the Eagletail Mountains, approximately four miles south of I-10 (see Figure D.3-4A; see enclosed CD). Viewing to the northwest toward the existing DPV1 line and the proposed route, this location was selected to generally characterize the existing landscape at the north end of the Eagletail Mountains, immediately adjacent to the Eagletail Mountains Wilderness. Views to the north from the access road in this area encompass a predominantly natural setting with the notable exception of the existing DPV1 line. The foreground landform of the Harquahala Plain appears flat and horizontal with an occasional isolated low, rounded hill. In the background to the north and sitting relatively low on the horizon are the horizontal, irregular forms of the distant Harcuvar Mountains and Harquahala Mountains. Landform colors vary from tan to lavender and bluish hues at greater distance, while landform textures are smooth to granular. Vegetation is patchy, consisting of low-growing grasses and shrubs with irregular to distinct forms (where defined by the floor of the plain). Vegetation colors include tans to pale yellow for grasses with muted greens for the shrubs. Vegetation exhibits a matte texture. The view from KVP 3 encompasses existing DPV1 Towers A422 through A303. At a viewing distance of approximately 0.67 miles, the lattice structures are prominent vertical features with a noticeably complex, industrial character. Structural features appear gray in color and smooth in texture. The existing BLM scenic quality classification or viewer sensitivity are not available but the VRM Class Rating is III as identified in the existing Resource Management Plan.

D.3.2.2 Kofa National Wildlife Refuge

This portion of the Proposed Project encompasses the segment of the project within the Kofa National Wildlife Refuge. From the eastern boundary of the Refuge, the Proposed Project would extend west approximately 25 miles through the northern portion of the Refuge along an existing pipeline road and adjacent to the existing DPV1 line. The route through the refuge passes through a rugged, desert canyon landscape of sparse vegetation and jagged ridgelines that confine views to the north or south. Views of the Proposed Project would be available from the pipeline access road entering from the east and Crystal Hill Road entering from the west off of U.S. 95. The existing DPV1 line is a prominent built feature in an otherwise natural-appearing landscape.

One KVP was selected to represent the visual setting along this route segment. The location of KVP 4 is shown on Figure D.3-1B (see enclosed CD). The results of the visual analysis for this segment are summarized in Appendix VR-1 (see enclosed CD). A discussion of the existing visual setting for the selected KVP is presented in the following paragraph.

Key Viewpoint 4 – Crystal Hill Road – Kofa (VS-VC)

Key Viewpoint 4 was established on Crystal Hill Road in the Refuge, approximately 4.8 miles east of U.S. 95 (see Figure D.3-5A; see enclosed CD). Viewing to the southeast toward the existing DPV1 line (Towers A740 through A743) and the proposed route, this location was selected to characterize the existing landscape along the route within Kofa.

Visual Quality. Moderate. The foreground flat, desert landscape is sparsely vegetated but punctuated by the noticeable vertical forms of saguaro cacti and backdropped by the rugged, angular Livingston Hills with a very coarse texture. The existing DPV1 line with its contrasting industrial character compromises the otherwise natural appearing landscape, reducing landscape coherence and overall visual quality to a moderate level.

Viewer Concern. High. Travelers on Crystal Hill Road in Kofa National Wildlife Refuge are typically pursuing backcountry and off-highway recreation opportunities in a predominantly natural desert setting. Any addition of built industrial features to the landscape or blockage of views to higher quality landscape features (sky or Livingston Hills) would be perceived as an adverse visual change in the landscape.

Viewer Exposure. Moderate-to-high. The proposed route would be highly visible in the foreground of views from Crystal Hill Road in general and KVP 4 specifically as the route parallels Crystal Hill Road and the pipeline access road through the Refuge. The number of viewers would be low though the duration of view would be extended given the close proximity of the project to the road and the prevalence of parallel "in-line" views of the route from the road (within the primary cone of vision of travelers on the road for considerable distances).

Overall Visual Sensitivity. Moderate-to-high. For travelers on Crystal Hill Road and the pipeline access road, the moderate visual quality, high viewer concern, and moderate-to-high viewer exposure lead to a moderate-to-high overall visual sensitivity of the visual setting and viewing characteristics.

D.3.2.3 Kofa National Wildlife Refuge to Colorado River

This portion of the Proposed Project extends through public lands administered by the BLM from the western boundary of the Kofa National Wildlife Refuge to the Colorado River. Heading northwest from Kofa, the Proposed Project would cross U.S. 95 and the flat, open La Posa Plain before entering the rugged Dome Rock Mountains through Copper Bottom Pass and La Paz Arroyo. The route would turn to the southwest and exit the north end of the Arroyo, approximately 1.5 miles south of I-10. From there, this segment would continue southwest for a distance of approximately 12.5 miles to the Colorado River, a popular recreational destination.

Views of the Proposed Project would be available from U.S. 95, the access road to Copper Bottom Pass, access roads into the Dome Rock Mountains from Ehrenberg and the Ehrenberg Sandbowl OHV Area, the east levee road along the east side of the Colorado River, and the Colorado River. In contrast to the flat, relatively non-descript open landscape of the La Posa Plain, the Dome Rock Mountains are rugged with views confined by steeply rising slopes. The landscape west of the Dome Rock Mountains again flattens out and is traversed by the meandering, linear form of the Colorado. The most notable built feature in the landscape along this route segment is the existing DPV1 line with its prominent vertical structural forms and lines which, the Proposed Project would parallel.

Three areas of potential visual sensitivity were selected for detailed analysis: (1) the crossing of U.S. 95 as viewed from the highway, (2) views in the vicinity of Copper Bottom Pass, an area popular with back country recreationists, and (3) views from the Colorado River. Therefore, three KVPs were selected to represent the visual setting along this route segment. The location of each of these KVPs is shown on Figure D.3-1B (see enclosed CD). The results of the visual analysis are summarized in Appendix VR-1 (see enclosed CD). A discussion of the existing visual setting for each KVP is presented in the following paragraphs.

Key Viewpoint 5 – U.S. 95 Crossing–Kofa Entrance (VRM)

Key Viewpoint 5 was established on northbound U.S. 95, just south of the Crystal Hill Road entrance to Kofa National Wildlife Refuge (see Figure D.3-6A; see enclosed CD). Viewing to the north toward the existing DPV1 crossing and the proposed route, this location was selected to characterize the existing landscape on the La Posa Plain in the vicinity of the highway crossing. Views to the north from the highway in this area encompass the foreground flat, horizontal, non-descript landform of the La Posa

Plain. Landform colors vary from tan to lavender at distance, while landform textures are smooth to granular. Vegetation is patchy with some clumps, consisting of low-growing grasses and shrubs with irregular and complex lines. Vegetation colors include tans to pale yellow for grasses with muted greens for the shrubs. Vegetation exhibits a matte texture. The view from KVP 5 encompasses numerous, prominent built features including the linear form of U.S. 95, the complex industrial forms of the existing DPV1 lattice Towers A720 and A721, and a roadside H-frame transmission line and wood pole distribution line. Structural features appear light gray to brown in color and smooth in texture. The existing BLM scenic quality classification or viewer sensitivity are not available but the VRM Class Rating is III as identified in the existing Resource Management Plan.

Key Viewpoint 6 – Copper Bottom Pass (VRM)

Key Viewpoint 6 was established on Pipeline Road, just south of Copper Bottom Pass in the Dome Rock Mountains (see Figure D.3-7A; see enclosed CD). Viewing to the east-southeast down the arroyo, this viewpoint was selected to characterize the existing landscape in the vicinity of Copper Bottom Pass where the proposed route would parallel Pipeline Road. The view down the arroyo encompasses the foreground flat horizontal to angular landforms of the arroyo floor and bordering rugged slopes. Landform colors vary from tan to lavender and bluish hues at distance, while landform textures are smooth to granular and coarse. Vegetation is patchy with some clumps to indistinct coverage, consisting of low-growing grasses and shrubs with irregular and complex lines to prominent linear lines defined by the access road cut. Vegetation colors include tans to pale yellow for grasses with muted greens for the shrubs. Vegetation exhibits a matte texture. The view from KVP 6 encompasses the prominent, complex industrial forms of the existing DPV1 lattice towers (Tower 493 is closest). Structural features appear dark gray in color and smooth in texture. The existing BLM scenic quality classification or viewer sensitivity are not available but the VRM Class Rating is III as identified in the existing Resource Management Plan.

Key Viewpoint 7 – Colorado River (VRM)

Key Viewpoint 7 was established on the Colorado River, just north of the span between existing DPV1 Towers 4757 and B801 (see Figure D.3-8A; see enclosed CD). Viewing to the southwest down-river, this viewpoint was selected to represent views from the intensive water-based recreational uses on and bordering the river. The view down-river encompasses the foreground flat horizontal river- and landscape with the angular landforms of distant mountains, low on the horizon. Views from the river tend to be somewhat limited to foreground landscapes due to the bordering vegetation and levees. Landform colors vary from tan to lavender at distance, while landform textures are smooth to granular and coarse. The water appears blue in color and smooth in texture. Vegetation is continuous and distinct as defined by the waterline with horizontal to irregular lines. Vegetation colors are light to dark green with a matte texture. The view from KVP 7 encompasses the prominent, complex industrial forms of the existing DPV1 lattice Towers B801 and B802 on the east side of the river and Towers 4756 and 4757 on the west side of the river. Structural features appear gray in color and ~~provide a pleasing color contrast with the muted earth tones of the surrounding desert landforms~~ smooth in texture. The existing BLM scenic quality classification or viewer sensitivity are not available but the VRM Class Rating is Class II inside the river/riparian corridor and Class III outside of the river corridor as identified in the existing Resource Management Plan. The VRM Class II management objective is as follows:

> ***VRM Class II.*** *To retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be low. Management Activities may be seen but should not attract the attention of the casual observer. Any changes must repeat the basic elements of form, line, color, and texture found in the predominant natural features of the characteristic landscape.*

D.3.2.4 Palo Verde Valley (Colorado River to Midpoint Substation)

This portion of the Proposed Project extends from the Colorado River to the proposed Midpoint Substation site. Entering California and heading due west from the Colorado River for approximately 11 miles, this route segment would pass through the private agricultural fields of Palo Verde Valley, south of Blythe, to the proposed Midpoint Substation site located on Palo Verde Mesa. The flat valley floor consists primarily of developed agricultural fields and scattered rural residences. The agricultural fields, orchards, irrigation canals, and roads impart a linear character to the valley floor landscape. Variations in landforms are limited and vegetation is seasonal, consisting primarily of row crops.

Views of the Proposed Project would be available from SR 78, several local roads and a few rural residences. The most prominent built feature in this agricultural setting, aside from the cultivated agricultural fields is the existing DPV1 line with its prominent vertical structural forms and lines, which the proposed DPV2 project (Proposed Project) would parallel.

The potential visual impact on local roads and the nearest residential community of Ripley were of greatest concern in consideration of key viewpoints along this route segment. As a result, one KVP was selected to represent the visual setting within the Palo Verde Valley. The location of KVP 8 is shown on Figure D.3-1C (see enclosed CD). The results of the visual analysis are summarized in Appendix VR-1 (see enclosed CD). A discussion of the existing visual setting for KVP 8 is presented in the following paragraphs.

Key Viewpoint 8 – State Route 78 Crossing–Ripley (VS-VC)

Key Viewpoint 8 was established on SR 78, just north of the community of Ripley in Palo Verde Valley (see Figure D.3-9A; see enclosed CD). Viewing to the north toward the existing DPV1 line (Towers 4735XX and 4736XX), this location was selected to characterize the existing landscape along the route within the Palo Verde Valley.

Visual Quality. Low-to-moderate. The foreground to middleground flat, horizontal landform of the highly modified valley floor is comprised of irrigated agricultural fields, punctuated by the complex, vertical forms of the existing DPV1 line with its industrial character and roadside wood pole utility lines. The angular to low horizontal form of the distant Big Maria Mountains with the irregular, undulating ridgeline is a landform feature that adds additional visual interest.

Viewer Concern. High. Travelers on SR 78 just north of Ripley, and residents on the north side of Ripley anticipate the rural, agricultural character of the Palo Verde Valley landscape as well as the substantial presence of the existing electric transmission and roadside utility infrastructure. However, any increase in industrial character or blockage of higher value landscape features (sky and Big Maria Mountains) would be seen as an adverse visual change in the landscape.

Viewer Exposure. Moderate-to-high. The proposed route would be highly visible in the foreground of views from SR 78 in general and KVP 8 specifically as the route passes through agricultural fields north of the community of Ripley and spans SR 78. The number of viewers would be moderate and the duration of view would be moderate-to-extended.

Overall Visual Sensitivity. Moderate. For travelers on SR 78 and residents on the north side of the community of Ripley, the low-to-moderate visual quality, moderate-to-high viewer concern, and moderate-to-high viewer exposure lead to a moderate overall visual sensitivity of the visual setting and viewing characteristics.

D.3.2.5 Midpoint Substation to Cactus City Rest Area

This portion of the Proposed Project extends through public lands administered by the BLM and private lands from Palo Verde Mesa to the Cactus City Rest Area at the west end of Shavers Valley. Midpoint Substation would be located at the southeastern end of Palo Verde Mesa adjacent to the DPV1 ROW, just west of the intersection of the DPV1 line and two 161 kV transmission lines. The substation site is on BLM lands characterized by open, flat and sparsely vegetated terrain with short grass and low-growing shrubs of muted colors. While the substation site is fairly remote, there is one residence approximately one mile from the site. However, the residence is located below a bluff with a partially screened view of the site (SCE, 2005a, p. 4-233).

Heading west from Palo Verde Mesa, the Proposed Project would cross the broad, open southern portion of the Chuckwalla Valley, a desert basin characterized by low-growing grasses and shrubs and surrounded by rugged, angular mountains. A portion of the route would parallel Chuckwalla Valley Road before turning to enter and pass through an area of interesting rock formations known as Alligator Rock Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC), just south of Desert Center and I-10. To the north is the broad flat expanse of the central Chuckwalla Valley while to the south is the steeply rising, and rugged Chuckwalla Mountains. From Alligator Rock, the proposed route would continue west through the western extension of Chuckwalla Valley, generally paralleling I-10 but at a variable distance to the south of approximately one-half to one mile.

As the route ascends Chiriaco Summit and descends into Shavers Valley, views become more confined by the Eagle Mountains and Cottonwood Mountains to the north of I-10 and the Orocopia Mountains to the south of I-10. The proposed route would cross to the north side of I-10, approximately two miles east of the Cactus City Rest Area. Throughout this portion of the study area, there is minimal development, with limited commercial and traveler services at Desert Center, Chiriaco Summit, and Cactus City. The existing DPV1 transmission line is a noticeable built feature with industrial character when viewing opportunities are sufficiently close. At greater distances, the lattice design of the structures enable the line to blend fairly effectively with background terrain. However, on open valley floors or where structures pass over ridges and raised alluvial fans, structure skylining can occur (extending above the horizon line) which increases structure visibility and prominence.

Views of the Proposed Project along this route segment would be available from numerous paved roads including I-10, Wiley Well Road, Chuckwalla Valley Road, Box Canyon Road, and Cottonwood Springs Road; unpaved 4WD access roads including Graham Pass Road, Dupont Road, Corn Springs Road, Red Cloud Road, Summit Road, and Red Canyon Trail; commercial and tourist service stops including Desert Center, Chiriaco Summit, and Cactus City Rest Area; and Alligator Rock ACEC.

Several areas of potential visual sensitivity were selected for detailed analysis along this route segment including: (1) the crossing Chuckwalla Valley as viewed from I-10, (2) views from Alligator Rock ACEC, (3) views of the Orocopia Mountains from I-10, and (4) views of the Orocopia Mountains as visitors leave Joshua Tree National Park. The location of each KVP selected to evaluate these views is shown on Figures D.3-1C (KVPs 9 and 10) and D.3-1D (KVPs 11 and 12), both on the enclosed CD. The results of the visual analysis are summarized in Appendix VR-1 (see enclosed CD). A discussion of the existing visual setting for each KVP is presented in the following paragraphs.

Key Viewpoint 9 – Chuckwalla Valley (VRM)

Key Viewpoint 9 was established on eastbound I-10, at the end of the on-ramp from Corn Springs Road in Chuckwalla Valley (see Figure D.3-10A on enclosed CD). Viewing to the east-southeast toward the existing DPV1 line and the proposed route, this location was selected to generally characterize the existing landscape of the vast Chuckwalla Valley. The landform in the central-eastern portion of the Chuckwalla Valley floor is flat and exhibits a prominent horizontal line. More distant, angular mountain ranges (McCoy Mountains to the north and Chuckwalla Mountains to the south) do provided limited backdrops of visual interest. Landform colors are tan to lavender and bluish hues for the more distant mountains. Vegetation is characterized by grass and low-growing shrubs with patchy to continuous distributions. Vegetative lines are irregular to distinct where defined by the line of the valley floor. Vegetation colors range from tan to pale yellow for grasses and muted to dark greens for shrubs. Overall, the natural landscape is relatively non-descript and is notably influenced by the dominant presence of existing utility infrastructure with its industrial character and Interstate 10. The view from KVP 9 encompasses existing DPV1 Towers 4546XX through 4549. Structural features appear light to dark gray in color and smooth in texture. The Interim Scenic Quality classification is Class C and Viewer Sensitivity is high because of its status within the Desert Conservation Area. Combined with the foreground to middleground viewing opportunities, the resulting VRM Class Rating is III (see Appendix VR-3 on enclosed CD).

Key Viewpoint 10 – Alligator Rock ACEC (VRM)

Key Viewpoint 10 was established on an access road within the Alligator Rock ACEC, south of I-10 and Desert Center (see Figure D.3-11A on enclosed CD). Viewing to the east-southeast toward the existing DPV1 line and the proposed route, this location was selected to generally characterize the existing landscape within the Alligator Rock ACEC. The foreground landform of the valley floor is horizontal with the prominent, angular form and jagged line of the steeply rising Chuckwalla Mountains providing a backdrop of added visual interest. Landform colors are tan to lavender and bluish hues for the more distant mountains. Vegetation is characterized by grass and low-growing shrubs with patchy to continuous distributions. Vegetative lines are irregular to indistinct except where better defined by the line of the valley floor. Vegetation colors range from tan to pale yellow for grasses and muted to dark greens for shrubs. Overall, the natural landscape consists of a visually interesting assemblage of flat valley floor punctuated by unusual rock formations and backdropped by rugged desert mountain slopes. The view from KVP 10 also encompasses existing DPV1 Towers 4515X through 4518XX. These built structural features appear geometric and complex (lattice towers) to simple linear (conductors) in form with vertical and diagonal lines for the structures and curvilinear lines for the conductors. Structures appear light to dark gray in color and smooth in texture. The existing DPV1 structures are prominent features in the landscape but pass south of most of the rock formations and blend effectively with the background rocky slopes when viewed from more distant viewpoints. The Interim Scenic Quality classification is Class B and Viewer Sensitivity is high because of its status within the Desert Conservation Area and the ACEC. Combined with the foreground to middleground viewing opportunities, the resulting VRM Class Rating is II (see Appendix VR-3 on enclosed CD).

Key Viewpoint 11 – Interstate 10–Orocopia Mountains (VRM)

Key Viewpoint 11 was established on eastbound I-10, approximately 0.9 miles west of Hayfield Road (see Figure D.3-12A on enclosed CD). Viewing to the southeast toward the existing DPV1 line and the proposed route, this location was selected to characterize the existing landscape to the south of I-10 in the vicinity of the Orocopia Mountains. The foreground landform of the western extension of Chuck-

walla Valley is horizontal, transitioning to gently sloping alluvial fans, backdropped by the rugged, angular forms of the Orocopia Mountains. The irregular and jagged lines of the ridges add visual interest to the landscape. Landform colors are tan to lavender and bluish hues for the more distant mountains. Vegetation includes grass and low-growing shrubs with patchy to irregular distributions. Vegetative lines are irregular to indistinct except where better defined by the line of the valley floor. Vegetation colors range from tan to pale yellow for grasses and muted to dark greens for shrubs. The view from KVP 11 also encompasses existing DPV1 Towers 4423 and 4424X as well as a wood pole utility line and roadside fence line. These built structural features appear geometric and complex to simple linear in form with vertical and diagonal lines for the structures and curvilinear lines for the conductors. Structures appear gray to dark brown in color and smooth in texture. While the visual variety of the landscape is enhanced by the variation in terrain characteristics, the overall scenic quality is compromised by the substantial presence of utility and roadside infrastructure. The resulting Interim Scenic Quality classification is Class C and Viewer Sensitivity is high because of its status within the Desert Conservation Area. Combined with the foreground to middleground viewing opportunities, the resulting VRM Class Rating is III (see Appendix VR-3 on enclosed CD).

Key Viewpoint 12 – Cottonwood Springs Road–Joshua Tree National Park (VRM)

Key Viewpoint 12 was established on southbound Cottonwood Springs Road, just south of the entrance to Joshua Tree National Park (see Figure D.3-13A on enclosed CD). Viewing to the south-southeast across Shavers Valley to the Orocopia Mountains and the existing DPV1 line (and the proposed route), this location was selected to characterize the existing landscape visible to visitors leaving Joshua Tree National Park. The foreground landform of the valley floor is horizontal, transitioning to the rugged, angular forms of the Orocopia Mountains. The irregular and jagged lines of the ridges add visual interest to the landscape. Landform colors are tan to lavender and bluish hues for the more distant mountains. Vegetation on the valley floor includes grass and low-growing shrubs but appears continuous and uniform with some angular clumps at this viewing distance. Vegetative lines are irregular to indistinct except where better defined by the line of the valley floor. Vegetation colors range from tan to pale yellow for grasses and muted to dark greens for shrubs. The view from KVP 12 encompasses existing DPV1 Towers 4349X through 4401. However, at a viewing distance of approximately two miles, the complex lattice structures appear indistinct against the mottled landform background. To the extent that structures are visible, they appear as indistinct vertical features, dark gray in color and smooth in texture. The overall scenic quality of Shavers Valley is somewhat compromised by the utility infrastructure that pass down both sides of the valley and I-10 running down the center of the valley. The resulting Interim Scenic Quality classification is Class C and Viewer Sensitivity is high because of its status within the Desert Conservation Area. Combined with the foreground to middleground viewing opportunities, the resulting VRM Class Rating is III (see Appendix VR-3 on enclosed CD).

D.3.2.6 Cactus City Rest Area to Devers Substation

This portion of the Proposed Project extends from Cactus City Rest Area to Devers Substation at the northern end of the Coachella Valley. Although most of this route segment passes through private lands, there is a scattering of BLM-administered public lands along the route. Heading west from Cactus City Rest Area, the Proposed Project would cross alluvial fans emanating from the Little San Bernardino Mountains to the north and begin its descent into the Coachella Valley, a desert basin rapidly transforming into a suburban environment with large-scale residential subdivisions, golf courses and commercial development. The northern end of the valley is also notable for the large wind farm

developments in the vicinity and to the east of San Gorgonio Pass. Serving the wind energy developments are numerous electric transmission lines that interconnect at Devers Substation. The Proposed Project would parallel the existing DPV1 line, as it passes to the immediate north of several new residential developments and crosses the Coachella Valley Preserve in the Indio Hills. While the valley is bordered on the north by the Little San Bernardino Mountains and Indio Hills, and the Santa Rosa Mountains to the south, the dominant landscape feature in the region is Mount San Jacinto, rising abruptly from the desert valley floor to an elevation of 10,834 feet.

Views of the Proposed Project along this route segment would be available from numerous roads including I-10, Dillon Road, Thousand Palms Canyon Road, Varner Road and other local roads. The Proposed Project would also be visible from numerous residential developments north of I-10 as well as the Coachella Valley Preserve.

Two areas of potential visual sensitivity were selected for detailed analysis along this route segment and included: (1) views from residential developments north of I-10 (KVP 13) and (2) views from the Coachella Valley Preserve (KVP 14). The locations of these two KVPs are shown on Figure D.3-1D (see enclosed CD). The results of the visual analysis are summarized in Appendix VR-1 (see enclosed CD). A discussion of the existing visual setting for each KVP is presented in the following paragraphs.

Key Viewpoint 13 – Terra Lago in Indio (VS-VC)

Key Viewpoint 13 was established within the Terra Lago residential and golf development (see Figure D.3-14A on enclosed CD). Viewing to the north toward the existing DPV1 line (Towers 4236X through 4238X), this location was selected as representative of the existing residential views of the landscape along the proposed route north of I-10.

Visual Quality. Moderate. The foreground landscape consists of a highly maintained golf course with vibrant green color that provides a sharp contrast to the muted earth tones of the background hills and mountains. The vertical forms of the existing DPV1 line with its complex structural forms and industrial character are visible through they are able to blend somewhat with the background landform of the Indio Hills, thereby reducing structural prominence.

Viewer Concern. High. Residents of, and visitors to, the Terra Lago development anticipate a highly landscaped environment that exhibits natural and designed vegetative characteristics. The introduction of any additional, industrial character or view blockage of higher value landscape features including the background hills and mountains would be perceived as an adverse visual change.

Viewer Exposure. High. The proposed route would be highly visible in the foreground of views from the Terra Lago development in general and KVP 13 specifically as the route passes adjacent and immediately to the north of the development. The number of viewers would be moderate but the duration of view would be extended for both residents and golfers.

Overall Visual Sensitivity. Moderate-to-high. For residents and golfers at Terra Lago, the moderate visual quality, high viewer concern, and high viewer exposure lead to a moderate-to-high overall visual sensitivity of the visual setting and viewing characteristics.

Key Viewpoint 14 – Coachella Valley Preserve (VRM)

Key Viewpoint 14 was established on an access trail in the Coachella Valley Preserve, just west of the trailhead on Thousand Palms Canyon Road (see Figure D.3-15A on enclosed CD). Viewing to the south

toward the existing DPV1 line and the proposed route, this location was selected to characterize the view from the Coachella Valley Preserve. The foreground to middleground landform of the Coachella Valley floor appears flat and horizontal. In the background to the south is the horizontal form of the Santa Rosa Mountains with an irregular and undulating ridgeline. Landform colors vary from tan to lavender and bluish hues for the more distant mountains, while landform textures are smooth to granular and coarse. Vegetation appears continuous to irregular with some clumping and consists of low-growing grasses and shrubs with irregular to distinct lines except where defined by the horizontal boundary of the valley floor. Vegetation colors include tans for grasses with gray and light to dark greens for the shrubs. Vegetation exhibits a matte texture. The view from KVP 14 encompasses existing DPV1 Towers 4202 and 4203 as well as the lattice structures for two additional adjacent transmission lines. At a viewing distance of approximately 0.39 miles, the lattice structures are prominent vertical features with a noticeably complex, industrial character, particularly when slightly backlit by the morning light. Structural features appear light to dark gray in color and smooth in texture. The existing BLM scenic quality classification or viewer sensitivity are not available but the VRM Class Rating is II as identified in the existing Resource Management Plan.

D.3.3 Environmental Setting for the Proposed Project – West of Devers

The portion of the Proposed Project west of Devers Substation transitions from a desert basin environment bordered by rough, rocky mountain ranges with jagged ridgelines, to semi-arid rolling terrain at the base of the east-west trending San Jacinto and San Bernardino Mountains, into the more urbanized and rapidly developing western sections of Riverside and San Bernardino Counties dominated by mixed use developments of residential, commercial, and industrial uses. Natural vegetation throughout this portion of the study area consists primarily of desert scrub (creosote), coastal scrub (sumac and buckwheat), mixed chaparral (scrub oak), grasses and suburban agriculture (SCE, 2005a, p. 4-186). Project viewing opportunities within the western portion of the study are numerous and include roads (Interstate 10, State Scenic Highway 62, Whitewater Canyon Road, San Timoteo Canyon Road, and local roads within existing suburbs); recreational facilities and parks; and rural residences and suburban residential developments. The following sections provide descriptions of each of the sub-segments within the western study area. Within each sub-segment, one or more Key Viewpoints (KVPs) have been established from which detailed setting characterizations have been developed to represent the typical visual resources and views along that sub-segment. The location of each KVP is shown on Figures D.3-1E and D.3-1F (see enclosed CD).

D.3.3.1 Devers Substation to East Border of Banning

This portion of the Proposed Project extends from Devers Substation to the east border of the City of Banning. With the notable exception of the Morongo Reservation, most of this route segment passes through private lands. Heading west from Devers Substation, the Proposed Project would pass through existing wind farm developments before crossing State Scenic Highway 62 and passing south of the Painted Hills rural residential area through more wind farm developments. Continuing west, the route would span Whitewater Canyon south of the community of Bonnie Bell before passing through the West Palm Springs Village rural residential area. Approximately one mile further west, the route would pass out of the California Desert Conservation Area and into lands alternating between private holdings and those of the Morongo Reservation in San Gorgonio Pass until reaching the eastern border of the City of Banning near the western end of the Pass. Throughout the length of this route segment, the arid landscape is dominated by the imposing Mount San Jacinto located immediately to the south of San Gorgonio Pass. The Proposed Project would parallel the existing DPV1 line and two other transmission lines.

Views of the Proposed Project along this route segment would be available from roads including I-10, SR 62, Dillon Road, Painted Hills Road, Whitewater Canyon Road, and other local roads. The Proposed Project would also be visible from several residential developments north of I-10 including Painted Hills and West Palm Springs Village. The Proposed Project would also be visible from the Morongo Community Center and the Outlet Mall at Cabazon.

Five areas of potential visual sensitivity were selected for detailed analysis along this route segment and included: (1) State Scenic Highway 62 (KVP 15), (2) the Painted Hills residential area west of SR 62 (KVP 16), (3) Whitewater Canyon Road south of Bonnie Bell (KVP 17), (4) views from West Palm Springs Village residential area (KVP 18), and (5) the Morongo Community Center (KVP 19). The locations of these five KVPs are shown on Figure D.3-1E (see enclosed CD). The results of the visual analysis are summarized in Appendix VR-1 (see enclosed CD). A discussion of the existing visual setting for each KVP is presented in the following paragraphs.

Key Viewpoint 15 – State Route 62 Scenic Highway (VS-VC)

Key Viewpoint 15 was established on southbound SR 62, just north of the crossing of SR 62 (see Figure D.3-16A on enclosed CD). Viewing to the south-southeast toward proposed tower location 207, this location was selected to represent the existing view from the State Scenic Highway.

Visual Quality. Low-to-moderate. The foreground to middleground desert landform is dominated by a profusion of energy infrastructure consisting of the predominantly vertical forms of wind turbines and electric transmission line towers. This highly industrial-appearing landscape is backdropped by Mount San Jacinto rising dramatically from the desert floor. The vertical forms of the existing DPV1 line and two adjacent transmission lines are able to blend somewhat with the surrounding wind generation facilities, thereby reducing structural prominence of the transmission lines.

Viewer Concern. High. Travelers on a State Scenic Highway typically have expectations for views of notable scenic quality. Although the foreground views from this portion of the Scenic Highway are somewhat overwhelmed by the profusion of wind turbines, Mount San Jacinto is still the dominant landscape feature and commands viewers' attention by its sheer scale. Although local travelers on SR 62 would anticipate the prominent energy infrastructure, the introduction of any additional, noticeable industrial character or view blockage of the background mountains would be perceived as an adverse visual change.

Viewer Exposure. High. The proposed route would be highly visible in the foreground of views from SR 62 in general and KVP 15 specifically as the route approaches and then spans the highway. The number of viewers would be high and the duration of view would be moderate-to-extended.

Overall Visual Sensitivity. Moderate-to-high. For travelers on SR 62, the low-to-moderate visual quality, high viewer concern, and high viewer exposure lead to a moderate-to-high overall visual sensitivity of the visual setting and viewing characteristics.

Key Viewpoint 16 – Painted Hills Road Neighborhood (VS-VC)

Key Viewpoint 16 was established on eastbound Painted Hills Road, just east of the intersection with Country View Road (see Figure D.3-17A on enclosed CD). Viewing to the south-southeast toward proposed tower location 209, this location was selected to represent the existing views from the Painted Hills rural residential area.

Visual Quality. Low-to-moderate. The foreground to middleground desert landform is dominated by a profusion of energy infrastructure consisting of the predominantly vertical forms of wind turbines and electric transmission line towers. This highly industrial-appearing landscape is backdropped by Mount San Jacinto rising dramatically from the desert floor. The vertical forms of the existing DPV1 line and two adjacent transmission lines are able to blend somewhat with the surrounding wind generation facilities, thereby reducing structural prominence of the transmission lines.

Viewer Concern. High. Residential viewers in the Painted Hills Road neighborhood would consider any increase in industrial character, structure prominence, or view blockage of higher value landscape features (such as background sky, ridges, and Mount San Jacinto) an adverse visual change.

Viewer Exposure. Moderate-to-high. The proposed route would be highly visible in the foreground of views from numerous residences in the Painted Hills Road residential area. Although the number of viewers would be low, the duration of view would be extended.

Overall Visual Sensitivity. Moderate-to-high. For residents in the Painted Hills Road neighborhood, the low-to-moderate visual quality, high viewer concern, and moderate-to-high viewer exposure lead to a moderate-to-high overall visual sensitivity of the visual setting and viewing characteristics.

Key Viewpoint 17 – Whitewater Canyon Road (VS-VC)

Key Viewpoint 17 was established on southbound Whitewater Canyon Road, just south of the rural residential community of Bonnie Bell (see Figure D.3-18A on enclosed CD). Viewing to the southeast toward proposed tower location 215, this viewpoint was selected to represent the existing view that travelers and Bonnie Bell residents would experience when traveling south on Whitewater Canyon Road.

Visual Quality. Moderate. Although the photograph presented in Figure D.3-18A (see enclosed CD) only captures a small portion of Mount San Jacinto because the view direction is oriented more toward the east canyon wall, the mountain, rising abruptly from the desert floor, dominates all other features of the desert river canyon landscape and is situated within the primary cone of vision of southbound travelers on Whitewater Canyon Road. Other notable landscape features are the numerous vertical forms of wind turbines located on the canyon rim and further out into the valley. Less prominent are the complex industrial forms of lattice transmission line structures on the rim of the canyon and the curvilinear form of the less distinct conductors spanning the canyon. The contrast of Mount San Jacinto's vertical scale with the surrounding flat desert landscape, which is framed by desert canyon walls creates a mosaic of natural features that partially overshadows the adverse visual characteristics of the existing energy infrastructure, and contributes substantially to an overall moderate rating for visual quality.

Viewer Concern. High. Travelers on Whitewater Canyon Road (including residents from Bonnie Bell) would consider any increase in industrial character, structure prominence, or view blockage of higher value landscape features (such as background sky, ridges, and Mount San Jacinto) an adverse visual change.

Viewer Exposure. Moderate-to-high. The placement of the Proposed Project's structures on the rim of the canyon and conductor span of Whitewater Canyon would be highly visible in the foreground of views from Whitewater Canyon Road. Although the number of viewers would be low-to-moderate, the duration of view would be extended for southbound viewers.

Overall Visual Sensitivity. Moderate-to-high. For travelers on Whitewater Canyon Road, the moderate visual quality, high viewer concern, and moderate-to-high viewer exposure lead to a moderate-to-high overall visual sensitivity of the visual setting and viewing characteristics.

Key Viewpoint 18 – Haugen-Lehmann Way–West Palm Springs Village Residential Area (VS-VC)

Key Viewpoint 18 was established on Haugen-Lehmann Way, just south of the intersection with Amethyst Drive, in the West Palm Springs Village residential community (see Figure D.3-19A on enclosed CD). Viewing to the west toward proposed tower location 226, this location was selected to represent the existing views from the West Palm Springs Village residential area.

Visual Quality. Low-to-moderate. The foreground rural residential desert landscape is dominated by the vertical forms of utility poles and lattice transmission line towers because of the relatively close proximity of residential viewers to the utility infrastructure. Views to the north from south of the proposed route (as illustrated with this viewpoint) are backdropped by a low range of rolling hills and angular ridges with muted earth tone colors. Conversely, residents north of the proposed route viewing south would have Mount San Jacinto as a backdrop for the numerous utility lines.

Viewer Concern. High. Residential viewers in the West Palm Springs Village neighborhood would consider any increase in industrial character, structure prominence, or view blockage of higher value landscape features (such as background sky, ridges, and Mount San Jacinto) an adverse visual change.

Viewer Exposure. Moderate-to-high. The proposed route would be highly visible in the foreground of views from residences and travelers on the local roads. Although the number of viewers would be low, the duration of views would be extended.

Overall Visual Sensitivity. Moderate-to-high. For residents in the West Palm Springs Village neighborhood, the low-to-moderate visual quality, high viewer concern, and moderate-to-high viewer exposure lead to a moderate-to-high overall visual sensitivity of the visual setting and viewing characteristics.

Key Viewpoint 19 – Morongo Community Center (VS-VC)

Key Viewpoint 19 was established at the Morongo Community Center at 13000 Fields Road, just north of I-10 (see Figure D.3-20A on enclosed CD). Viewing to the southwest toward proposed tower location 256, this location was selected to represent the existing views from the Morongo Community Center. This view can also be considered somewhat representative of the views of travelers on southbound Fields Road as they leave the Reservation.

Visual Quality. Low-to-moderate. Foreground views to the southwest from the Community Center are dominated by the flat arid landscape of San Gorgonio Pass and the prominent presence of energy transmission infrastructure (structures and conductors), paved parking surfaces and I-10 immediately to the south. Views to the north and south are backdropped (and confined) by the steeply rising ridges and mountains that define the pass between the arid desert to the east and the urban basin to the west.

Viewer Concern. High. Visitors to the Community Center would consider any visible increase in industrial character, structure prominence, or view blockage of higher value landscape features (such as background sky, ridges, and Mount San Jacinto) an adverse visual change.

Viewer Exposure. High. Proposed Project structures would be highly visible in the center of foreground of views from the Community Center (and Fields Road). Although the number of viewers would be low, the duration of view would be extended.

Overall Visual Sensitivity. Moderate-to-high. For visitors to the Community Center, the low-to-moderate visual quality, high viewer concern, and high viewer exposure lead to a moderate-to-high overall visual sensitivity of the visual setting and viewing characteristics.

D.3.3.2 Banning and Beaumont

This portion of the Proposed Project extends through the Cities of Banning and Beaumont. Continuing west along the foothills of the San Bernardino Mountains in the established transmission line corridor with three existing transmission lines, the route would pass adjacent to numerous existing and new residential developments. The landscape along the majority of this route segment is decidedly suburban with well-defined residential developments, interspersed with occasional park and recreation facilities and backdropped to the north by the San Bernardino Mountains.

Views of the Proposed Project along this route segment would be available from local roads paralleling and crossing under the corridor, residential areas adjacent to the corridor, and park facilities either crossed by or adjacent to the existing transmission lines.

Four areas of potential visual sensitivity were selected for detailed analysis along this route segment and included (1) views from residential areas in the north portion of Banning (KVP 20), (2) views from residential areas in Beaumont (KVPs 21 and 22), and (3) views from existing park and recreational facilities (KVP 24). The locations of these four KVPs are shown on Figures D.3-1E (KVP 20) and D.3-1F (KVP 21 through KVP 23) on the enclosed CD. The results of the visual analysis are summarized in Appendix VR-1 (see enclosed CD). A discussion of the existing visual setting for each KVP is presented in the following paragraphs.

Key Viewpoint 20 – Murray Street in the City of Banning (VS-VC)

Key Viewpoint 20 was established on Murray Street, just north of Summit Drive and one block east of North San Gorgonio Avenue (see Figure D.3-21A on enclosed CD). Viewing to the northeast toward proposed tower locations 102 and 103, this location was selected to represent the existing views from potentially affected residential areas in Banning.

Visual Quality. Low-to-moderate. The foreground semi-arid landscape is dominated by the foothills of the San Bernardino Mountains. Landscape colors of subdued tans and greens are characteristic of the short grass and shrub vegetation common to the area. Scattered rural residences are visible in the distance at the base of the rolling to angular foothills and mountains. The existing lattice and wood-pole transmission line structures are prominently visible on nearby ridge tops where structure skylining (extending above the skyline) increases structure prominence and visual contrast with the horizontal forms of the more natural appearing background landscape. However, the neutral gray and tan colors of the structures along with the semi-transparent design of the lattice towers enables at least portions of the facilities to blend with background hills and mountains, thereby reducing structure prominence somewhat.

Viewer Concern. High. Residential viewers in the adjacent residential area would consider any increase in industrial character, structure prominence, or view blockage of higher value landscape features (such as background sky, hills, ridges and mountains) an adverse visual change.

Viewer Exposure. Moderate-to-high. The proposed route would be highly visible in the foreground of views from residences and travelers on the local roads. Although the number of viewers would be low, the duration of views would be extended.

Overall Visual Sensitivity. Moderate-to-high. For residents in the adjacent neighborhood, the low-to-moderate visual quality, high viewer concern, and moderate-to-high viewer exposure lead to a moderate-to-high overall visual sensitivity of the visual setting and viewing characteristics.

Key Viewpoint 21 – Cedar Hollow Road in the City of Beaumont (VS-VC)

Key Viewpoint 21 was established on Cedar Hollow Road off of Cherry Avenue and immediately south of Beaumont High School in the City of Beaumont (see Figure D.3-22A on enclosed CD). Viewing to the west-southwest toward proposed tower locations 127 and 128, this location was selected to represent the existing views from residences facing the proposed route in Beaumont.

Visual Quality. Low-to-moderate. The foreground newer suburban residential landscape of one and two-story single-family homes is generally lacking distinctive landscape features or elements of visual interest and is visually dominated by the adjacent energy transmission infrastructure (towers and conductors) that is substantially skylined throughout the corridor.

Viewer Concern. High. Residential viewers in the adjacent residential area would consider any increase in industrial character, structure prominence, or view blockage of higher value landscape features (such as background sky) an adverse visual change.

Viewer Exposure. Moderate-to-high. The proposed route would be highly visible in the foreground of views from residences facing onto the corridor. Although the number of viewers would be low, the duration of view would be extended.

Overall Visual Sensitivity. Moderate-to-high. For residents in the adjacent neighborhood, the low-to-moderate visual quality, high viewer concern, and moderate-to-high viewer exposure lead to a moderate-to-high overall visual sensitivity of the visual setting and viewing characteristics.

Key Viewpoint 22 – Stargazer Street and Rose Avenue in the City of Beaumont (VS-VC)

Key Viewpoint 22 was established at the intersection of Stargazer Street and Rose Avenue in The Estates residential subdivision in the City of Beaumont (see Figure D.3-23A on enclosed CD). Viewing to the east-southeast toward proposed tower locations 129 and 130, this location was selected to represent the existing views from residential neighborhoods that back onto the proposed route in Beaumont.

Visual Quality. Moderate. The foreground suburban residential landscape of one-story, single-family homes is generally lacking distinctive landscape features or elements of visual interest. However, unlike KVP 21, The Estates' residences back onto the corridor and other homes help block portions of the existing transmission structures. Equally visually beneficial is the blockage of views down the corridor, thereby reducing the number of visible utility structures from any given viewpoint. Therefore, although the adjacent energy transmission infrastructure (towers and conductors) are still prominent features in the landscape, they are somewhat less dominant than the structures visible from KVP 21.

Viewer Concern. High. Residential viewers in the adjacent residential area would consider any increase in industrial character, structure prominence, or view blockage of higher value landscape features (such as background sky) an adverse visual change.

Viewer Exposure. Moderate-to-high. The proposed route would be highly visible in the foreground of views from residences and local streets adjacent to the corridor. Although the number of viewers would be low, the duration of view would be extended.

Overall Visual Sensitivity. Moderate-to-high. For residents in the adjacent neighborhood, the moderate visual quality, high viewer concern, and moderate-to-high viewer exposure lead to a moderate-to-high overall visual sensitivity of the visual setting and viewing characteristics.

Key Viewpoint 23 – Oak Valley Golf Course in the City of Beaumont (VS-VC)

Key Viewpoint 23 was established on the Oak Valley Golf Course in the City of Beaumont (see Figure D.3-24A on enclosed CD). Viewing to the east toward proposed tower locations 130 and 131, this location was selected to represent the existing views from recreational facilities adjacent to the Proposed Project.

Visual Quality. Moderate. Much of the landscape visible from this location consists of foreground highly manicured lawns bordered by trees designed to provide aesthetic appeal and screening of the adjacent utility corridor. While the sculpted landscape exhibits some degree of intactness and coherence of vegetative form and character, the adjacent residential development and utility infrastructure are prominent features in the landscape. It is these built features (and particularly the existing transmission line corridor) that diminish the scenic integrity of the existing landscape and reduce what would otherwise be a moderate-to-high level of visual quality.

Viewer Concern. High. Visitors to the golf course expect to see a landscape with high aesthetic appeal and characterized by a mosaic of natural vegetative forms. Although the existing transmission line facilities are also part of a repeat visitor's expectations, any additional intrusion of built structures with industrial character or blockage of views from any of the golf course grounds would be perceived as an adverse visual change.

Viewer Exposure. Moderate-to-high. The proposed towers would be highly visible in the foreground of views from KVP 23 and the golf course fairways as the corridor passes. Although the number of viewers would be low, the duration of view would be extended.

Overall Visual Sensitivity. Moderate-to-high. For visitors to Oak Valley Golf Course in general and KVP 23 specifically, the moderate visual quality, high viewer concern, and moderate-to-high viewer exposure lead to a moderate-to-high overall visual sensitivity of the visual setting and viewing characteristics.

D.3.3.3 Calimesa and San Timoteo Canyon

This project segment crosses the southern portion of the City of Calimesa and Interstate 10 (which is eligible for State Scenic Highway status along this segment) before passing though San Timoteo Canyon to San Bernardino Junction. The landscape along this route segment is predominantly rural residential, particularly in the San Timoteo Canyon area. Though new residential developments are beginning in the southern end of the canyon, open views of canyon slopes and rolling foothills are still available to residents and travelers on San Timoteo Canyon Road. For the most part, the Proposed Project would parallel existing transmission lines across the rolling foothills of the San Jacinto Mountains bordering the south side of the canyon.

Views of the Proposed Project along this route segment would be available from I-10 at the freeway span, San Timoteo Canyon Road, local roads paralleling and crossing under the corridor, and rural residences.

The rural residences within San Timoteo Canyon (KVP 24) were selected for detailed analysis along this route segment. The location of KVP 24 is shown on Figure D.3-1F (see enclosed CD). The results of the visual analysis are summarized in Appendix VR-1 (see enclosed CD). A discussion of the existing visual setting for KVP 24 is presented in the following paragraphs.

Key Viewpoint 24 – Pilgrim Road in San Timoteo Canyon (VS-VC)

Key Viewpoint 24 was established on Pilgrim Road, off of San Timoteo Canyon Road in San Timoteo Canyon (see Figure D.3-25A on enclosed CD). Viewing to the west-southwest toward proposed tower locations 183 and 184, this location was selected to represent the existing views from rural residences in San Timoteo Canyon.

Visual Quality. Moderate. Much of the landscape visible from this location consists of a foreground rural residential landscape of rolling grass-covered hills with limited visual variety. Although the landscape exhibits a predominantly rural character, the existing energy infrastructure corridor with its complex vertical forms and industrial character substantially influence overall visual quality. Although the lattice structures blend effectively with background landforms and vegetation, they become more conspicuous and prominent where structure skylining occurs, resulting in a reduction of scenic integrity.

Viewer Concern. High. Nearby residents expect to see a rural landscape with a predominantly natural character. Although the existing transmission line facilities are also part of a resident's expectations, any additional intrusion of built structures with industrial character or blockage of views of higher quality landscape features (sky, hills, or ridgelines) would be considered an adverse visual change.

Viewer Exposure. Moderate-to-high. The proposed towers would be highly visible in the foreground of views from KVP 24 and nearby residences. Although the number of viewers would be low, the duration of view would be extended.

Overall Visual Sensitivity. Moderate-to-high. For rural residents in San Timoteo Canyon (and travelers on San Timoteo Canyon Road) in general and KVP 24 specifically, the moderate visual quality, high viewer concern, and moderate-to-high viewer exposure lead to a moderate-to-high overall visual sensitivity of the visual setting and viewing characteristics.

D.3.3.4 San Bernardino Junction to Vista Substation

This portion of the Proposed Project extends from San Bernardino Junction west through the Cities of Loma Linda, Colton and Grand Terrace before terminating at Vista Substation. The transmission line corridor along this segment contains several lattice structure transmission lines. The landscape along this route segment transitions from the undeveloped, rolling, grass-covered hills of southern Loma Linda to that of a typical suburban landscape with a mix of new and older residential neighborhoods in Colton and Grand Terrace. From the residential neighborhood in Grand Terrace, the route spans Interstate 215 to Vista Substation, which is a visually complex facility, serving numerous transmission lines and exhibiting substantial industrial character.

Views of the Proposed Project along this route segment would be available from local roads paralleling and crossing under the corridor and residential neighborhoods adjacent to the transmission line corridor.

The residential neighborhoods adjacent to the project route (KVP 25) were selected for detailed analysis along this route segment. The location of KVP 25 is shown on Figure D.3-1F (see enclosed CD). The results of the visual analysis are summarized in Appendix VR-1 (see enclosed CD). A discussion of the existing visual setting for KVP 25 is presented in the following paragraphs.

Key Viewpoint 25 – Canyon Vista Drive and Chase Canyon Lane in the City of Colton (VS-VC)

Key Viewpoint 25 was established at the intersection of Canyon Vista Drive and Chase Canyon Lane in the City of Colton (see Figure D.3-26A on enclosed CD). Viewing to the west toward existing Towers M42-T2 and M42-T3, this location was selected to represent the existing views from residential neighborhoods adjacent to the Proposed Project in the Cities of Colton and Grand Terrace.

Visual Quality. Moderate. The foreground suburban residential landscape consists of newer, two-story, single-family homes. The contrast of green vegetation against red-tiled roofs adds visual interest to the landscape. Views to the south and west within the neighborhood are backdropped by rolling grass-covered hills that support several existing electric transmission lines with contrasting complex vertical forms and industrial character. The skylined nature of the structures increases structural prominence.

Viewer Concern. High. Although energy transmission infrastructure features prominently in the foreground views from the adjacent residential area, residential viewers would consider any increase in industrial character, structure prominence, or view blockage of higher value landscape features (such as background sky or hills) an adverse visual change.

Viewer Exposure. Moderate-to-high. The proposed route would be highly visible in the foreground of views from residences and local streets adjacent to the corridor. Although the number of viewers would be low, the duration of view would be extended.

Overall Visual Sensitivity. Moderate-to-high. For residents in the adjacent neighborhood, the moderate visual quality, high viewer concern, and moderate-to-high viewer exposure lead to a moderate-to-high overall visual sensitivity of the visual setting and viewing characteristics.

D.3.3.5 San Bernardino Junction to San Bernardino Substation

This portion of the Proposed Project extends from San Bernardino Junction north through the Cities of Loma Linda and Redlands before terminating at San Bernardino Substation. The transmission line corridor along this segment contains two lattice structure transmission lines. The landscape along this route is suburban in character with numerous residential developments, parks and commercial developments in close proximity to the corridor.

Views of the Proposed Project along this route segment would be available from local roads paralleling and crossing under the corridor, residential neighborhoods adjacent to the transmission line corridor, parks within the corridor right-of-way, and I-10 where the transmission lines span the freeway.

Although the parks within the right-of-way (KVP 26) were selected for detailed analysis along this route segment, the visual setting described for KVP 26 would also be somewhat representative of views of the project route from adjacent residences. The location of KVP 26 is shown on Figure D.3-1F (see enclosed CD). The results of the visual analysis are summarized in Appendix VR-1 (see enclosed CD). A discussion of the existing visual setting for KVP 26 is presented in the following paragraphs.

Key Viewpoint 26 – Right-of-Way Park off Beaumont Avenue in Loma Linda (VS-VC)

Key Viewpoint 26 was established at the southern end of the right-of-way park near Beaumont Avenue in the City of Loma Linda (see Figure D.3-27A on enclosed CD). Viewing to the north toward existing Towers M2-T4, this location was selected to represent the existing views available to park users. However, it also useful in illustrating the close proximity of adjacent residential developments from where the transmission structures would also be prominently visible.

Visual Quality. Low-to-moderate. The foreground suburban right-of-way park landscape is dominated by the overhead electric transmission line infrastructure (towers and conductors). Also, visible is a limited amount of park landscaping and play structures. The corridor is bordered by trees along the perimeter of adjacent residential developments. In the background, though mostly obscured by haze, are the San Gabriel Mountains. The skylined nature of the structures increases structural prominence.

Viewer Concern. High. Although energy transmission infrastructure features prominently in the foreground views from the adjacent residential area, residential viewers would consider any increase in industrial character, structure prominence, or view blockage of higher value landscape features (such as background sky or mountains) an adverse visual change.

Viewer Exposure. High. This portion of the route would be highly visible in the foreground of views of park visitors and adjacent residences and local streets adjacent to the corridor. The number of viewers would be moderate and the duration of view would be extended.

Overall Visual Sensitivity. Moderate-to-high. For park users and residents in the adjacent neighborhood, the low-to-moderate visual quality, high viewer concern, and high viewer exposure lead to a moderate-to-high overall visual sensitivity of the visual setting and viewing characteristics.

D.3.4 Applicable Regulations, Plans, and Standards

Table D.3-6 identifies the various plans and policies that pertain to Visual Resources. For each relevant policy or directive identified in the table, the Proposed Project's consistency is identified and discussed.

Table D.3-6. Consistency with Applicable Land Use Plans and Policies

Agency Regulating Visual Resources	Regulation or Policy	Project Consistent?	Method of Consistency
U.S. Bureau of Land Management Phoenix District	Phoenix South Resource Management Plan		
	VRM Classifications are specified (Classes II through IV in the project study area) in the Resource Management Plan. The VRM Class II Management Objective requires that a project or action retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the landscape should be low. Activities may be seen but should not attract attention of the casual observer. Changes must repeat the basic elements of form, line, color, and texture found in the predominant natural features of the characteristic landscape. The VRM Class III Management Objective requires that a project or action partially retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the landscape should be moderate. Activities may attract attention but should not dominate the view of the casual observer. Changes should repeat the basic elements found in the predominant natural features of the characteristic landscape. The VRM Class IV Management Objective allows a project or action to make high levels of change to the characteristic landscape. Activities may dominate the view and be the major focus of viewer attention. However, every attempt should be made to minimize the impact of these activities through careful location, minimal disturbance, and repeating the basic elements.	Yes	The Proposed Project would cross BLM Phoenix District lands with VRM Class III designations south of the Big Horn Mountains. The very low level of change that would be caused by the project would meet the VRM Class III objective of a moderate (or lower) degree of visual change. While the new line would not repeat the basic elements of the existing natural features in the landscape, it would repeat the characteristics of the existing line. Although the project would be visible, it would not dominate the view of the casual observer. See Figures D.3-2A (existing view) and D.3-2B (simulation) for views of Big Horn Peak (both on CD).

Table D.3-6. Consistency with Applicable Land Use Plans and Policies

Agency Regulating Visual Resources	Regulation or Policy	Project Consistent?	Method of Consistency
U.S. Bureau of Land Management Yuma District	Lower Gila South Resource Management Plan		
	VRM Classifications are specified (Classes II and III in the project area) in the Resource Management Plan *(see above for description of Class II and Class III management objectives)*.	Yes	The Proposed Project would span the Colorado River, which is assigned a VRM Class II from riparian border to riparian border. The visual change associated with the conductor span only would be low and would meet the VRM Class II objective of a low degree of visual change. The Proposed Project would also cross BLM Yuma District lands with VRM Class III designations in the following areas: (a) north of the Eagletail Mountains, (b) across the Ranegras and La Posa Plains, and (c) through Copper Bottom Pass in the Dome Rock Mountains to the Colorado River. The low-to-moderate levels of change that would be caused by the project in these areas would meet the VRM Class III objective of a moderate (or lower) degree of visual change. While the new line would not repeat the basic elements of the existing natural features in the landscape, it would repeat the characteristics of the existing line. Although the project would be visible, it would not dominate the view of the casual observer. See Figures D.3-7A and D.3-7B for views of La Posa Plain, and Figures D.3-8A (existing view) and D.3-8B (simulation) for views of the Colorado River crossing (all on CD).
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Kofa National Wildlife Refuge	Kofa National Wildlife Refuge & Wilderness and New Water Mountains Wilderness Interagency Management Plan and EA, 1996. Page 29, Management Strategy, Objective 1: Preservation of Wilderness Values.		
	Objective 1: Preservation of Wilderness Values	No	The Proposed Project would result in the placement of new structures within the Refuge, which would adversely affect views from Crystal Hill Road and Pipeline Road. The new structures would cause a noticeable increase in structure prominence and industrial character and would result in a moderate-to-high degree of additional view blockage of the background Livingston Hills. The construction of new or use of existing access and spur roads may also result in increased land scarring. Therefore, the project would not be consistent with the objective of maintaining or enhancing the wilderness values of naturalness by minimizing visual impacts of development. See Figures D.3-5A (existing view) and D.3-5B (simulation) for views of the Kofa NWR (both on enclosed CD).
U.S. Bureau of Land Management California Desert District	California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA) Plan-1980 as amended.		
	Interim VRM Class II Designations. In the absence of established Visual Resource Management (VRM) Classes in the CDC Plan, Interim VRM Classes have been developed for those BLM lands within the Alligator Rock ACEC *(see above for description of Class II management objectives)*.	No	The Proposed Project would cross BLM lands in the Alligator Rock ACEC with an interim VRM Class II designation. The moderate levels of visual change that would be caused by the project in these areas would not meet the VRM Class II objective of a low degree of visual change. The new line would not retain the existing character of the landscape nor would it repeat the basic elements (form, line, color, and texture) of the existing natural features in the landscape. See Figures D.3-11A (existing view) and D.3-11B (simulation) for views of the Alligator Rock ACEC (on enclosed CD).

Table D.3-6. Consistency with Applicable Land Use Plans and Policies

Agency Regulating Visual Resources	Regulation or Policy	Project Consistent?	Method of Consistency
	Interim VRM Class III Designations. In the absence of established Visual Resource Management (VRM) Classes, Interim VRM Classes have been developed for those BLM lands crossed by the project in the Chuckwalla and Shavers Valleys not covered by the Coachella Valley Plan Amendment *(see above for description of Class III management objectives)*.	Yes	The Proposed Project would cross BLM lands with interim VRM Class III designations in the Chuckwalla and Shavers Valleys. The low-to-moderate levels of change that would be caused by the project in these areas would meet the VRM Class III objective of a moderate (or lower) degree of visual change. While the new line would not repeat the basic elements of the existing natural features in the landscape, it would repeat the characteristics of the existing line. Although the project would be visible, it would not dominate the view of the casual observer. See Figures D.3-12A (existing view) and D.3-12B (simulation) for views of the Chuckwalla Valley (on enclosed CD).
	Record of Decision for California Desert Conservation Area Plan Amendment for the Coachella Valley, Page 1, Plan Amendment Decision 2: Designate Visual Resource Management Classes on public lands.		
	VRM Classifications in the Plan Amendment are specified (Class II) for the Coachella Valley Preserve.	Yes	The Proposed Project passes through portions of the Coachella Valley Preserve subject to VRM Class II management objectives. The low level of visual change that would be caused by the project in this area would meet the VRM Class II objective of a low degree of visual change. While the new line would not repeat the basic elements of the existing natural features in the landscape, it would repeat the characteristics of the existing three lattice tower transmission lines. Also, the additional structures would not dominate the view of, nor attract the attention of, the casual observer. See Figures D.3-15A (existing view) and D.3-15B (simulation) for views of the Coachella Valley Preserve (on enclosed CD).
Maricopa County, Arizona	Maricopa County 2020 Comprehensive Plan, Page 98, Open Space Goal: Maintain and, where necessary, encourage expanding the open space system for Maricopa County to address public access, connectivity, education, preservation, buffering, quantity, quality, and diversity for regionally significant open spaces.		
	Open Space Objective 01: Promote development that is compatible with the visual character and quality of the site. Policy 01.1: Encourage efforts to protect and improve access to open space resources.	Yes (with APMs & mitigation)	The Proposed Project would require the construction of new access and spur roads in Maricopa County. These roads would likely improve some access in the vicinity of the project. Therefore, the project would be consistent with the access focus of this Open Space goal. However, the new access and spur roads also have the potential to create additional visual contrast from unnatural vegetative lines and exposed soils, which would not be consistent with Objective 01/Policy 01-1. Implementation of the Applicant's APMs and Mitigation Measures V-2a through V-2c should achieve development that is compatible with Objective 01/Policy 01-1. Therefore, the Proposed Project, with mitigation, would be consistent with this policy. See Figures D.3-2A/B and D.3-3A/B for views within Maricopa County (on enclosed CD).

Table D.3-6. Consistency with Applicable Land Use Plans and Policies

Agency Regulating Visual Resources	Regulation or Policy	Project Consistent?	Method of Consistency
	Open Space Objective 01: Protect and enhance environmentally sensitive areas, including mountains and steep slopes; rivers and significant washes; historic, cultural, and archaeological resources; view corridors; sensitive desert; and significant wildlife habitat and ecosystems. Policy O4.1: Conserve mountainous areas that contain important wildlife habitats, cultural resources, and scenic areas.	Yes	As the Proposed Project exits the Harquahala Switchyard east to the east side of Salome Highway, southbound views from Salome Highway would be adversely affected resulting in significant (Class II) visual impacts. Effective implementation of Mitigation Measures V-6a through V-6c and V-35 would reduce the visual impacts to levels that would be less than significant. Passing south of the Big Horn Mountains, the Proposed Project would cause an adverse but less than significant (Class III) visual impact on views of the Big Horn Mountains from some 4WD access roads south of the Big Horn Mountains and north of I-10. Also, implementation of Mitigation Measure V-3a would help to avoid any unnecessary adverse visual impacts. In both of the above cases, the project would not be located on any steep mountain slopes or otherwise impact any mountainous areas.
	Open Space Objective 05 Encourage appropriate open space between communities and land uses. Policy 05.3: Protect view corridors through buffering, screening, and other development standards.	Yes	This policy pertains primarily to the establishment and protection of view corridors relative to developed communities. The Proposed Project does not pass near any developed communities in Maricopa County nor adversely affect any view corridor from an established community. Although some views from local roads in proximity to the project (West Courthouse Road, Salome Highway, I-10) would be adversely affected by the project, the resulting visual impacts would be adverse but not significant (Class III). Also, implementation of Mitigation Measure V-3a would help to avoid any unnecessary adverse visual impacts.
	Maricopa County 2020 Tonopah-Arlington Area Plan. Goal 1: Promote development that considers adverse environmental impacts on the natural and cultural environment, preserves highly valued open space, and remediates areas contaminated with hazardous materials.		
	Objective 1: Encourage developments that are compatible with natural environmental features and which do not lead to their destruction. Policy E1.2 – Encourage land uses and development designs that are compatible with environmentally sensitive areas such as parks, open space, floodplains, hillsides, wildlife habitat, scenic areas, and unstable geologic and soil conditions.	Yes (with APMs & mitigation)	The Proposed Project would require the construction of new access and spur roads in Maricopa County. The new access and spur roads have the potential to create additional visual contrast from unnatural vegetative lines and exposed soils, which would not be consistent with Objective 1/Policy E1.2. Implementation of the Applicant's APMs and Mitigation Measures V-2a through V-2c should achieve development that is compatible with Objective 1/Policy E1.2. Therefore, the Proposed Project, with mitigation, would be consistent with this policy. See Figures D.3-2A/B and D.3-3A/B for views within Maricopa County (on enclosed CD).

Table D.3-6. Consistency with Applicable Land Use Plans and Policies

Agency Regulating Visual Resources	Regulation or Policy	Project Consistent?	Method of Consistency
Riverside County, California	Land Use Element: Project Design, pp LU-22 and LU-23.		
	Policy LU 4.1 – Require that new developments be located and designed to visually enhance, not degrade the character of the surrounding area through consideration of the following concepts: a. Compliance with the design standards of the appropriate area plan land use category. l. Mitigate noise, odor, lighting, and other impacts on surrounding properties.	Yes (with mitigation)	There are no aesthetic design standards pertaining to high-voltage transmission lines in the Land Use Element. However, the Proposed Project would include facilities that would require night lighting with the potential to impact surrounding areas. However, with implementation of Mitigation Measure V-6c, night lighting impacts would be mitigated to a level that would be less than significant (Class III).
	Policy LU 6.1 – Require land uses to develop in accordance with the General Plan and area plans to ensure compatibility and minimize impacts.	Yes	The Proposed Project would be located within an established utility corridor, which would avoid the proliferation of additional utility facilities across the landscape with the potential for land use compatibility impacts. Furthermore, implementation of the APMs identified in this document and the Mitigation Measures presented in following sections would serve to minimize the visual impacts of the Proposed Project.
	Policy LU 6.4 – Retain and enhance the integrity of existing residential, employment, agricultural, and open space areas by protecting them from encroachment of land uses that would result in impacts from noise, noxious fumes, glare, shadowing, and traffic.	Yes (with mitigation)	The Proposed Project would include facilities that might cause daytime glare and night lighting impacts on surrounding areas. However, with implementation of Mitigation Measures V-3a, V-6a, V-6c, and V-40a glare and night lighting impacts would be kept to levels that would be less than significant (Class III).
	Land Use Element: Hillside Development & Slope, Page LU-30.		
	Policy LU 11.1 – Apply the following policies to areas where development is allowed and that contain natural slopes, canyons, or other significant elevation changes, regardless of land use designation: a. Restrict development on visually significant ridgelines, canyon edges and hilltops through sensitive siting and appropriate landscaping to ensure development is visually unobtrusive.	No	The Proposed Project would cross several hilltops and ridgelines and would be located on canyon edges (Whitewater Canyon) in Riverside County. As a result, the transmission structures would cause additional skylining (extending above the horizon line) and appear more prominent and obtrusive. There is no mitigation available that would bring the project into consistency with this policy following the proposed alignment.
	Land Use Element: Scenic Corridors, Page LU-31.		
		Yes	The Proposed Project would be located within an existing utility corridor. Although some views from roads within Riverside County would be adversely affected, these visual impacts would be less than significant Class III). No designated scenic corridors within Riverside County would experience significant visual impacts from the Proposed Project.

Table D.3-6. Consistency with Applicable Land Use Plans and Policies

Agency Regulating Visual Resources	Regulation or Policy	Project Consistent?	Method of Consistency
	Policy LU 13.3 – Ensure that the design and appearance of new landscaping, structures, equipment, signs, or grading within Designated and Eligible State and County scenic highway corridors are compatible with the surrounding scenic setting or environment.	Yes	Portions of the Proposed Project would cross designated (or eligible) scenic roads within Riverside County. However, the project would be located within an existing utility corridor and the proposed structures would match the design of existing structures within the corridor.
	Policy LU 13.4 – Maintain at least a 50-foot setback from the edge of the right-of-way for new development adjacent to Designated and Eligible State and County Scenic Highways.	Yes	Although the Proposed Project would affect views from designated (SR 62) and eligible (I-10, Dillon Road, Whitewater Canyon Road, San Timoteo Canyon Road, and Redlands Boulevard) scenic highways, structures would be located within an existing utility corridor and more than 50 feet from the edge of the scenic highway right-of-way. See Figures D.3-16A and D.3-17A (existing view) and D.3-16B and D.3-17B (simulation) for views at SR 62 (on enclosed CD).
	Land Use Element: Open Space Area Plan Land Use Designations: Recreation Page LU-52.		
	Policy LU 19.4 – Encourage that structures be designed to maintain the environmental character in which they are located.	Yes	The Proposed Project would be located within an established utility corridor, which would avoid the proliferation of additional utility corridors. The proposed transmission line structures would also match the same design as existing structures within the corridor. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not substantially alter the existing environmental character in which it would be located.
	Land Use Element: Open Space–Rural Land Use Designations, Page LU-52.		
	Policy LU 20.1 – Require that structures be designed to maintain the environmental character in which they are located.	Yes	The Proposed Project would be located within an established utility corridor, which would avoid the proliferation of additional utility corridors. The proposed transmission line structures would also match the same design as existing structures within the corridor. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not substantially alter the existing environmental character in which it would be located.
	Policy LU 20.2 – Require that development be designed to blend with undeveloped natural contours of the site and avoid an unvaried, unnatural, or manufactured appearance.	No	Although the Proposed Project would (a) be located within an established utility corridor, (b) have the same design as existing transmission line structures, and (c) have a lattice design that would help the structures blend with a background where one exists, the project would still exhibit an industrial, manufactured appearance. There is no mitigation available that would bring the project into consistency with this policy following the proposed alignment.

Table D.3-6. Consistency with Applicable Land Use Plans and Policies

Agency Regulating Visual Resources	Regulation or Policy	Project Consistent?	Method of Consistency
	Policy LU 20.4 – Ensure that development does not adversely impact the open space and rural character of the surrounding area.	No	Although the Proposed Project would (a) be located within an established utility corridor, (b) have the same design as existing transmission line structures, and (c) have a lattice design that would help the structures blend with a background where one exists, the project would still exhibit an industrial, manufactured appearance and cause adverse visual impacts. There is no mitigation available that would bring the project into consistency with this policy following the proposed alignment. However, this policy inconsistency is not considered significant given the project's location adjacent to other transmission line facilities of similar design and scale, within an established transmission line corridor.
	Land Use Element: Eastern Riverside County Desert Areas (Non-Area Plan) Policies, Page LU-72.		
	Policy LU 30.1 – Preserve the character of the Eastern Riverside County Desert Areas through application of those land use designations reflected on Figure LU-6, Eastern Riverside County Desert Areas Land Use Plan (on enclosed CD).	Yes	Within the Eastern Riverside County Desert Area, the Proposed Project would be located within an existing utility corridor and be the same design as existing facilities with the corridor.
	Circulation Element: Scenic Corridors, Page C-46.		
	Policy C 19.1 – Preserve scenic routes that have exceptional or unique visual features in accordance with Caltrans' Scenic Highways Plan.	Yes	Although the Proposed Project would affect views from designated (SR 62) and eligible (I-10, Dillon Road, Whitewater Canyon Road, San Timoteo Canyon Road, and Redlands Boulevard) scenic highways, the project would (a) be located within an established utility corridor and (b) have the same design as existing transmission line structures. Also, the resulting visual impacts in the vicinity of these transportation corridors would be adverse but not significant (Class III).
	Circulation Element: Major Utility Corridors, Page C-55.		
	Policy C 25.2 – Locate new and relocated utilities underground when possible. All remaining utilities shall be located or screened in a manner that minimizes their visibility by the public.	No	The Proposed Project would be an aboveground facility. Although the project would be located within an existing corridor and have the same design as other facilities within the corridor, its location within an existing corridor would not minimize the project's visibility given the relatively close proximity of the utility corridor to major travel corridors (I-10), local roads, and development. There is no mitigation available that would bring the project into consistency with this policy following the proposed alignment.
	Multipurpose Open Space Element: Scenic Resources, Page OS-45.		
	Policy OS 21.1 – Identify and conserve the skylines, view corridors, and outstanding scenic vistas within Riverside County.	No	The Proposed Project would be located along a number of ridgelines and slopes that would result in additional skylining (extending above the horizon). There is no mitigation available that would bring the project into consistency with this policy following the proposed alignment.

Table D.3-6. Consistency with Applicable Land Use Plans and Policies

Agency Regulating Visual Resources	Regulation or Policy	Project Consistent?	Method of Consistency
	Multipurpose Open Space Element: Scenic Corridors, Page OS-45.		
	Policy OS 22.1 – Design developments within designated scenic highway corridors to balance the objectives of maintaining scenic resources with accommodating compatible land uses.	Yes	Although the Proposed Project would affect views from designated (SR 62) and eligible (I-10, Dillon Road, Whitewater Canyon Road, San Timoteo Canyon Road, and Redlands Boulevard) scenic highways, the project would (a) be located within an established utility corridor and (b) have the same design as existing transmission line structures. Also, the resulting visual impacts in the vicinity of these transportation corridors would be adverse but not significant (Class III). See Figures D.3-16A and D.3-17A (existing view) and D.3-16B and D.3-17B (simulation) for views at SR 62 (see enclosed CD).
	Reche Canyon/Badlands Area Plan. Circulation Element: Scenic Highways, Page 36.		
	Policy RCBAP 11.1 – Protect the scenic highways in the Reche Canyon/Badlands area from change that would diminish the aesthetic value of adjacent properties through policies in the Scenic Corridors sections of the General Plan Land Use, Multipurpose Open Space, and Circulation Elements.	Yes	The reconductoring that would occur in this area under the Proposed Project would be minimally noticeable and would not result in significant adverse visual impacts. Also, implementation of Mitigation Measure V-3a would ensure that significant visual impacts do not occur.
	Reche Canyon/Badlands Area Plan. Multipurpose Open Space, Page 45.		
	Policy RCBAP 13.1 – Protect visual and biological resources in the Reche Canyon/Badlands area through adherence to General Plan policies found in the Multipurpose Open Space Element.	Yes	The reconductoring that would occur in this area under the Proposed Project would be minimally noticeable and would not result in significant adverse visual impacts. Also, implementation of Mitigation Measure V-3a would ensure that significant visual impacts do not occur.
	The Pass Area Plan. Circulation: Scenic Highways, Page 41.		
	Policy PAP 12.1 – Protect the scenic highways in the Pass from change that would diminish the aesthetic value of adjacent properties in accordance with the Scenic Corridors sections of the General Plan Land Use, Multipurpose Open Space, and Circulation Elements.	No	The Proposed Project would cause adverse but less than significant (Class III) visual impacts on views in the vicinity of San Timoteo Canyon Road. There is no mitigation available that would bring the project into consistency with this policy following the proposed alignment. See Figures D.3-25A (existing view) and D.3-25B (simulation) for views in San Timoteo Canyon (see enclosed CD).
	Western Coachella Valley Area Plan. Land Use: Industrial Uses, Page 38.		
	Policy WCVAP 12.4 – Require the screening and/or landscaping of outdoor storage areas, such as contractor storage yards and similar uses.	Yes (with mitigation)	The Proposed Project would require the establishment of the Palm Springs Construction yard within the Western Coachella Valley Plan Area. However, implementation of Mitigation Measure V-1a would help to minimize the temporary visual impacts from construction and storage yards.

Table D.3-6. Consistency with Applicable Land Use Plans and Policies

Agency Regulating Visual Resources	Regulation or Policy	Project Consistent?	Method of Consistency
	Western Coachella Valley Area Plan. Land Use: Light Pollution, Page 43.		
	Policy WCVAP 15.1 – Where outdoor lighting is proposed, require the inclusion of outdoor lighting features that would minimize the effects on the nighttime sky and wildlife habitat areas.	Yes (with mitigation)	Some project facilities (substations and construction yards) would include night lighting with the potential to impact the nighttime sky and adjacent wildlife habitat areas. However, implementation of Mitigation Measures V-1b and V-6c would ensure that night lighting impacts do not occur.
	Policy WCVAP 15.2 – Adhere to the lighting requirements of the County Ordinance Regulating Light Pollution for standards that are intended to limit light leakage and spillage that may interfere with the operations of the Palomar Observatory.	Yes (with mitigation)	Some project facilities (substations and construction yards) would include night lighting with the potential to impact the nighttime sky and adjacent wildlife habitat areas. However, implementation of Mitigation Measures V-1b and V-6c would ensure that night lighting impacts do not occur.
	Western Coachella Valley Area Plan. Circulation: Scenic Highways, Page 48.		
	Policy WCVAP 18.1 – Protect the scenic highways in the Western Coachella Valley from change that would diminish the aesthetic value of adjacent properties in accordance with the Scenic Corridors sections of the General Plan Land Use, Multipurpose Open Space, and Circulation Elements.	No	The Proposed Project would result in an adverse but less than significant (Class III) visual impact on views from State-designated Scenic Highway SR 62. There is no mitigation available that would bring the project into consistency with this policy following the proposed alignment. See Figures D.3-16A and D.3-17A (existing view) and D.3-16B and D.3-17B (simulation) for views at SR 62 (see enclosed CD).
	Western Coachella Valley Area Plan. Multipurpose Open Space, Page 55.		
	Policy WCVAP 19.1 – Protect visual and biological resources in the Western Coachella Valley through adherence to General Plan policies found in the Fish and Wildlife Habitat section of the Multipurpose Open Space Element.	No	The Proposed Project would affect visual resources within the Western Coachella Valley Planning Area. Visual impacts would be adverse but less than significant (Class III). There is no mitigation available that would bring the project into consistency with this policy following the proposed alignment.
	Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan. Land Use: Light Pollution, Page 35.		
	Policy ECVAP 4.1 – Require the inclusion of outdoor lighting features that would minimize the effects on the nighttime sky and wildlife habitat areas.	Yes (with mitigation)	The Proposed Project would not include permanent facilities requiring night lighting within the Eastern Coachella Valley Planning Area. However, the project would include night lighting at the temporary Indio Construction Yard. Implementation of Mitigation Measure V-1b would ensure that night lighting impacts from construction facilities do not occur.
	Policy ECVAP 4.2 – Adhere to the County's lighting requirements for standards that are intended to limit light leakage and spillage that may interfere with the operations of the Palomar Observatory.	Yes (with mitigation)	The Proposed Project would not include permanent facilities requiring night lighting within the Eastern Coachella Valley Planning Area. However, the project would include night lighting at the temporary Indio Construction Yard. Implementation of Mitigation Measure V-1b would ensure that night lighting impacts from construction facilities do not occur.

Table D.3-6. Consistency with Applicable Land Use Plans and Policies

Agency Regulating Visual Resources	Regulation or Policy	Project Consistent?	Method of Consistency
	Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan. Circulation: Scenic Highways, Page 47.		
	Policy ECVAP 14.1 – Protect the scenic highways in the Eastern Coachella Valley from change that would diminish the aesthetic value of adjacent properties in accordance with the Scenic Corridors sections of the General Plan Land Use, Multipurpose Open Space, and Circulation Elements.	No	The Proposed Project would affect views from county-eligible (I-10 and Dillon Road) scenic highways within the Eastern Coachella Valley Planning Area. The visual impacts would be adverse but less than significant (Class III). There is no mitigation available that would bring the project into consistency with this policy following the proposed alignment. However, this policy inconsistency is not considered significant given the project's location adjacent to other transmission line facilities of similar design and scale, within an established transmission line corridor.
	Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan. Open Space: Habitat Conservation/CVMSHCP, Page 55.		
	Policy ECVAP 15.1 – Protect visual and biological resources in the Eastern Coachella Valley through adherence to General Plan policies found in the Fish and Wildlife Habitat section of the Multipurpose Open Space Element, as well as policies contained in the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan, upon its adoption.	Maybe	The criteria for protection of visual resources in the Eastern Coachella Valley are not defined. However, the Proposed Project would result in adverse but less than significant (Class III) visual impacts in the Eastern Coachella Valley.
	Desert Center Area Plan. Land Use: Light Pollution, Page 27.		
	Policy DCAP 5.1 – When outdoor lighting is used, require the use of fixtures that would minimize effects on the nighttime sky and wildlife habitat areas, except as necessary for security reasons.	Yes (with mitigation)	Some project facilities (California Series Capacitor and Desert Center Construction Yard) would include night lighting with the potential to impact the nighttime sky and adjacent wildlife habitat areas. However, effective implementation of Mitigation Measures V-1b and V-6c would ensure that night lighting impacts do not occur.
	Desert Center Area Plan. Circulation: Scenic Highways, Page 31.		
	Policy DCAP 9.1 – Protect the scenic highways within the Desert Center Area Plan from change that would diminish the aesthetic value of adjacent properties through adherence to the policies found in the Scenic Corridors sections of the General Plan Land Use, Multipurpose Open Space, and Circulation Elements.	No	The Proposed Project would adversely affect views from Interstate 10, a county-eligible scenic highway within the Desert Center Planning Area. The visual impacts would be adverse but less than significant (Class III). There is no mitigation available that would bring the project into consistency with this policy following the proposed alignment.
	Palo Verde Valley Planning Area. Circulation: Scenic Highways, Page 37.		
	Policy PVVAP 10.1 – Protect the scenic highways within the Palo Verde Valley planning area from change that would diminish the aesthetic value of adjacent properties in accordance with the Scenic Corridors sections of the General Plan Land Use, Multipurpose Open Space, and Circulation Elements.	No	The Proposed Project would adversely affect views from Interstate 10, a county-eligible scenic highway within the Palo Verde Valley Planning Area. The visual impacts would be adverse but less than significant (Class III). There is no mitigation available that would bring the project into consistency with this policy following the proposed alignment.

Table D.3-6. Consistency with Applicable Land Use Plans and Policies

Agency Regulating Visual Resources	Regulation or Policy	Project Consistent?	Method of Consistency
San Bernardino County	General Plan, 1989 (Revised 1999). Natural Resources – Open Space/Recreation/Scenic: E. Scenic Resource Policies/Actions, Page II-C5-106.		
	Policy OR-51 – Because the provision of scenic areas, trails and scenic highways is an integral part of the planning process, the County shall require the following:		
	b. Define the Scenic Corridor to extend 200 feet on either side of the designated route, measured from the outside edge of the right-of-way, trail or path. Development along scenic corridors shall be required to demonstrate through visual analysis that proposed improvements are compatible with the scenic qualities present.	b. Yes	b. The Proposed Project would traverse several ridges and hilltops and be visible from the following County Designated scenic highways: Barton Road, Beaumont Avenue, and San Timoteo Canyon Road. In each case the Proposed Project would be located within an existing transmission corridor, adjacent to other transmission facilities of similar design and scale.
	j. Control development on prominent ridgelines.	j. Yes	j. Although the Proposed Project would cross some prominent ridgelines, its location is being limited to similar tower locations within an existing transmission line right-of-way.
	k. Allow new regional and community infrastructure on hilltops only when no alternative sites are available.	k. Yes	k. The Proposed Project would cross several hilltops. However, the proposed facilities would be located within an existing transmission corridor with other similar facilities. Co-location of energy infrastructure within corridors helps to minimize the proliferation of rights-of-way across the landscape.
	l. Review site planning, including architectural design, to prevent obstruction of scenic views and to blend with the surrounding landscape.	l. Yes	l. The Proposed Project would be of a design and scale similar to that of other facilities within the corridor. Structure placement would also be matched with existing facilities to minimize the occurrence of asynchronous conductor spans.
	Require compliance with grading and vegetation removal standards as set forth in the Scenic Routes Overlay District.		
	Policy OR-57 – Because the preservation of scenic qualities can in many cases be achieved only through the preservation of existing landform and natural features, the County shall require the following:	No	Although the Proposed Project would be consistent with existing utility infrastructure within the existing corridor, it would not be consistent with the visual characteristics of the surrounding natural features and would not serve to preserve the integrity and character of the hillside environment. There is no mitigation available that would bring the project into consistency with this policy following the proposed alignment.
	c. Require that hillside development be compatible with natural features and the ability to develop the site in a manner which preserves the integrity and character of the hillside environment, including but not limited to, consideration of terrain, landform, access needs, fire and erosion hazards, watershed and flood factors, tree preservation, and scenic amenities and quality.		

Table D.3-6. Consistency with Applicable Land Use Plans and Policies

Agency Regulating Visual Resources	Regulation or Policy	Project Consistent?	Method of Consistency
	Policy OR-58 – Because the County desires to retain the scenic character of visually important roadways throughout the County, the County shall designate the following routes as scenic highways, and apply all applicable policies to development within the Scenic Corridor [partial list]: <u>Loma Linda Planning Area</u>: • Barton Road • Beaumont Avenue • San Timoteo Canyon Road	Maybe	Although the Proposed Project would be visible from the following County Designated scenic highways: Barton Road, Beaumont Avenue, and San Timoteo Canyon Road, the applicable policies referenced in Policy OR-58 are not specified. See Figures D.3-23A and D.3-24A (existing views) and D.3-23B and D.3-24B (simulations) for views in Beaumont (see enclosed CD).
City of Coachella	General Plan 2020. Infrastructure and Public Services Element Policies, Page 111.		
	Objective: The City shall ensure the adequate provision of private utilities to serve the needs of the community. Policy – The shared use of major transmission corridors and other appropriate measures shall be encouraged as a means of preserving the aesthetic resources of the City and to lessen the visual impacts of such development. The City shall work with the appropriate agencies in developing these corridors for recreational use.	Yes	The Proposed Project would include the construction of a new electric transmission line through the northern portion of the City of Coachella. The project would be co-located with other transmission facilities within an established corridor.
City of Desert Hot Springs	Comprehensive General Plan: Community Design Element Policies, Pages III-118 and III-120.		
	Policy 10: Lighting shall be limited to the minimum height, number and intensity of fixtures needed to provide security and identification in residential, commercial and industrial development, taking every reasonable measure to preserve the community's night skies.	Yes (with mitigation)	The Proposed Project would include facilities within the City of Desert Hot Springs that may require night lighting (Devers Substation modifications and Palm Springs Construction Yard at Devers Substation. However, effective implementation of Mitigation Measures V-1b and V-6c would ensure that night lighting impacts are minimized.
	Policy 14: Water wells, utility substations, switching and control facilities associated with it shall be screened to preserve scenic viewsheds and limit visual clutter.	Yes (with mitigation)	The Proposed Project would include both short-term construction facilities (Palm Springs Construction Yard) and long-term operational facilities (modifications to Devers Substation) within the City of Desert Hot Springs. However, effective implementation of Mitigation Measures V-1a~~,~~ <u>and</u> V-6a ~~and V-6b~~ would ensure that visual impacts from ancillary facilities are minimized.
	Policy 16: All grading and development proposed within scenic highway viewsheds, including hillsides, entry and focal points, shall be regulated to minimize adverse impacts to these viewsheds.	Yes	The Proposed Project would be located within the viewshed of SR 62, a State Designated Scenic Highway. However, the co-location of the Proposed Project within an existing corridor and the net reduction in transmission structures would minimize the visual impact experienced from SR 62.

Table D.3-6. Consistency with Applicable Land Use Plans and Policies

Agency Regulating Visual Resources	Regulation or Policy	Project Consistent?	Method of Consistency
	Comprehensive General Plan: Water, Sewer & Utilities Element Policies, Page VI-8.		
	Policy 10: Major utility facilities shall be sited to ensure minimal impacts to the environment and the community, and minimize potential environmental hazards.	Yes	The Proposed Project would include the siting of facilities within the City of Desert Hot Springs with the potential to cause visual impacts. However, the co-location of the Proposed Project within an existing corridor adjacent to existing transmission structures of similar design and scale would minimize the potential for visual impacts.
	Comprehensive General Plan: Public Buildings and Facilities Element Policies, Page VI-36.		
	Policy 1: Coordinate with public utilities and special districts, utilities and other quasi-public entities to ensure the least intrusive and most compatible integration of related buildings and facilities into the land use pattern of the community. Program 1B – Integrate all new maintenance areas and utility substations with surrounding land uses, and regulate in order to maintain a compatible and aesthetically pleasing community through the use of appropriate buffers, architectural design and landscape, and signage.	Yes	The Proposed Project would include the siting of additional facilities within the existing transmission line corridor and adjacent to Devers Substation. In both cases, the new facilities would appear similar to existing structures and facilities in terms of design and scale and would appear compatible with the existing landscape character.
City of Loma Linda	Draft General Plan (2004). Land Use Element: 2.2.3.1 Guiding Policy for the South Hills, Pages 2-12 and 2-13.		
	Policy j: Development shall maintain appropriate horizontal and vertical setbacks from "primary ridgelines," which are the ridgelines mapped as part of a comprehensive Specific Plan for the South Hills having the following characteristics. • Ridges that have a significant difference in elevation from the valley or canyon floor, and are recognizable as ridgelines from the valley floor to the north. • Ridges that possess a prominent landform in the foreground and form a major skyline in the background. In some cases where layers of ridges may be visible into the distance, the objective of defining major ridgelines is to avoid the silhouetting of development along sky lines when viewed from preserved open space areas and valley areas to the south.	No	Although the policy statement does not specify appropriate setbacks, the Proposed Project would cross some ridges and would cause additional skylining or "silhouetting of development along sky lines." There is no mitigation available that would bring the project into consistency with this policy following the proposed alignment. Although shorter structures would result in less skylining, they would also necessitate shorter spans and a greater number of structures to maintain sufficient ground clearance, which would more than offset the benefit achieved from less skylining.

Table D.3-6. Consistency with Applicable Land Use Plans and Policies

Agency Regulating Visual Resources	Regulation or Policy	Project Consistent?	Method of Consistency
	Policy p: The overall scale and massing of structures shall respect the natural surroundings and unique visual resources of the area by incorporating designs which minimize bulk and mass, and minimize visual intrusion on the natural landscape.	Yes	The Proposed Project would add more conductors to the existing structures and the new conductors would appear similar to the existing conductors. As a result, the project's apparent bulk, mass and visual intrusion on the natural landscape would be minimized.
	Draft General Plan (2004). General Plan Implementation Programs, Page 11-5.		
	Policy d: Limit development on ridgelines.	No	The policy does not establish criteria that would define the limits to development on ridgelines. Therefore, since the Proposed Project would pass through portions of the South Hills in the City of Loma Linda, it is assumed that the project would be inconsistent with this policy.
	Draft General Plan (2004). Conservation and Open Space Element: 9.2.10.1 Guiding Policy for Visual Resources, Page 9-7.		
	Work with Southern California Edison to improve transmission line corridors with attractive, community-serving uses and to upgrade the appearance of the transmission line corridors in conjunction with an expansion or co-use of the corridor.	Yes	The Proposed Project would not affect any of the current park and recreation uses that are presently occurring within the transmission line right-of-way. Also, the additional conductors would not noticeably change the visual quality or character of the existing rights-of-way.
City of Redlands	1995 General Plan. City Design and Preservation Element: Section 3.10 City Design – Guiding Policies.		
	Policy 3.10e – Preserve the natural appearance of steep hillsides and ridges. Conservation, safety, and fiscal reasons justify preservation, but visual satisfaction is more widely appreciated.	No	The Proposed Project would cross several hillsides and ridges within San Timoteo Canyon in the City of Redlands. The resulting visual impacts would be adverse but less than significant (Class III). Therefore, the Proposed Project would not serve to preserve the natural appearance of the landscape.
	1995 General Plan. Land Use Element: Section 4.41 Southern Area Hills and Canyons – Implementing Policies.		
	Policy 4.41d – Major topographic features within the San Timoteo and Live Oak Canyon areas shall be preserved, maintained and where possible, enhanced. Major ridgelines should not be modified although development on a ridgeline may be allowed where there is offsetting need demonstrated.	Yes	The Proposed Project would cross several hillsides and ridges within San Timoteo Canyon in the City of Redlands. However, co-locating the Proposed Project within an existing transmission line corridor would be less visually impacting compared to creating an entirely new corridor and causing increased proliferation of energy infrastructure across the landscape.
	Policy 4.41e – Within the Live Oak Canyon and San Timoteo Canyon areas, the canyon walls immediately below major ridges and vegetation thereon shall be preserved and enhanced where appropriate. Slopes that are in excess of 50% shall be preserved intact except for public safety needs.	Yes	The Proposed Project would result in a net reduction of transmission line structures on slopes below major ridgelines within San Timoteo Canyon. See Figures D.3-25A (existing view) and D.3-25B (simulation) for views in San Timoteo Canyon (see enclosed CD).

Table D.3-6. Consistency with Applicable Land Use Plans and Policies

Agency Regulating Visual Resources	Regulation or Policy	Project Consistent?	Method of Consistency
City of Calimesa	General Plan: Land Use Element: Page 1-5, Rural Atmosphere and Quality of Life Policies.		
	Policy 1.1 – Preserve the natural character and visual quality of the hillsides through sensitive site design and grading.	Yes	The Proposed Project would cross several hillsides to the north of San Timoteo Canyon in the City of Calimesa. However, along this route segment, the project would result in the removal of one transmission line, the rebuilding of a second transmission line to match a third transmission line, and the reconductoring of the third line. From most viewing locations the visual change would appear less industrially complex, resulting in an improvement of views.
	General Plan: Land Use Element: Page 1-8, Preservation of Natural Resources and Environmentally Sensitive Areas.		
	Policy 5.4 – Development shall be prohibited in areas containing sensitive biological resources and habitats, cultural resources, groundwater recharge areas, prominent ridgelines, unless adequate protection and/or preservation is provided.	Yes	The Proposed Project would cross several hillsides to the north of San Timoteo Canyon in the City of Calimesa. However, along this route segment, the project would result in the removal of one transmission line, the rebuilding of a second transmission line to match a third transmission line, and the reconductoring of the third line. From most viewing locations the visual change would appear less industrially complex, resulting in an improvement of views.
	General Plan: Resource Management Element: Page 14-5, Geologic Resources.		
	Policy 2.5 – Protect the City's scenic and visual resources by limiting ridgeline development and building heights.	Yes	The Proposed Project would cross several hillsides to the north of San Timoteo Canyon in the City of Calimesa. However, along this route segment, the project would result in the removal of one transmission line, the rebuilding of a second transmission line to match the design and height of a third transmission line, and the reconductoring of the third line. From most viewing locations the visual change would appear less industrially complex though the new tower would be taller than the structures being replaced. The result would be an improvement of views from most viewing locations. See Figures D.3-25A (existing view) and D.3-25B (simulation) for views in San Timoteo Canyon (see enclosed CD).
City of Grand Terrace	General Plan: Aesthetic, Cultural, and Recreational Resources Element: Aesthetic Resources.		
	Policy: Scenic resources should be protected from harmful impacts and maintained as community assets.	Yes	Within the context of the existing energy transmission corridors, the Proposed Project reconductoring within the City of Grand Terrace would appear minimally noticeable.
	Policy: Design of new development shall respect and preserve the view opportunities of existing development in the area.	No	Although the reconductoring of the Proposed Project within the City of Grand Terrace would appear minimally noticeable from most viewing locations, the addition of 6 new conductors to the Devers-Vista 1 & 2 transmission line, would adversely affect views from several residences along the north side of Vista Grande Way.
City of Palm Springs	General Plan: Land Use, Page 1-19.		
	3.1.7 Ensure that development does not overwhelm natural features, especially the washes and the views of mountains.	Yes	The Proposed Project would be located within an existing utility corridor adjacent to an existing transmission line of similar design and height. As a result, the Proposed Project would appear consistent with the existing character of the immediate landscape and would not overwhelm natural features.

D.3.5 Significance Criteria and Approach to Impact Assessment

This section explains how impacts are assessed in the Visual Resources section. Section D.3.5.1 presents the approach to visual impact assessment. Section D.3.5.2 presents the criteria that determine the significance of the anticipated impacts. In addition, Section D.3.5.3 lists the Applicant Proposed Measures relevant to Section D.3, and Section D.3.5.4 lists all impacts identified for the Proposed Project and alternatives, Sections D.3.6, D.3.7.

D.3.5.1 Approach to Impact Assessment

The factors considered in determining impacts on visual resources typically include: (1) scenic quality of the project site and vicinity; (2) available visual access and visibility, frequency and duration that the landscape is viewed; (3) viewing distance and degree to which project components would dominate the view of the observer; (4) resulting contrast of the proposed facilities or activities with existing landscape characteristics; (5) the extent to which project features or activities would block views of higher value landscape features; and (6) the level of public interest in the existing landscape characteristics and concern over potential changes.

An *adverse visual impact* occurs within public view when: (1) an action perceptibly changes existing features of the physical environment so that they no longer appear to be characteristic of the subject locality or region; (2) an action introduces new features to the physical environment that are perceptibly uncharacteristic of the region and/or locale; or (3) aesthetic features of the landscape become less visible (e.g., partially or totally blocked from view) or are removed. Changes that seem uncharacteristic are those that appear out of place, discordant, or distracting. The degree of the visual impact depends upon how noticeable the adverse change may be. The noticeability of a visual impact is a function of project features, context, and viewing conditions (angle of view, distance, primary viewing directions, and duration of view).

Impacts on visual resources within the study area could result from various activities including: structure and line construction, substation construction, establishment of construction staging areas and access roads, and project operation or presence of the built facilities. As stated in Section D.3.1.2 above, the Visual Resources technical approach utilizes two technical methodologies — the BLM's VRM methodology for BLM administered public lands east of Devers Substation and the Visual Sensitivity–Visual Change method for all other public and private lands throughout the study area. However, under both approaches, there are common steps in the impact assessment.

Initially, the proposed and alternative routes were viewed from various public roads and vantage points to develop an overall assessment of the potential impacts by segment. In consultation with the BLM and CPUC, a number of representative Key Viewpoints (KVPs — also commonly referred to as Key Observation Points [KOPs] under the BLM methodology) were established to assess the potential project impacts on sensitive visual resources (see discussion of KVPs in Section D.3.1.2 above). Detailed visual impact analyses were conducted at each of these key viewpoints and the necessary photo-documentation was obtained to serve as the foundation for photosimulations of the project features. The photosimulations are valuable tools in the evaluation of anticipated project effects.

The approach to impact assessment under each of the two methodologies used is discussed in the following sections. The results of the impact assessment under both methodologies are summarized and presented as a series of foldout tables at the end of the Visual Resources section in Appendix VR-1 (see enclosed CD).

BLM VRM Contrast Analysis Methodology

The key component of the impact assessment under the BLM's Visual Resource Management (VRM) methodology is the determination of visual contrast caused by a project's features or activities. Visual Contrast Ratings were conducted using the BLM's VRM system manuals (BLM, 1984, 1986a). The Visual Contrast Rating Forms are provided in Appendix VR-4 (see enclosed CD). Under the VRM system, the degree to which a project or activity affects the visual quality of a landscape depends on the visual contrast created between the project components and the major features, or predominant qualities, in the existing landscape. Visual contrast evaluates the project's consistency with the visual elements of form, line color and texture already established in the viewshed. In a sense, visual contrast describes a particular landscape's ability to absorb a project's components and location without resulting in an uncharacteristic appearance. Other elements that are considered in evaluating visual contrast include the degree of natural screening by vegetation and landforms, placement of structures relative to existing vegetation, landforms and other structures, distance from the point of observation, and relative size or scale. Once the degree of anticipated contrast is determined (ranging from none to strong), a conclusion on the overall level of change is made (ranging from very low to high) and compared to the applicable VRM Class objective for a determination of consistency with the management objectives and level of visual impact. For the present project, if a determination was made that the resulting level of change would be inconsistent with the VRM class objective for that location, and the inconsistency was considered a significant visual impact, the impact situation was further evaluated against the application of feasible mitigation measures in an effort to reduce the visual impact to a level of less than significant if possible. A final conclusion on impact significance was then reached.

Visual Sensitivity – Visual Change Methodology

Under the Visual Sensitivity–Visual Change method, field analysis at each KVP included assessment of visual contrast, project dominance, and view blockage. Subsequently, a conclusion was made regarding the extent of overall visual change, and taken together with the existing landscape's visual sensitivity, the level of probable visual impact significance was determined. A visual simulation was also prepared with which to further evaluate the preliminary impact determination. A conclusion on initial impact significance was then arrived at. If a determination was made that the resulting impact would be significant, the impact situation was further evaluated against the application of feasible mitigation measures in an effort to reduce the visual impact to a level of less than significant if possible. A final conclusion on impact significance was then reached.

Each of the key factors considered in the evaluation of visual change is generally expressed as low, low-to-moderate, moderate, moderate-to-high, or high and is discussed below.

Visual Contrast describes the degree to which a project's visual characteristics or elements (consisting of form, line, color, and texture) differ from the same visual elements established in the existing landscape. The degree of contrast can range from low to high. The presence of forms, lines, colors, and textures in the landscape similar to those of a Proposed Project indicates a landscape more capable of accepting those project characteristics than a landscape where those elements are absent. This ability to accept alteration is often referred to as visual absorption capability and typically is inversely proportional to visual contrast.

Project Dominance is a measure of a feature's apparent size relative to other visible landscape features and the total field of view. A feature's dominance is affected by its relative location in the field of view and the distance between the viewer and the feature. The level of dominance can range from subordinate to dominant.

View Blockage or Impairment describes the extent to which any previously visible landscape features are blocked from view as a result of the project's scale and/or position. Blockage of higher quality landscape features by lower quality project features causes adverse visual impacts. The degree of view blockage can range from none to high.

Overall Visual Change is a concluding assessment as to the degree of change that would be caused by a project. Overall visual change is derived from a comparison of resulting visual contrast, project dominance, and view blockage.

D.3.5.2 Significance Criteria

The criteria used to assess the significance of visual impacts resulting from a project take into consideration the factors described in Section D.3.5.1 above, as well as federal, State, and local policies and guidelines pertaining to visual resources. Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines identifies the following four circumstances that can lead to a determination of significant visual impact:

- Project construction or the long-term presence of project components would cause a substantial effect on a scenic vista.
- Project construction or the long-term presence of project components would substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within view of a State Scenic Highway.
- Project construction or the long-term presence of project components would substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surrounding landscape. [Note: Substantial degradation results from high levels of visual contrast, project dominance, and view blockage. Visual contrast relates to spatial characteristics, visual scale, texture, form, line, and color.]
- Project construction or the long-term presence of the Proposed Project would create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area or be hazardous to motorists or pedestrians.

Three additional criteria that can lead to a determination of significant visual impact for this Proposed Project include:

- The presence of the Proposed Project would result in a long-term (greater than three years) inconsistency with established (or interim) BLM Visual Resource Management Class objectives (applies only to public lands administered by the BLM). This would typically occur where a landscape with a relatively high visual quality and viewer concern is noticeably altered.
- Construction of the Proposed Project or the presence of project components would result in an inconsistency with local regulations, plans, and standards applicable to the protection of visual resources.
- The presence of the Proposed Project would add to a cumulative visual alteration.

It should be noted that the above criteria represent thresholds beyond which a determination of "significant" is likely though not certain due to specific site and viewing circumstances.

Under the **BLM's VRM methodology**, an adverse visual change was usually considered significant if it resulted in a long-term inconsistency with the applicable VRM Class management objectives. Again, specific site and viewing circumstances may warrant a different outcome.

Under the **Visual Sensitivity–Visual Change methodology**, the degree of impact significance is generally arrived at as a function of overall visual sensitivity and visual change. Table D.3-7 illustrates the general interrelationship between visual sensitivity and visual change and is used primarily as a consistency check between individual KVP evaluations. Actual parameter determinations (e.g., visual contrast, project dominance, and view blockage) are primarily based on analyst experience and site-specific circumstances.

Table D.3-7. Visual Sensitivity–Visual Change Guidance for Review of Impact Significance

OVERALL VISUAL SENSITIVITY	OVERALL VISUAL CHANGE				
	Low	Low to Moderate	Moderate	Moderate to High	High
Low	Not Significant[1]	Not Significant	Adverse but Less Than Significant	Adverse but Less Than Significant	Adverse but Less Than Significant
Low to Moderate	Not Significant	Adverse but Less Than Significant	Adverse but Less Than Significant	Adverse but Less Than Significant	Adverse and Potentially Significant
Moderate	Adverse but Less Than Significant[2]	Adverse but Less Than Significant	Adverse but Less Than Significant	Adverse and Potentially Significant	Adverse and Potentially Significant
Moderate to High	Adverse but Less Than Significant	Adverse but Less Than Significant	Adverse and Potentially Significant	Adverse and Potentially Significant	Significant[4]
High	Adverse but Less Than Significant	Adverse and Potentially Significant[3]	Adverse and Potentially Significant	Significant[4]	Significant

1 Not Significant impacts may or may not be perceptible but are considered minor in the context of existing landscape characteristics and view opportunity.
2 Adverse but Less Than Significant Impacts are perceived as negative but do not exceed environmental thresholds.
3 Adverse and Potentially Significant impacts are perceived as negative and may exceed environmental thresholds depending on project and site-specific circumstances.
4 Significant impacts with feasible mitigation may be reduced to levels that are less than significant or avoided all together. Without mitigation, significant impacts would exceed environmental thresholds.

The interrelationships presented in Table D.3-7 are intended as guidance only, recognizing that site-specific circumstances may warrant a different outcome. However, it is reasonable to conclude that lower visual sensitivity ratings paired with lower visual change ratings will generally correlate well with lower degrees of impact significance when viewed onsite. Conversely, higher visual sensitivity ratings paired with higher visual change ratings will tend to result in higher degrees of visual impact.

Implicit in this rating methodology is the acknowledgment that, for a visual impact to be considered significant, two conditions generally exist: (1) the existing landscape is of reasonably high quality and is relatively valued by viewers; and (2) the perceived incompatibility of one or more Proposed Project elements or characteristics tends toward the high extreme, leading to a substantial reduction in visual quality.

D.3.5.3 Applicant Proposed Measures

Applicant Proposed Measures (APMs) were identified by SCE in its CPCN Application to the CPUC. Table D.3-8 presents the APMs that are relevant to visual resources. The impact analysis assumes that all APMs will be implemented as defined in the table. Additional mitigation measures are also recommended because it has been determined that the APMs do not fully mitigate the impacts for which they are presented.

Table D.3-8. Applicant Proposed Measures – Visual Resources

APM No.	Description
APM B-5	Removal of all construction debris from the area (Copper Bottom Pass) at the conclusion of the work.
APM B-14	Minimize the area needed for equipment operation and material storage and assembly.
APM B-15	In the vicinity of the Colorado River, existing tower spacings and conductor heights will be matched to the extent practical.
APM B-19	Restoration – Whenever possible, spur roads and access roads and other disturbed sites created during construction should be recontoured and restored.
APM B-23	Minimize impact to or removal of creosote bush.
APM B-24	Avoid any alterations to the vegetation structure of Washington fan palm oases.
APM B-25	Avoid any alterations of mesquite hummock habitat.
APM B-30	Within tortoise habitat in California, spur roads shall not be bladed except where necessary to allow access for construction vehicles.
APM W-9 & 17	Cut and fill slopes will be minimized by a combination of benching and following natural topography where possible.
APM G-10	New access roads and soil disturbance will be avoided or minimized in all areas designated as having high erosion hazards or potential slope instability.
APM G-11 & 19	New access roads, which are required, will be designed to minimize ground disturbance from grading. They will follow natural ground contours as closely as possible and include specific features for road drainage.
APM V-1 (500 kV)	Non-specular conductors will be used [to reduce glare and visual contrast]. (BLM B-6.1)[4] [bracketed text added by SCE]
APM V-2 (500 kV)	For the proposed alignment, tower spacing will correspond to the spacing of the existing transmission line structures. Additionally, new tower heights will be adjusted such that the top elevations of each set of towers (new and existing) are horizontal with each other. This will coordinate perceptions of towers and conductors as one element. Site-specific conditions will determine when such mitigation is feasible. Other exceptions to these two measures are where towers will be sited to avoid sensitive features and/or to allow conductors to clearly span features. (BLM B-6.2) [PEA adds: "SCE will comply with the above mitigation measure to the extent possible. However, the ISO has specified that the capacity of the line be 2700 amps under normal conditions and 3600 amps under emergency conditions. This capacity rating is an increase from the 1988 DPV2 capacity rating. This capacity rating necessitates that the heights of some of the proposed Devers-Harquahala towers be slightly taller than [adjacent towers], and in some locations tower spacing may not correspond to the adjacent DPV1 structures, to provide adequate ground clearance." (PEA, p. 6-31)
APM V-3 (500 kV)	At all highway and recreation routes-of-travel crossings, including the Colorado River, towers will be placed at the maximum feasible distance, and when feasible, [except in locations where matching existing tower spacing is deemed appropriate]. (BLM B-6.3) [From "and where feasible," the BLM text reads "...at right angles, from the crossing." SCE has replaced this phrase in the bracketed text.]
APM V-4 (500 kV)	Improvements to existing access and new access will be accomplished according to Mitigation Measures 1 and 2 as identified under soils. (BLM B-6.4)
APM V-5 (500 kV)	Standard tower spacing would be modified to correspond with spacing of existing transmission line towers where feasible and within limits of standard tower design to reduce visual contrast. (BLM B-6.8a)
APM V-6 (500 kV)	Towers would be placed so as to avoid features and/or to allow conductors to clearly span the feature (within limits of standard tower design) to minimize the amount of sensitive feature disturbed and/or reduce visual contrast (e.g., avoiding skyline situations through placement of tower to one side of a ridge or adjusting tower location to avoid highly visible locations and utilize screening of nearby landforms). (BLM B-6.8b)
APM V-7 (230 kV)	The proposed steel lattice towers would be constructed using a dulled galvanized steel finish, which would result in visual contrast reduction. (SCE)
APM V-8 (230 kV)	Non-specular conductors would be used to reduce glare and resulting visual contrast. (SCE)
APM V-9 (230 kV)	Towers would be located adjacent to existing structures where feasible. Exceptions are at locations where the tower heights and/or spans would be modified based on terrain features allowing for adequate conductor clearance to ground and other facilities within the right-of-way. (SCE)
APM V-10 (230 kV)	At all highway and recreation routes-of-travel crossings, including the I-10 crossing, towers would be placed at the maximum feasible distance, except in locations where matching existing tower spacing is deemed appropriate, and when feasible, at 90 degree angles from the crossing. (SCE)

Table D.3-8. Applicant Proposed Measures – Visual Resources

APM No.	Description
APM L-1	Impacts in crossing of the Kofa NWR (Link 2) would be minimized through utilization of existing utility access (gas and transmission) roads during the construction and operational phases of the project. All vehicular traffic would be limited to approved access or spur roads.
APM L-3	New access road construction will be kept to a minimum. (BLM B-1.2).
APM L-4	Where feasible, the following additional mitigation measures would be implemented: • Matching of tower spans • Aligning towers adjacent to or parallel to agricultural field boundaries • Using tubular steel pole structures in agricultural fields instead of lattice steel towers to reduce the footprint of the structure • Specific tower placement to avoid span-sensitive features.
APM L-5	Along Link 10 in the Palo Verde Valley, H-frame structures, similar to the existing DPV1 structures, would be installed in this segment to reduce the amount of farmland permanently removed from production and minimize impacts to farm operations. Where feasible, additional mitigation measures would include matching tower spans, and aligning towers adjacent or parallel to field boundaries. (SCE)
APM L-9	Link 100 crosses the Pacific Crest National Trail, causing a potential temporary impact during construction. Temporary impacts also may occur where Link 102 crosses Noble Creek Regional Park and the Oak Valley Golf Course. Mitigation for construction includes avoiding high use periods and holidays. Mitigation for operation would require construction using structures placed parallel to existing structures to span and avoid displacement of recreational facilities. (SCE)

D.3.5.4 Impacts Identified

Table D.3-9 lists the impacts identified for the Proposed Project and alternatives, along with the significance of each impact. Detailed discussions of each impact and the specific locations where each is identified are presented in the following sections. Impacts are classified as Class I (significant, cannot be mitigated to a level that is less than significant), Class II (significant, can be mitigated to a level that is less than significant), Class III (adverse, but less than significant), and Class IV (beneficial).

Table D.3-9. Impacts Identified – Visual Resources

Impact No.	Description	Impact Significance
Proposed Project – Devers-Harquahala Segment		
V-1	Short-term visibility of construction activities, equipment and night lighting.	Class III
V-2	Long-term visibility of land scarring in arid and semi-arid landscapes.	Class II
V-3	Increased structure contrast when viewed from Key Viewpoint 1 south of the Big Horn Mountains.	Class III
V-4	Increased structure contrast, view blockage and skylining when viewed from Key Viewpoint 2 on Interstate 10 crossing the Harquahala Plain.	Class III
V-48	Impact V-48: Inconsistency of the Harquahala Mountain Telecommunication Facility with BLM VRM Class II management objective due to increased structure contrast, industrial character, view blockage, and skylining when viewed from Harquahala Mountains Wilderness (VRM Class I) and surrounding area (VRM Class II)	Class I
V-5	Increased structure contrast, view blockage, and skylining when viewed from Key Viewpoint 3 at the north end of the Eagletail Mountains.	Class III
V-6	Increased structure contrast, industrial character, and skylining when viewing the Arizona Series Capacitor Bank from Pipeline Road.	Class III
V-7	Increased visual contrast, view blockage, and skylining when viewed from Key Viewpoint 4 on Crystal Hill Road in Kofa National Wildlife Refuge.	Class I
V-8	Increased structure contrast, view blockage, and skylining when viewed from Key Viewpoint 5 on U.S. 95 near the Crystal Hill Road entrance to Kofa National Wildlife Refuge.	Class III

Table D.3-9. Impacts Identified – Visual Resources

Impact No.	Description	Impact Significance
V-9	Increased structure contrast, industrial character, and view blockage when viewed from Key Viewpoint 6 on Pipeline Road near Copper Bottom Pass.	Class III
V-10	Increased structure contrast, view blockage, and skylining when viewed from Key Viewpoint 7 on the Colorado River.	Class III
V-11	Increased structure contrast, view blockage, and skylining when viewed from Key Viewpoint 8 on SR 78 near Ripley.	Class III
V-12	Introduction of new structure contrast and industrial character when viewing the proposed Blythe Optical Repeater Station from nearby local roads.	Class III
V-13	Increased structure contrast, industrial character, view blockage, and skylining when viewing the Midpoint Substation site from the nearby BLM access road.	Class III
V-14	Increased structure contrast, view blockage, and skylining when viewed from Key Viewpoint 9 on Interstate 10 in the eastern Chuckwalla Valley.	Class III
V-15	Inconsistency with Interim BLM VRM Class II management objective due to increased structure contrast, industrial character, view blockage, and skylining when viewed from Key Viewpoint 10 in the Alligator Rock ACEC.	Class I
V-16	Increased structure contrast, view blockage, and skylining when viewing the Orocopia Mountains from Key Viewpoint 11 on Interstate 10, just west of Hayfield Road.	Class III
V-17	Increased structure contrast, industrial character, and skylining when viewing the proposed California Series Capacitor Bank from Interstate 10 or Red Cloud Road.	Class III
V-18	Increased structure contrast and view blockage when viewing the Orocopia Mountains from Key Viewpoint 12 on Cottonwood Springs Road, just south of the entrance to Joshua Tree National Park.	Class III
V-19	Increased structure contrast, industrial character, and view blockage when viewed from Key Viewpoint 13 in the Terra Lago golf and residential development.	Class III
V-20	Increased structure contrast, industrial character, and view blockage when viewing the Santa Rosa Mountains from Key Viewpoint 14 in the Coachella Valley Preserve, just west of Thousand Palms Canyon Road.	Class III
Proposed Project – West of Devers Segment		
V-21	Increased structure contrast and skylining when viewing the San Jacinto Mountains from Key Viewpoint 15 on southbound SR 62.	Class III
V-22	Increased structure contrast and skylining when viewed from Key Viewpoint 16 on Painted Hills Road in the Painted Hills rural residential community.	Class III
V-23	Increased structure contrast when viewing the east rim of Whitewater Canyon and Mount San Jacinto from Key Viewpoint 17 on southbound Whitewater Canyon Road.	Class III
V-24	Increased structure contrast, industrial character, view blockage, and skylining when viewed from Key Viewpoint 18 on Haugen-Lehmann Way in the West Palm Springs Village residential community.	Class III
V-25	Increased structure contrast, structure prominence, and skylining when viewed from Key Viewpoint 19 at the Morongo Community Center.	Class III
V-26	Increased structure contrast, view blockage, and skylining when viewed from Key Viewpoint 20 on Murray Street in the City of Banning.	Class III
V-27	Beneficial impact from reduction in structure prominence and view blockage when viewed from Key Viewpoint 21 on Cedar Hollow Road in the City of Beaumont.	Class IV
V-28	Beneficial impact from reduction in structure prominence and view blockage when viewed from Key Viewpoint 22 at the intersection of Stargazer Street and Rose Avenue in the City of Beaumont.	Class IV
V-29	Beneficial impact from reduction in structure prominence and view blockage when viewed from Key Viewpoint 23 on the Oak Valley Golf Course in the City of Beaumont.	Class IV
V-30	Increased view blockage when viewed from Key Viewpoint 24 on Pilgrim Road in San Timoteo Canyon.	Class III
V-31	Increased view blockage when viewed from Key Viewpoint 25 at the intersection of Canyon Vista Drive and Chase Canyon Lane in the City of Colton.	Class III

Table D.3-9. Impacts Identified – Visual Resources

Impact No.	Description	Impact Significance
V-32	Increased view blockage when viewed from Key Viewpoint 26 in the right-of-way park just off Beaumont Avenue.	Class III
SCE Harquahala-West Alternative		
V-33	Inconsistency with BLM VRM Class III management objective due to introduction of structure contrast, industrial character, view blockage, and skylining when viewed from Key Viewpoint 27 on a BLM access road to Courthouse Rock and the Eagletail Mountains.	Class I
SCE Palo Verde Alternative		
V-34	Increased structure contrast and view blockage when viewing toward Saddle Mountain from Key Viewpoint 28 on Salome Highway.	Class III
Harquahala Junction Switchyard Alternative		
V-35	Increased structure contrast, industrial character, structure prominence, view blockage, and skylining when viewing the Harquahala Junction Switchyard Alternative site from Viewpoint 29 on Salome Highway.	Class II
DSWTP Alternative		
V-36	Inconsistency with Interim BLM VRM Class II management objective due to introduction of structure contrast, industrial character, view blockage, and skylining when viewing Alligator Rock from Key Viewpoint 30 on eastbound Interstate 10.	Class I
Alligator Rock–North of Desert Center Alternative		
V-37	Inconsistency with Interim BLM VRM Class III management objective due to introduction of structure contrast, industrial character, view blockage, and skylining when viewing the Chuckwalla Mountains from Key Viewpoint 31 on southbound Kaiser Road, north of Desert Center.	Class I
Alligator Rock–Blythe Energy Transmission Alternative		
V-38	Inconsistency with Interim BLM VRM Class II management objective due to introduction of structure contrast, industrial character, view blockage, and skylining when viewing Alligator Rock from Key Viewpoint 32 on westbound Interstate 10, east of Desert Center.	Class I
Alligator Rock–South of I-10 Frontage Alternative		
V-39	Inconsistency with Interim BLM VRM Class II management objective due to introduction of structure contrast, industrial character, view blockage, and skylining when viewing Alligator Rock from Key Viewpoint 30 on eastbound Interstate 10 *(Same as V-36)*.	Class I
Devers-Valley No. 2 Alternative		
V-40	Increased structure contrast and skylining when viewing the San Jacinto Mountains from Key Viewpoint 33 on the Pacific Crest Trail in the vicinity of the Snow Creek Village residential community.	Class I
V-41	Inconsistency with BLM VRM Class II management objective due to introduction of structure contrast and industrial character when viewing the San Jacinto Mountains from BLM-managed lands within the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument (in the vicinity of KVP 33).	Class I
V-42	Inconsistency with U.S. Forest Service Scenic Integrity Objective (SIO) due to introduction of structure contrast and industrial character	Class I
V-43	Increased structure contrast, skylining, and view blockage when viewed from Key Viewpoint 34 in the residential community in Cabazon (VS-VC)	Class I
V-44	Increased structure contrast and skylining when viewing the San Jacinto Mountains and San Gorgonio Pass from Key Viewpoint 35 on southbound State Route 243	Class I
V-45	Increased structure contrast, skylining, and view blockage when viewed from residential areas in southern Banning and Beaumont	Class I
V-46	Inconsistency with BLM VRM Class II management objective due to introduction of structure contrast and industrial character when viewing from BLM-managed lands within the Potrero ACEC	Class I
V-47	Increased structure contrast, skylining, and view blockage when viewed from Key Viewpoint 36 on Mapes Road	Class I

D.3.6 Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures for the Proposed Project – Devers-Harquahala

This section presents discussion of impacts and mitigation measures for the 500 kV portion of the DPV2 project. The discussion is divided into six geographic areas, three in Arizona and three in California. Within each area, both construction impacts and operational impacts are addressed.

D.3.6.1 Harquahala to Kofa National Wildlife Refuge

Construction Impacts

Impact V-1: Short-term visibility of construction activities, equipment, and night lighting (Class III)

Construction impacts on visual resources would result from the presence and visual intrusion of construction vehicles, equipment, materials, and work force at Harquahala Switchyard, two construction yards, and along the new transmission line route. Construction impacts on visual resources would also result from the temporary alteration of landforms and vegetation along the right-of-way (ROW). Vehicles, heavy equipment, project components, and workers would be visible during switchyard modifications, access and spur road clearing and grading, structure erection, conductor stringing, and site/ROW clean-up and restoration.

Specific facilities that would be visible along this portion of the project (in addition to the transmission line) would include Harquahala Switchyard, Tonopah Construction Yard located northwest of the intersection of West Indian School Road and North 411th Avenue and Vicksburg Construction Yard located south of a fuel station on Vicksburg Road on the south side of I-10.

Construction equipment and activities would be seen by various viewers in close proximity to the switchyard, construction yards and ROW including rural residents along West Courthouse Road and travelers on highways and local roads (I-10, Salome Highway, West Courthouse Road, West Indian School Road, North 411th Avenue, and Vicksburg Road). View durations would vary from moderate to extended.

Night lighting impacts during construction could occur if lighting at construction and storage yards and staging areas is not appropriately controlled.

Due to the relatively short duration of project construction (approximately 24 months), project construction impacts would generally constitute adverse, but less than significant (Class III) visual impacts. APMs B-5, B-14 and L-9 (presented in Table D.3-6 above) would help to minimize the impact at these sites. In addition, to ensure that viewers are not unnecessarily impacted during construction, Mitigation Measures V-1a and V-1b are recommended, but are not required because the impact is less than significant without mitigation. Please see the explanation of mitigation for less than significant impacts in Section D.1.2.

Mitigation Measures for Impact V-1: Visibility of Construction Activities and Equipment

V-1a **Reduce visibility of construction activities and equipment.** Substation construction sites and all staging and material and equipment storage areas, including storage sites for excavated materials shall be appropriately located away from areas of high public visibility. If visible from nearby roads, residences, public gathering areas, or recreational areas, facilities, or trails,

construction sites and staging and storage areas shall be visually screened using temporary screening fencing. Fencing will be of an appropriate design and color for each specific location. Additionally, avoid construction in areas visible from recreation facilities and areas during holidays and periods of heavy recreational use. This measure encompasses BLM permit requirements B-7.1 and B-7.2. SCE shall submit final construction plans demonstrating compliance with this measure to the BLM and CPUC for review and approval at least 60 days prior to the start of construction.

V-1b **Reduce construction night lighting impacts.** SCE shall design and install all lighting at construction and storage yards and staging areas such that light bulbs and reflectors are not visible from public viewing areas; lighting does not cause reflected glare; and illumination of the project facilities, vicinity, and nighttime sky is minimized. SCE shall submit a Construction Lighting Mitigation Plan to the BLM and CPUC for review and approval at least 90 days prior to the start of construction or the ordering of any exterior lighting fixtures or components, whichever comes first. SCE shall not order any exterior lighting fixtures or components until the Construction Lighting Mitigation Plan is approved by the BLM and CPUC. The Plan shall include but is not necessarily limited to the following:

- Lighting shall be designed so exterior light fixtures are hooded, with lights directed downward or toward the area to be illuminated and so that backscatter to the nighttime sky is minimized. The design of the lighting shall be such that the luminescence or light sources is shielded to prevent light trespass outside the project boundary
- All lighting shall be of minimum necessary brightness consistent with worker safety
- High illumination areas not occupied on a continuous basis shall have switches or motion detectors to light the area only when occupied.

Impact V-2: Long-term visibility of land scars in arid and semi-arid landscapes (Class II)

Land scarring from use of staging areas and construction yards, construction of new access and spur roads, and activities adjacent to construction sites and along the ROW can be long-lasting in arid and semi-arid environments where vegetation recruitment and growth is slow. In-line views of linear land scars or newly bladed roads are particularly problematic and introduce adverse visual change and contrast by causing unnatural vegetative lines and soil color contrast from newly exposed soils.

The longer duration of land scarring impacts would generally constitute potentially significant visual impacts that could be mitigated to levels that are less than significant (Class II). Implementation of Applicant Proposed Measures (APMs) presented in Table D.3-6 above that pertain to: (a) minimizing ground disturbance in general and the number of new access roads (B-14, B-30, W-9, W-17, G-10, G-11, G-19, V-4, and L-3; (b) minimizing loss or damage to vegetation (B-23-250); and (c) restoration and recontouring of disturbed areas (B-19) would reduce these impacts. However, Mitigation Measures V-2a through V-2c shall also be implemented in order to reduce impacts to less than significant levels.

Mitigation Measures for Impact V-2: Visibility of land scarring in arid and semi-arid landscapes

V-2a **Reduce in-line views of land scars.** Construct access or spur roads at appropriate angles from the originating, primary travel facilities to minimize extended, in-line views of newly graded terrain. Contour grading should be used where possible to better blend graded surfaces with existing terrain. SCE shall submit final construction plans demonstrating compliance with this measure to the BLM and CPUC for review and approval at least 60 days prior to the start of construction.

V-2b **Reduce visual contrast from unnatural vegetation lines.** In those areas where views of land scars are unavoidable, the boundaries of disturbed areas should be aggressively revegetated to create a less distinct and more natural-appearing line to reduce visual contrast. Furthermore, all graded roads and areas not required for on-going operation, maintenance, or access shall be returned to pre-construction conditions. This measure partially encompasses BLM permit requirement BLM B-6.9. SCE shall submit final construction and restoration plans demonstrating compliance with this measure to the BLM and CPUC for review and approval at least 60 days prior to the start of construction.

V-2c **Reduce color contrast of land scars.** In those areas where views of land scars from sensitive public viewing locations are unavoidable, disturbed soils shall be treated with Eonite or similar treatments to reduce the visual contrast created by the lighter-colored disturbed soils with the darker vegetated surroundings. SCE will consult with the Authorized Officer on a site-by-site basis for the use of Eonite. This measure partially encompasses BLM permit requirement BLM B-6.4. SCE shall submit final construction and restoration plans demonstrating compliance with this measure to the BLM and CPUC for review and approval at least 60 days prior to the start of construction.

Operational Impacts

From Harquahala Switchyard to Kofa National Wildlife Refuge, the Proposed Project would result in adverse but less than significant (Class III) visual impacts as the project parallels the existing DPV1 transmission line. Long-term, operational visual impacts would be experienced by travelers on I-10 and Salome Highway and recreationists accessing BLM lands south of the Big Horn Mountains (north of I-10) and the Eagletail Mountains (south of I-10). Three representative Key Viewpoints (KVPs 1 through 3) were selected to characterize the visual impacts that would occur along this route segment.

Impact V-3: Increased structure contrast when viewed from Key Viewpoint 1, south of the Big Horn Mountains (VRM) (Class III)

Figure D.3-2A (see enclosed CD) presents the existing view to the northwest from Key Viewpoint 1 on a 4WD access road, just north of I-10 and west of Burnt Mountain. Figure D.3-2B (see enclosed CD) presents a visual simulation that depicts the addition of the DPV2 transmission line adjacent and slightly to the south of the existing DPV1 transmission line. The Proposed Project would be similar in scale and design to the DPV1 line. Towers would be paired and conductor spans would generally be matched. As shown in the simulation, the new structures and conductors would be visible, though not prominent at this viewing distance. The new structures would be the same design and height as the existing structures. The resulting visual contrast would be weak and the overall level of change would be low. The BLM's Visual Resource Management (VRM) Class III objective allows for a moderate or lower degree of visual change that, while it may attract attention, should not dominate the view of the casual observer. The new line would not repeat the basic elements of the existing natural features in the landscape though it would repeat the characteristics of the existing line and would not dominate the view of the casual observer. Therefore, the low level of change that would be caused by this portion of the Proposed Project would be consistent with the applicable VRM Class III management objective and the resulting visual impact would be adverse but less than significant (Class III). The following APMs commit SCE to several tower design and placement measures to minimize visual impacts: APM V-1 through APM V-3, APM V-5 through APM V-10, APM L-4, and APM L-5. These measures are assumed to be implemented for all structures and route segments. In addition, visual resources Mitigation Measure V-3a is recommended to provide additional detail pertaining to structure design and

placement and is recommended for all structures and route segments including the route segment south of the Big Horn Mountains. While Impact V-3 is less than significant, mitigation is recommended in compliance with NEPA requirements (please see the explanation of mitigation for less than significant impacts in Section D.1.2). This viewpoint analysis is considered representative of views toward the Big Horn Mountains from BLM lands north of I-10.

Mitigation Measure for Impact V-3: Increased structure contrast when viewed from Key Viewpoint 1, south of the Big Horn Mountains

V-3a **Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors.** The following design measures shall be applied to all new structures and conductors in order to reduce the degree of visual contrast caused by the new facilities:

- All new and replacement structures are to as closely as possible match the design of the existing structures with which they will be seen.
- All new and replacement structures are to be paired as closely as possible with the existing structure(s) in the corridor in order to avoid or reduce the number of off-setting (from existing structures) tower placements.
- All new and replacement structures are to match the heights of the existing DPV1 structures to the extent possible as dictated by variation in terrain.
- All new and reconductored spans are to match existing conductor spans as closely as possible in order to avoid or reduce the occurrence of unnecessary visual complexity associated with asynchronous conductor spans, particularly at sensitive crossings such as Salome Highway, I-10, U.S. 95, Colorado River, SR 78, Dillon Road, SR 62, Whitewater Canyon Road, and San Timoteo Canyon Road.
- All new conductors are to be non-specular in design in order to reduce conductor visibility and visual contrast.
- To the extent feasible, no new access roads are to be constructed downhill from existing or proposed towers to reduce the potential for structure skylining.

Impact V-4: Increased structure contrast, view blockage, and skylining when viewed from Key Viewpoint 2 on Interstate 10, Crossing the Harquahala Plain (VS-VC) (Class III)

Figure D.3-3A (see enclosed CD) presents the existing view to the west from Key Viewpoint 2 on westbound I-10, approximately 1.5 miles west of Avenue 75E. Figure D.3-3B (see enclosed CD) presents a visual simulation that depicts the crossing of I-10. As shown in the simulation, the DPV2 transmission line towers (D-33 through D-37) would be located adjacent and slightly to the southeast of the existing DPV1 towers. Because of the angle of the crossing, the more gradual convergence on and then divergence from the highway allows for more structures to be visible within the primary cone of vision of travelers on I-10. The Proposed Project would be similar in scale and design to the DPV1 line and conductor spans would generally be matched. The new structures and conductors would cause a noticeable increase in structure prominence and industrial character within the corridor. Additional skylining (extending above the horizon line) and view blockage of background sky and distant mountains would also occur. As a result, visual contrast would be moderate and the Proposed Project would appear co-dominant with the existing landscape features. View blockage of background sky and mountains would be low-to-moderate.

The overall visual change would be moderate and in the context of the existing landscape's moderate visual sensitivity, the resulting visual impact would be adverse but less than significant (Class III). However, Mitigation Measure V-3a is recommended to further reduce the visual impact along this portion of the project. While Impact V-4 is less than significant, mitigation is recommended in compliance with NEPA requirements (please see the explanation of mitigation for less than significant impacts in Section D.1.2). This viewpoint analysis is considered representative of project views from I-10 on the Harquahala Plain in general and specifically at the two freeway crossings.

Mitigation Measure for Impact V-4

V-3a Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors.

Impact V-48: Inconsistency of the Harquahala Mountain Telecommunication Facility with BLM VRM Class II management objective due to increased structure contrast, industrial character, view blockage, and skylining when viewed from Harquahala Mountains Wilderness (VRM Class I) and surrounding area (VRM Class II)

The proposed Harquahala Mountain telecommunication facility would be constructed adjacent to an existing facility of similar design and character on BLM lands that are designated VRM Class II. The site location is in close proximity to the Harquahala Mountains Wilderness Area, which is designated VRM Class I. Although the new structures would be similar to the existing facilities, the new facility would cause an increase in industrial character, structure skylining, and view blockage. These visual effects would become more pronounced the closer the viewer is to the facility. Of particular concern are views from the adjacent Harquahala Mountains Wilderness, the Smithsonian Observatory, and the Harquahala Pack Trail. The resulting visual contrast for structural form and line would be moderate as would the overall level of change.

The BLM's Visual Resource Management (VRM) Class II objective requires that the existing character of the landscape be retained and that the level of change to the characteristic landscape be low and not attract the attention of the casual observer. Also, any changes to the landscape must repeat the basic elements of form, line, color, and texture found in the predominant natural features of the landscape. The new facility may not substantially alter the existing character of the telecommunication site, nor cause an incremental increase in facility noticeability. However, the new facility would not repeat the basic elements found in the natural features of the landscape. Therefore, the new facility would not achieve full consistency with the Class II objectives and the moderate level of visual change that would be caused by this portion of the Proposed Project would be inconsistent with the applicable VRM Class II management objectives. The resulting visual impact would be significant (Class I).

While it is not expected that that the Harquahala Mountain visual impact can be mitigated to a level that would be less than significant as presently proposed, Mitigation Measure C-1g (see Section D.7.6.1, Cultural Resources) is proposed to provide an opportunity to revise the project design to reduce the level of impact. However, at this point, even with mitigation, the impact would still be significant (Class I).

Mitigation Measure for Impact V-48

C-1g Minimize impacts at Harquahala Peak.

Impact V-5: Increased structure contrast, view blockage, and skylining when viewed from Key Viewpoint 3 at the north end of the Eagletail Mountains (VRM) (Class III)

Figure D.3-4A (see enclosed CD) presents the existing view to the northwest from Key Viewpoint 3 on Eagletail Mountains access road YE047 at the north end of the Eagletail Mountains. This viewpoint analysis is considered representative of views from the north access roads into the Eagletail Mountains. This viewpoint is located approximately 0.1 miles south of Pipeline Road. Figure D.3-4B (see enclosed CD) presents a visual simulation that depicts the addition of the DPV2 transmission line adjacent and slightly to the south of the existing DPV1 transmission line. The proposed structures would be similar in scale and design to the DPV1 line. The proposed towers would appear as complex, geometric forms with vertical to diagonal lines. The conductors would appear as simple curvilinear forms. Although the number of visible structures would be effectively doubled, existing and new structures would be paired and conductor spans would generally be matched. The resulting visual contrast would be weak-to-moderate, and the overall level of change would be low-to-moderate. The BLM's Visual Resource Management (VRM) Class III objective allows for a moderate or lower degree of visual change that, while it may attract attention, should not dominate the view of the casual observer. Although the new line would not repeat the basic elements of the existing natural features in the landscape, it would repeat the characteristics of the existing line and it would not dominate the view of the casual observer. Therefore, this portion of the Proposed Project would be consistent with the applicable VRM Class III management objective and the resulting visual impact would be adverse but less than significant (Class III). While Impact V-5 is less than significant, mitigation is recommended in compliance with NEPA requirements (please see the explanation of mitigation for less than significant impacts in Section D.1.2).

Mitigation Measure for Impact V-5

V-3a Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors.

Impact V-6: Increased structure contrast, industrial character, and skylining when viewing the Arizona Series Capacitor Bank from Pipeline Road (VRM) (Class III)

The proposed Arizona series capacitor bank would be located approximately 55 miles west of the Harquahala Switchyard on the Ranegras Plain on BLM land. The new site would be adjacent to the south side of the existing DPV1 series capacitor bank, between Towers M61-T3 and M61-T4. The site is approximately seven miles south of I-10 and is accessed from the nearby El Paso Natural Gas Pipeline road. The facility would occupy approximately two acres inside a fenced site and would temporarily use a one-acre fenced area for material laydown, storage, and staging. The facility would appear visually complex and industrial in character. Equipment would include series capacitors, dead-end structures, telecommunications equipment, night lighting fixtures and a mechanical-electrical equipment room. The new series capacitor bank would appear similar to the existing DPV1 series capacitor bank. In the context of the existing DPV1 facilities, the resulting visual contrast would be moderate. The overall level of change would be moderate. The BLM's Visual Resource Management (VRM) Class III objective would allow for a moderate or lower degree of visual change that, while it may attract attention, should not dominate the view of the casual observer. Although the new capacitor bank would not repeat the basic elements of the existing natural features in the landscape, it would repeat the characteristics of the existing capacitor bank and it would not dominate the view of the casual observer. Therefore, the capacitor bank would be consistent with the applicable VRM Class III management objective and the resulting visual impact would be adverse but less than significant (Class III). However, Mitigation Measures V-6a ~~through~~ and V-6c are recommended to reduce the visual impact of the series capacitor bank and to ensure that visual impacts do not become significant. While Impact V-6 is less than significant, mit-

igation is recommended in compliance with NEPA requirements (please see the explanation of mitigation for less than significant impacts in Section D.1.2). **Mitigation Measures V-6a ~~through~~ and V-6c would also apply to all permanent ancillary facilities including substations/switchyards, 500 kV shunt reactor, series capacitor banks, and optical repeater stations.**

Mitigation Measures for Impact V-6: Increased structure contrast, industrial character, and skylining when viewing the Arizona Series Capacitor Bank from Pipeline Road

V-6a **Reduce visual contrast associated with ancillary facilities.** SCE shall submit to BLM and CPUC a Surface Treatment Plan describing the application of colors and textures to all facility structures, buildings, walls, fences, and components comprising all ancillary facilities including substations/switchyards, series capacitor banks, and optical repeater stations. The Surface Treatment Plan must reduce glare and minimize visual intrusion and contrast by blending the facilities with the landscape. The Treatment Plan shall be submitted to BLM and CPUC for approval at least 90 days prior to (a) ordering the first structures that are to be color treated during manufacture, or (b) construction of any of the ancillary facility component, whichever comes first. If the BLM or CPUC notifies SCE that revisions to the Plan are needed before the Plan can be approved, within 30 days of receiving that notification, SCE shall prepare and submit for review and approval a revised Plan. The Surface Treatment Plan shall include:

- Specification, and 11”x17” color simulations at life size scale, of the treatment proposed for use on project structures, including structures treated during manufacture
- A list of each major project structure, building, tower and/or pole, and fencing specifying the color(s) and finish proposed for each (colors must be identified by name and by vendor brand or a universal designation)
- Two sets of brochures and/or color chips for each proposed color
- A detailed schedule for completion of the treatment
- A procedure to ensure proper treatment maintenance for the life of the project.

SCE shall not specify to the vendors the treatment of any buildings or structures treated during manufacture, or perform the final treatment on any buildings or structures treated onsite, until SCE receives notification of approval of the Treatment Plan by the BLM and CPUC. Within 30 days following the start of commercial operation, SCE shall notify the BLM and CPUC that all buildings and structures are ready for inspection.

~~**V-6b** **Screen ancillary facilities.** SCE shall provide a Screening Plan for screening vegetation, walls, and fences that reduces visibility of ancillary facilities (except Devers Substation) and helps the facility blend in with the landscape. The use of berms to facilitate project screening may also be incorporated into the Plan. SCE shall submit the Plan to the BLM and CPUC for review and approval at least 90 days prior to installing the landscape screening. If the BLM or CPUC notifies SCE that revisions to the Plan are needed before the Plan can be approved, within 30 days of receiving that notification, SCE shall prepare and submit for review and approval a revised Plan. The plan shall include but not necessarily be limited to:~~

- ~~An 11”x17” color simulation of the proposed landscaping at 5 years~~
- ~~A plan view to scale depicting the project and the location of screening elements~~
- ~~A detailed list of any plants to be used; their size and age at planting; the expected time to maturity, and the expected height at five years and at maturity.~~

~~SCE shall complete installation of the screening prior to the start of project operation. SCE shall notify the BLM and CPUC within seven days after completing installation of the screening, that the screening components are ready for inspection.~~

V-6c **Reduce night lighting impacts.** SCE shall design and install all permanent lighting such that light bulbs and reflectors are not visible from public viewing areas; lighting does not cause reflected glare; and illumination of the project facilities, vicinity, and nighttime sky is minimized. SCE shall submit a Lighting Mitigation Plan to the BLM and CPUC for review and approval at least 90 days prior to ordering any permanent exterior lighting fixtures or components. SCE shall not order any exterior lighting fixtures or components until the Lighting Mitigation Plan is approved by the BLM and CPUC. The Plan shall include but is not necessarily limited to the following:

- Lighting shall be designed so exterior light fixtures are hooded, with lights directed downward or toward the area to be illuminated and so that backscatter to the nighttime sky is minimized. The design of the lighting shall be such that the luminescence or light sources is shielded to prevent light trespass outside the project boundary
- All lighting shall be of minimum necessary brightness consistent with worker safety
- High illumination areas not occupied on a continuous basis shall have switches or motion detectors to light the area only when occupied.

D.3.6.2 Kofa National Wildlife Refuge

Impact V-1: Short-term visibility of construction activities, equipment and night lighting (Class III)

Construction impacts within Kofa National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) would be as described above for the Harquahala to Kofa segment in Section D.3.6.1. Although there are no ancillary facilities (e.g., substations, switchyards, series capacitor sites, and construction yards) proposed along this route segment, specific viewing opportunities of concern would include Crystal Hill Road and Pipeline Road.

Due to the relatively short duration of project construction (approximately 24 months), project construction impacts would generally constitute adverse, but less than significant (Class III) visual impacts. In addition to the APMs identified under Impact V-1 in Section D.3.6.1 (B-5, B-14, and L-9), APM L-1 would also apply in this segment. Mitigation Measures V-1a and V-1b (full text presented above) are recommended to further reduce construction impacts. While Impact V-1 in this segment would be less than significant, mitigation is recommended in compliance with NEPA requirements (please see the explanation of mitigation for less than significant impacts in Section D.1.2).

Mitigation Measures for Impact V-1: Visibility of Construction Activities and Equipment

V-1a **Reduce visibility of construction activities and equipment.**

V-1b **Reduce construction night lighting impacts.**

Impact V-2: Long-term visibility of land scars in arid and semi-arid landscapes (Class II)

This impact, described in Section D.3.6.1 above, would also occur in the Kofa NWR segment. The following APMs must be implemented in this segment: B-14, B-23-25, B-30, W-9, W-17, G-10, G-11, V-4, L-1, and L-3. Because the APMs alone do not eliminate the significant impacts, Mitigation Measures V-2a,

V-2b, and V-2c are required in order to reduce the potentially significant impact (Class II) to less than significant levels.

Mitigation Measures for Impact V-2: Visibility of land scarring in arid and semi-arid landscapes (Class II)

V-2a Reduce in-line views of land scars.

V-2b Reduce visual contrast from unnatural vegetation lines.

V-2c Reduce color contrast of land scars.

Operational Impacts

Within Kofa National Wildlife Refuge, the Proposed Project would result in significant and unmitigable (Class I) visual impacts as the project parallels the existing DPV1 transmission line. Long-term, operational visual impacts would be experienced by travelers and recreationists accessing the refuge on Pipeline Road and Crystal Hill Road. One representative Key Viewpoint (KVP 4) was selected to characterize the visual impacts that would occur along this route segment.

Impact V-7: Increased visual contrast, view blockage, and skylining when viewed from Key Viewpoint 4 on Crystal Hill Road in Kofa NWR (VS-VC) (Class I)

Figure D.3-5A (see enclosed CD) presents the existing view to the southeast from Key Viewpoint 4 on Crystal Hill Road in Kofa NWR, approximately 4.8 miles east of U.S. 95. Figure D.3-5B (see enclosed CD) presents a visual simulation that depicts the addition of the DPV2 transmission line adjacent and slightly to the south of the existing DPV1 line. As shown in the simulation, the DPV2 transmission line towers (F-50 through F-53 in the image) would be similar in scale and design to the DPV1 line and conductor spans would generally be matched. The new structures and conductors would cause a noticeable increase in structure prominence and industrial character along the corridor. Additional skylining (extending above the horizon line) and view blockage of background sky and the Livingston Hills and Kofa Mountains would also occur. As a result, visual contrast would be moderate and the Proposed Project would appear co-dominant with the existing landscape features. View blockage of background sky and mountains would be moderate-to-high and is a key consideration in the conclusion of overall visual change. In this narrow valley landscape with somewhat confined sightlines, the most notable features are the rugged mountains with jagged ridgelines that form the southern backdrop to the existing corridor. Any additional blockage of these scenic features would substantially compromise overall visual quality within this portion of Kofa.

The overall visual change would be moderate and in the context of the existing landscape's moderate-to-high visual sensitivity, the resulting visual impact would be significant (Class I). Although Mitigation Measure V-3a is recommended to reduce the visual impact along this portion of the project, the visual impact would not be reduced to less than significant levels. This viewpoint analysis is considered representative of project views within Kofa from Crystal Hill Road, Pipeline Road, and other branch roads.

Mitigation Measure for Impact V-7

V-3a Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors.

D.3.6.3 Kofa National Wildlife Refuge to Colorado River

Construction Impacts

Construction impacts from Kofa NWR to the Colorado River would be as described above for the Harquahala to Kofa segment in Section D.3.6.1 and would include visibility of construction activities and equipment (Impact V-1) and visibility of land scarring (Impact V-2).

Impact V-1: Short-term visibility of construction activities, equipment and night lighting (Class III)

The only ancillary facility associated with this route segment would be the Quartzsite Construction Yard, located approximately 1,000 feet north of the intersection of Quartzsite Road and Main Street in Quartzsite. Specific viewing opportunities of concern along this portion of the transmission line route would include U.S. 95, the access road to Copper Bottom Pass, access roads into the Dome Rock Mountains from Ehrenberg and the Ehrenberg Sandbowl OHV Area, the east levee road along the east side of the Colorado River, and the Colorado River.

Due to the relatively short duration of project construction (approximately 24 months), project construction impacts would generally constitute adverse, but less than significant (Class III) visual impacts. The APMs must be implemented in this segment: B-5, B-14, and L-9, and L-1. Mitigation Measures V-1a and V-1b (full text presented above) are recommended to further reduce construction impacts. While Impact V-1 in this segment would be less than significant, mitigation is recommended in compliance with NEPA requirements (please see the explanation of mitigation for less than significant impacts in Section D.1.2).

Mitigation Measures for Impact V-1: Visibility of Construction Activities and Equipment

V-1a Reduce visibility of construction activities and equipment.

V-1b Reduce construction night lighting impacts.

Impact V-2: Long-term visibility of land scars in arid and semi-arid landscapes (Class II)

This impact, described in Section D.3.6.1 above, would also occur in the Kofa NWR to the Colorado River segment. The following APMs must be implemented in this segment: B-14, B-23-25, B-30, W-9, W-17, G-10, G-11, V-4, L-1, and L-3. However, in addition to the APMs, Mitigation Measures V-2a, V-2b, and V-2c are required in order to reduce the potentially significant impact (Class II) to less than significant levels.

Mitigation Measures for Impact V-2: Visibility of land scarring in arid and semi-arid landscapes (Class II)

V-2a Reduce in-line views of land scars.

V-2b Reduce visual contrast from unnatural vegetation lines.

V-2c Reduce color contrast of land scars.

Operational Impacts

From Kofa NWR to the Colorado River, the Proposed Project would result in adverse but less than significant (Class III) visual impacts as the project parallels the existing DPV1 transmission line. Long-term, operational visual impacts would be experienced by travelers on U.S. 95 and recreationists accessing

the Copper Bottom Pass area and the Colorado River corridor. Three representative Key Viewpoints (KVPs 5 through 7) were selected to characterize the visual impacts that would occur along this route segment. Photos of these KVPs and simulations at each location are presented after the discussion of Impact V-10.

Impact V-8: Increased structure contrast, view blockage, and skylining when viewed from Key Viewpoint 5 on U.S. 95 near the Crystal Hill Road Entrance to Kofa NWR (VRM) (Class III)

Figure D.3-6A (see enclosed CD) presents the existing view to the north from Key Viewpoint 5 on northbound U.S. 95, just south of the Crystal Hill Road entrance to Kofa NWR. Figure D.3-6B (see enclosed CD) presents a visual simulation of the span of U.S. 95 with the addition of the DPV2 transmission line adjacent and slightly to the south of the existing DPV1 transmission line. The angle at which the corridor crosses U.S. 95 is closer to 95 degrees and thus, fewer towers are visible within the primary cone of vision of motorists on U.S. 95. The proposed structures would be similar in scale and design to the DPV1 line. The proposed towers would appear as complex, geometric forms with vertical to diagonal lines. The conductors would appear as simple curvilinear forms. Although the number of visible structures would be effectively doubled, existing and new structures would be paired and conductor spans would generally be matched. The existing landscape character would not substantially change with addition of the Proposed Project. The resulting visual contrast would be weak and the overall level of change would be low. The BLM's Visual Resource Management (VRM) Class III objective allows for a moderate or lower degree of visual change that, while it may attract attention, should not dominate the view of the casual observer. Although the new line would not repeat the basic elements of the existing natural features in the landscape, it would repeat the characteristics of the existing line and it would not dominate the view of the casual observer. Therefore, the low level of visual change that would be caused by this portion of the Proposed Project would be consistent with the applicable VRM Class III management objective and the resulting visual impact would be adverse but less than significant (Class III). Mitigation Measure V-3a is recommended to further reduce the visual impact along this portion of the project. While Impact V-8 in this segment would be less than significant, mitigation is recommended in compliance with NEPA requirements (please see the explanation of mitigation for less than significant impacts in Section D.1.2). This viewpoint analysis is considered representative of project views from U.S. 95 on the La Posa Plain in general and specifically at the highway crossing.

Mitigation Measure for Impact V-8

V-3a Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors.

Impact V-9: Increased structure contrast, industrial character, and view blockage when viewed from Key Viewpoint 6 on Pipeline Road near Copper Bottom Pass (VRM) (Class III)

Figure D.3-7A (see enclosed CD) presents the existing view to the east-southeast from Key Viewpoint 6 on Pipeline Road, just south of Copper Bottom Pass in the Dome Rock Mountains. Figure D.3-7B (see enclosed CD) presents a visual simulation with the addition of the DPV2 transmission line adjacent and slightly to the south of the existing DPV1 transmission line. Because of the close parallel of the corridor with Pipeline Road and the resulting "in-line" view of the corridor, a number of towers are visible within the primary cone of vision of travelers on Pipeline Road. The proposed structures would be similar in scale and design to the DPV1 line and would appear as complex, geometric forms with vertical to diagonal lines. The conductors would appear as simple curvilinear forms. Although the number of visible structures would be effectively doubled, existing and new structures would be paired and conductor spans would generally be matched though variations in terrain may result in varying tower elevations and the appearance of asynchronous spans in some cases. The new line would also cause some

additional view blockage of the adjacent ridges and slopes when viewed from Pipeline Road and increase the structural complexity and industrial character in the narrow valley landscape. The resulting visual contrast would be moderate as would be the overall level of change. The BLM's Visual Resource Management (VRM) Class III objective allows for a moderate or lower degree of visual change that, while it may attract attention, should not dominate the view of the casual observer. Although the new line would not repeat the basic elements of the existing natural features in the landscape, it would repeat the characteristics of the existing line and would not dominate the view of the casual observer. Therefore, the moderate level of visual change that would be caused by this portion of the Proposed Project would be consistent with the applicable VRM Class III management objective and the resulting visual impact would be adverse but less than significant (Class III). Mitigation Measure V-3a is recommended to further reduce the visual impact along this portion of the project. While Impact V-9 would be less than significant, mitigation is recommended in compliance with NEPA requirements (please see the explanation of mitigation for less than significant impacts in Section D.1.2). This viewpoint analysis is considered representative of project views from the west side of the Dome Rock Mountains.

Mitigation Measure for Impact V-9

V-3a Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors.

Impact V-10: Increased structure contrast, view blockage, and skylining when viewed from Key Viewpoint 7 on the Colorado River (VRM) (Class III)

Figure D.3-8A (see enclosed CD) presents the existing view to the southwest from Key Viewpoint 7 on the Colorado River, north of the crossing. Figure D.3-8B (see enclosed CD) presents a visual simulation of the span of the river with the addition of the DPV2 transmission line adjacent and slightly to the north of the existing DPV1 transmission line. The proposed towers would appear as complex, geometric forms with vertical to diagonal lines. The existing and new structures would be paired and conductor spans, which would appear as simple curvilinear forms, would generally be matched. Although the new structures would be the same design and height as the existing structures, the new structures would "skyline" (extend above the horizon line) as they approach the span of the river. As a result, some additional view blockage of sky would occur when viewed from the river.

The Proposed Project would also increase the overall structural complexity and industrial character visible from the river and would contrast with the relatively horizontal, natural characteristics of the river environment composed of the watercourse, parallel banks, and riparian vegetation. The level of change attributable to the conductors, which span a VRM Class II area (riparian border to riparian border) would be low with only marginally more prominent curvilinear lines over the river. The low level of change would be consistent with the VRM Class II management objective.

The transmission towers would be located outside of the riparian boundary in areas designated VRM Class III. The resulting visual contrast for form and line associated with the structures would be moderate as would be the overall level of change. The BLM's Visual Resource Management (VRM) Class III objective (for areas outside of the riparian corridor) allows for a moderate or lower degree of visual change that, while it may attract attention, should not dominate the view of the casual observer. Although the structures would not repeat the basic elements of the existing natural features in the landscape, they would repeat the characteristics of the existing towers and would not dominate the view of the casual observer. Therefore, the moderate level of visual change that would be caused by the structures would be consistent with the applicable VRM Class III management objective and the resulting visual impact would be adverse but less than significant (Class III). Mitigation Measure V-3a is recommended to further reduce the visual impact along this portion of the project. While Impact V-10 would be less than

significant, mitigation is recommended in compliance with NEPA requirements (please see the explanation of mitigation for less than significant impacts in Section D.1.2).This viewpoint analysis is considered representative of project views from the Colorado River, both north and south of the crossing.

Mitigation Measure for Impact V-10

V-3a Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors.

D.3.6.4 Palo Verde Valley (Colorado River to Midpoint Substation)

Construction Impacts

Construction impacts within the Palo Verde Valley from the Colorado River to Midpoint Substation would be as described above for the Harquahala to Kofa segment in Section D.3.6.1 and would include visibility of construction activities and equipment (Impact V-1) and visibility of land scarring (Impact V-2).

Impact V-1: Short-term Visibility of construction activities, equipment and night lighting (Class III)

Ancillary facilities associated with this route segment would include the Blythe Construction Yard, located on the north side of Hobson Way, one mile west of Neighbors Blvd, on the west side of Blythe Substation, and the Blythe Optical Repeater Station located approximately six miles southwest of Blythe (and just west of Lovekin Road) adjacent to the proposed ROW. Specific viewing opportunities of concern along this portion of the transmission line route would include SR 78, several local roads and a few rural residences. Viewing opportunities of concern for the Blythe Construction Yard include Hobson Way and I-10.

Due to the relatively short duration of project construction (approximately 24 months), project construction impacts would generally constitute adverse, but less than significant (Class III) visual impacts. Mitigation Measures V-1a and V-1b (full text presented above) are recommended to further reduce construction impacts. While Impact V-1 in this segment would be less than significant, mitigation is recommended in compliance with NEPA requirements (please see the explanation of mitigation for less than significant impacts in Section D.1.2).

Mitigation Measures for Impact V-1: Visibility of Construction Activities and Equipment

V-1a Reduce visibility of construction activities and equipment.

V-1b Reduce construction night lighting impacts.

Impact V-2: Long-term visibility of land scars in arid and semi-arid landscapes (Class II)

This impact, described in Section D.3.6.1 above, would also occur in the Palo Verde Valley from the Colorado River to Midpoint Substation segment. The following APMs must be implemented in this segment: B-14, B-23-25, B-30, W-9, W-17, G-10, G-11, V-4, L-1, and L-3. However, Mitigation Measures V-2a, V-2b, and V-2c are required in order to reduce the potentially significant impact (Class II) to less than significant levels.

Mitigation Measures for Impact V-2: Visibility of land scarring in arid and semi-arid landscapes (Class II)

V-2a Reduce in-line views of land scars.

V-2b Reduce visual contrast from unnatural vegetation lines.

V-2c Reduce color contrast of land scars.

Operational Impacts

Within the Palo Verde Valley, the Proposed Project would result in adverse but less than significant (Class III) visual impacts as the project parallels the existing DPV1 transmission line through agricultural fields on the valley floor. Long-term, operational visual impacts would be experienced by travelers on local roads in the vicinity of the route and the Blythe Repeater Station, and from a very few residences. One representative Key Viewpoint (KVP 8) was selected to characterize the visual impacts that would occur along this segment of the transmission line.

Impact V-11: Increased structure contrast, view blockage, and skylining when viewed from Key Viewpoint 8 on SR 78 Near Ripley (VS-VC) (Class III)

Figure D.3-9A (see enclosed CD) presents the existing view to the north from Key Viewpoint 8 on northbound SR-78, just north of the community of Ripley. Figure D.3-9B (see enclosed CD) presents a visual simulation that depicts the crossing of SR-78. As shown in the simulation, the DPV2 transmission line towers (2735 and 2736) would be located adjacent and to the north of the existing DPV1 towers. The 90 degree angle crossing reduces the number of structures visible within the primary cone of vision of travelers on SR-78. The Proposed Project would be similar in scale and design to the DPV1 line and conductor spans would generally be matched. In the context of the forms, lines, and landscape character attributable to agrarian management in the valley, the new structures and conductors would cause a noticeable increase in structure prominence and industrial character when viewed from SR-78. Additional skylining (extending above the horizon line) and view blockage of background sky and distant mountains would also occur. However, in the context of the existing structures, visual contrast would be low-to-moderate and the Proposed Project would appear co-dominant with the existing landscape features. View blockage of background sky and mountains would be moderate.

The overall visual change would be moderate and in the context of the existing landscape's moderate visual sensitivity, the resulting visual impact would be adverse but less than significant (Class III). Mitigation Measure V-3a is recommended to reduce the visual impact along this portion of the project. While Impact V-11 in this segment would be less than significant, mitigation is recommended in compliance with NEPA requirements (please see the explanation of mitigation for less than significant impacts in Section D.1.2). This viewpoint analysis is considered representative of project views in the Palo Verde Valley.

Mitigation Measure for Impact V-11

V-3a Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors.

Impact V-12: Introduction of new structure contrast and industrial character when viewing the Blythe Optical Repeater Station site from nearby local roads (VS-VC) (Class III)

The Blythe Optical Repeater Station would consist of a 12' x 36' prefabricated building, an emergency generator, and a 500-gallon fuel tank along with two air condition systems and other minor equipment.

The Repeater Station would be located adjacent to the ROW, just west of Lovekin Road and approximately six miles southwest of the City of Blythe in an area characterized by flat agricultural fields and ancillary agricultural structures and facilities.

The resulting visual contrast and view blockage would be low-to-moderate. The facility would appear subordinate to other landscape features including the existing and proposed transmission line structures. The overall level of change would be low-to-moderate and in the context of the existing landscape's moderate visual sensitivity, the resulting visual impact would be adverse but less than significant (Class III). In order to minimize the visual impacts of this relatively small facility, Mitigation Measures V-6a ~~through~~ and V-6c are recommended. While Impact V-12 would be less than significant, mitigation is recommended in compliance with NEPA requirements (please see the explanation of mitigation for less than significant impacts in Section D.1.2).

Mitigation Measures for Impact V-12: Introduction of new structure contrast and industrial character when viewing the Blythe Optical Repeater Station site from nearby local roads

V-6a **Reduce visual contrast associated with ancillary facilities.**

~~**V-6b** **Screen ancillary facilities.**~~

V-6c **Reduce night lighting impacts.**

D.3.6.5 Midpoint Substation

Construction Impacts

Construction impacts associated with Midpoint Substation would be as described above for the Harquahala to Kofa segment in Section D.3.6.1 and would include visibility of construction activities and equipment (Impact V-1) and visibility of land scarring (Impact V-2).

Impact V-1: Short-term Visibility of construction activities, equipment and night lighting (Class III)

Although there are a very few rural residences in the general region (to the north and east) of the Midpoint Substation site, the primary viewing opportunity of concern along this portion of the transmission line route would be from the 4WD access road to the Mule Mountains ACEC. This 4WD road heads south from the Mesa Verde residential community (Nicholls Warm Springs) and passes just west of the substation site.

Due to the relatively short duration of project construction, project construction impacts would generally constitute adverse, but less than significant (Class III) visual impacts. Mitigation Measures V-1a and V-1b (full text presented above) are recommended to further reduce construction impacts. While Impact V-1 in this segment would be less than significant, mitigation is recommended in compliance with NEPA requirements (please see the explanation of mitigation for less than significant impacts in Section D.1.2).

Mitigation Measures for Impact V-1: Visibility of Construction Activities and Equipment

V-1a **Reduce visibility of construction activities and equipment.**

V-1b **Reduce construction night lighting impacts.**

Impact V-2: Long-term visibility of land scars in arid and semi-arid landscapes (Class II)

This impact, described in Section D.3.6.1 above, would also occur in the area of the Midpoint Substation. The following APMs must be implemented in this segment: B-14, B-23-25, B-30, W-9, W-17, G-10, G-11, V-4, L-1, and L-3. In addition, Mitigation Measures V-2a, V-2b, and V-2c are required in order to reduce the potentially significant impact (Class II) to less than significant levels.

Mitigation Measures for Impact V-2: Visibility of land scarring in arid and semi-arid landscapes (Class II)

V-2a Reduce in-line views of land scars.

V-2b Reduce visual contrast from unnatural vegetation lines.

V-2c Reduce color contrast of land scars.

Operational Impacts

On Palo Verde Mesa, Midpoint Substation would be located adjacent to the existing DPV1 transmission line to the south and two 161 kV transmission lines to the east in a flat, open landscape sparsely vegetated with short grass and low-growing shrubs of muted colors. Given the limited public access in this area, viewer exposure to the substation site would be minimal.

Impact V-13: Increased structure contrast, industrial character, view blockage, and skylining when viewing the Midpoint Substation site from the nearby BLM access road (VRM) (Class III)

The proposed substation would appear as an assemblage of complex, geometric forms with vertical to diagonal lines. Although the substation structures would exhibit an industrial character similar to the existing DPV1 transmission line, the substation structures would be more numerous and would increase the overall structural complexity at this location. The resulting visual contrast for form and line would be moderate in the context of the existing infrastructure. The overall level of change would also be moderate. The BLM's Visual Resource Management (VRM) Class III objective allows for a moderate or lower degree of visual change that, while it may attract attention, should not dominate the view of the casual observer. Although the substation would not repeat the basic elements of the existing natural features in the landscape, it would repeat the characteristics of the existing transmission lines and it would not dominate the view of the casual observer. Therefore, the moderate level of visual change that would be caused by Midpoint Substation would be consistent with the Interim VRM Class III management objective and the resulting visual impact would be adverse but less than significant (Class III). Additionally, the substation would have the potential to cause light and glare impacts if night lighting is not properly controlled. While the visual impacts at the substation are less than significant, Mitigation Measures V-6a ~~through~~ and V-6c are recommended to further reduce the visual impact of Midpoint Substation. While Impact V-13 would be less than significant, mitigation is recommended in compliance with NEPA requirements (please see the explanation of mitigation for less than significant impacts in Section D.1.2).

Mitigation Measures for Impact V-13

V-6a Reduce visual contrast associated with ancillary facilities.

~~**V-6b Screen ancillary facilities.**~~

V-6c Reduce night lighting impacts.

D.3.6.6 Midpoint Substation to Cactus City Rest Area

Construction Impacts

Construction impacts associated with the Midpoint Substation to Cactus City Rest Area segment would be as described above for the Harquahala to Kofa segment in Section D.3.6.1 and would include visibility of construction activities and equipment (Impact V-1) and visibility of land scarring (Impact V-2).

Impact V-1: Short-term Visibility of construction activities, equipment and night lighting (Class III)

Ancillary facilities associated with this route segment would include the Desert Center Construction Yard, approximately 1,000 feet northwest of the intersection of Rice Road (SR 177) and Ragsdale Road. The other ancillary facility along this route segment would be the California Series Capacitor in the Chuckwalla Valley, adjacent to the south side of the existing DPV1 series capacitor, approximately 0.4 miles south of I-10 and just west of Red Cloud Road. There are numerous viewing opportunities of concern along this route segment including from paved roads (I-10, Wiley Well Road, Chuckwalla Valley Road, Box Canyon Road, and Cottonwood Springs Road); unpaved 4WD access roads (Graham Pass Road, Dupont Road, Corn Springs Road, Red Cloud Road, Summit Road, and Red Canyon Trail); commercial and tourist service stops including Desert Center, Chiriaco Summit, and Cactus City Rest Area; and Alligator Rock ACEC.

Due to the relatively short duration of project construction, project construction impacts would generally constitute adverse, but less than significant (Class III) visual impacts. Mitigation Measures V-1a and V-1b (full text presented above) are recommended to further reduce construction impacts. While Impact V-1 in this segment would be less than significant, mitigation is recommended in compliance with NEPA requirements (please see the explanation of mitigation for less than significant impacts in Section D.1.2).

Mitigation Measures for Impact V-1: Visibility of Construction Activities and Equipment

V-1a Reduce visibility of construction activities and equipment.

V-1b Reduce construction night lighting impacts.

Impact V-2: Long-term visibility of land scars in arid and semi-arid landscapes (Class II)

This impact, described in Section D.3.6.1 above, would also occur in the area of the Midpoint Substation to Cactus City Rest Area segment. The following APMs must be implemented in this segment: B-14, B-23-25, B-30, W-9, W-17, G-10, G-11, V-4, L-1, and L-3. In addition, Mitigation Measures V-2a, V-2b, and V-2c are required in order to reduce the potentially significant impact (Class II) to less than significant levels.

Mitigation Measures for Impact V-2: Visibility of land scarring in arid and semi-arid landscapes (Class II)

V-2a Reduce in-line views of land scars.

V-2b Reduce visual contrast from unnatural vegetation lines.

V-2c Reduce color contrast of land scars.

Operational Impacts

From Midpoint Substation to the Cactus City Rest Area, the Proposed Project would parallel the existing DPV1 transmission line across the expansive Chuckwalla Valley and smaller Shavers Valley. This portion of the project would result in significant (Class I) visual impacts and adverse but less than significant (Class III) visual impacts. Long-term, operational visual impacts would be experienced from numerous locations along this route segment as noted above. Four representative Key Viewpoints (KVPs 9 through 12) were selected to characterize the visual impacts that would occur along this segment of the transmission line.

Impact V-14: Increased structure contrast, view blockage, and skylining when viewed from Key Viewpoint 9 on Interstate 10 in the eastern Chuckwalla Valley (VRM) (Class III)

Figure D.3-10A (see enclosed CD) presents the existing view to the east-southeast from Key Viewpoint 9 on eastbound I-10, at the end of the on-ramp from Corn Springs Road in Chuckwalla Valley. Figure D.3-10B (see enclosed CD) presents a visual simulation of the DPV2 transmission line adjacent and slightly to the north of the existing DPV1 transmission line. The relatively close parallel of the Proposed Project to I-10 and the resulting in-line view causes more structures to fall within the primary cone of vision of motorists on I-10. Compared to the existing DPV1 structures, the new structures would be of similar design (complex, geometric forms with vertical to diagonal lines) and height and the conductors would appear as simple curvilinear lines. Although the number of visible structures would be effectively doubled, existing and new structures would be paired and conductor spans would generally be matched. The new structures would also cause additional skylining as they cross the flat expanse of Chuckwalla Valley, resulting in some additional view blockage of sky and mountains (though slight) when viewed from I-10. Visual contrast would be weak for structural form and weak-to-moderate for line and the existing landscape character would not substantially change. The overall level of change would be low.

The BLM's Visual Resource Management (VRM) Class III objective allows for a moderate or lower degree of visual change that, while it may attract attention, should not dominate the view of the casual observer. Although the new line would not repeat the basic elements of the existing natural features in the landscape, it would repeat the characteristics of the existing line and it would not dominate the view of the casual observer. Therefore, the low level of visual change that would be caused by this portion of the Proposed Project would be consistent with the applicable VRM Class III management objective and the resulting visual impact would be adverse but less than significant (Class III). Mitigation Measure V-3a is recommended to reduce the visual impact along this portion of the project. While Impact V-14 would be less than significant, mitigation is recommended in compliance with NEPA requirements (please see the explanation of mitigation for less than significant impacts in Section D.1.2). This viewpoint analysis is considered representative of project views within the central and eastern Chuckwalla Valley.

Mitigation Measure for Impact V-14

V-3a Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors.

Impact V-15: Inconsistency with Interim BLM VRM Class II management objective due to increased structure contrast, industrial character, view blockage, and skylining when viewed from Key Viewpoint 10 in the Alligator Rock ACEC (VRM) (Class I)

Figure D.3-11A (see enclosed CD) presents the existing view to the east-southeast from Key Viewpoint 10 on an access road within the Alligator Rock ACEC, south of I-10 and Desert Center. Figure D.3-11B (see enclosed CD) presents a visual simulation of the DPV2 transmission line adjacent and

slightly to the north of the existing DPV1 transmission line. Although the new structures would be of similar design and height as the existing DPV1 structures, the new structures would cause additional skylining and view blockage of the Chuckwalla Mountains in the background. The new line would also increase the structural complexity and industrial character visible from the several access roads within the Alligator Rock ACEC. These visual effects would become more pronounced the closer the viewer is to the transmission line. The resulting visual contrast for structural form and line would be moderate because of the close proximity of viewers to the line. The overall level of change would also be moderate.

The BLM's Visual Resource Management (VRM) Class II objective requires that the existing character of the landscape be retained and that the level of change to the characteristic landscape be low and not attract the attention of the casual observer. Also, any changes to the landscape must repeat the basic elements of form, line, color, and texture found in the predominant natural features of the landscape. The new line would not achieve any of the Class II objectives. Therefore, the moderate level of visual change that would be caused by this portion of the Proposed Project would be inconsistent with the applicable VRM Class II management objectives and the resulting visual impact would be significant (Class I). There is no mitigation available to reduce the significant visual impact to a level that would be less than significant. It would be possible to relocate the DPV2 line out of the ACEC into VRM Class III areas, but the resulting visual impact would be even greater given the absence of similar facilities (i.e., transmission lines) in the VRM Class III areas. VRM Class III areas require that the level of change to the characteristic landscape be "moderate or less" and that the project should not dominate the view of the casual observer. A new 500 kV transmission line would create change exceeding "moderate" and it would dominate the view. Therefore, significant visual impacts would still occur with a realignment of the Proposed Project, which is therefore not recommended. However, Mitigation Measure V-3a is recommended to reduce the visual impact along this portion of the project. This viewpoint analysis is considered representative of project views within the Alligator Rock ACEC.

Mitigation Measure for Impact V-15

V-3a Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors.

Impact V-16: Increased structure contrast, view blockage, and skylining when viewing the Orocopia Mountains from Key Viewpoint 11 on Interstate 10 (VRM) (Class III)

Figure D.3-12A (see enclosed CD) presents the existing view to the southeast from Key Viewpoint 11 on eastbound I-10, approximately 0.9 miles west of Hayfield Road. Figure D.3-12B (see enclosed CD) presents a visual simulation of the DPV2 transmission line adjacent and slightly to the north of the existing DPV1 transmission line. Although the new structures would be of similar design and height as the existing DPV1 structures, the new structures would cause additional skylining as the line crosses the lower ridges of the Orocopia Mountains. As a result, some additional view blockage of sky and mountains (though slight) would occur when viewed from I-10. The new line would also increase the structural complexity and industrial character visible from I-10 though when backdropped by the rugged slopes, the structures would blend relatively well. The resulting visual contrast would be moderate for structural form and weak for line, color, and texture. The overall level of change would be low-to-moderate.

The BLM's Visual Resource Management (VRM) Class III objective allows for a moderate or lower degree of visual change that, while it may attract attention, should not dominate the view of the casual observer. Although the new line would not repeat the basic elements of the existing natural features in the landscape, it would repeat the characteristics of the existing line and it would not dominate the view

of the casual observer. Therefore, the low level of visual change that would be caused by this portion of the Proposed Project would be consistent with the applicable VRM Class III management objective and the resulting visual impact would be adverse but less than significant (Class III). Mitigation Measure V-3a is recommended to reduce the visual impact along this portion of the project. While Impact V-16 would be less than significant, mitigation is recommended in compliance with NEPA requirements (please see the explanation of mitigation for less than significant impacts in Section D.1.2). This viewpoint analysis is considered representative of project views from I-10 toward the Orocopia Mountains.

Mitigation Measure for Impact V-16

V-3a Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors.

Impact V-17: Increased structure contrast, industrial character, and skylining when viewing the proposed California Series Capacitor Bank from Interstate 10 or Red Cloud Road (VRM) (Class III)

The proposed California series capacitor bank would be located approximately 64 miles east of the Devers Substation, on BLM land in the Chuckwalla Valley. The new site would be adjacent to the south side of the existing DPV1 series capacitor bank, between Towers M173-T2 and M173-T3. The site is approximately 0.4 miles south of I-10 and is accessed from the nearby Red Cloud Road. The facility would occupy approximately two acres inside a fenced site and would temporarily use a one-acre fenced area for material laydown, storage, and staging. The tallest structure at the site would be the dead-end, which would be 110 feet in height. The facility would appear visually complex and industrial in character. Equipment would include series capacitors, dead-end structures, telecommunications equipment, night lighting fixtures and a mechanical-electrical equipment room. The new series capacitor bank would appear similar to the existing DPV1 series capacitor bank. In the context of the existing DPV1 facilities, the resulting visual contrast would be moderate as would be the overall level of change. The BLM's Visual Resource Management (VRM) Class III objective would allow for a moderate or lower degree of visual change that, while it may attract attention, should not dominate the view of the casual observer. Although the new capacitor bank would not repeat the basic elements of the existing natural features in the landscape, it would repeat the characteristics of the existing capacitor bank and it would not dominate the view of the casual observer. Therefore, the capacitor bank would be consistent with the applicable VRM Class III management objective and the resulting visual impact would be adverse but less than significant (Class III). However, Mitigation Measures V-6a ~~through~~ and V-6c are recommended to further reduce the visual impact of the series capacitor bank. While Impact V-17 would be less than significant, mitigation is recommended in compliance with NEPA requirements (please see the explanation of mitigation for less than significant impacts in Section D.1.2).

Mitigation Measures for Impact V-17

V-6a Reduce visual contrast associated with ancillary facilities.

~~**V-6b Screen ancillary facilities.**~~

V-6c Reduce night lighting impacts.

Impact V-18: Increased structure contrast and view blockage when viewing the Orocopia Mountains from Key Viewpoint 12 on Cottonwood Springs Road when exiting Joshua Tree National Park (VRM) (Class III)

Figure D.3-13A (see enclosed CD) presents the existing view to the south-southeast from Key Viewpoint 12 on southbound Cottonwood Springs Road, just south of the entrance to Joshua Tree National Park. Figure D.3-13B (see enclosed CD) presents a visual simulation of the DPV2 transmission line

adjacent and slightly to the north of the existing DPV1 transmission line. From this viewpoint, the closest pair of structures would be approximately two miles distant. At this viewing distance, the structures would be barely discernible and would not attract the attention of viewers leaving Joshua Tree National Park. The new structures would be of similar design and height as the existing DPV1 structures and although some new skylining and view blockage would be caused by the new structures, they would, for the most part, blend effectively with the background landforms. The resulting visual contrast would be weak and the overall level of change would be very low.

The BLM's Visual Resource Management (VRM) Class III objective allows for a moderate or lower degree of visual change that, while it may attract attention, should not dominate the view of the casual observer. Although the new line would not repeat the basic elements of the existing natural features in the landscape, it would repeat the characteristics of the existing line and it would not dominate the view of the casual observer. Therefore, the very low level of visual change that would be caused by this portion of the Proposed Project would be consistent with the applicable VRM Class III management objective and the resulting visual impact would be adverse but less than significant (Class III). Mitigation Measure V-3a is recommended to reduce the visual impact along this portion of the project. While Impact V-18 would be less than significant, mitigation is recommended in compliance with NEPA requirements (please see the explanation of mitigation for less than significant impacts in Section D.1.2). This viewpoint analysis is considered representative of project views from southbound Cottonwood Springs Road in general and as visitors to Joshua Tree National Park exit the park to the south.

Mitigation Measure for Impact V-18

V-3a Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors.

D.3.6.7 Cactus City Rest Area to Devers Substation

Construction impacts associated with the Cactus City Rest Area to Devers Substation segment would be as described above for the Harquahala to Kofa segment in Section D.3.6.1 and would include visibility of construction activities and equipment (Impact V-1) and visibility of land scarring (Impact V-2).

Impact V-1: Short-term visibility of construction activities, equipment and night lighting (Class III)

Ancillary facilities associated with this route segment would include the Indio Construction Yard located on the east side of Dillon Road, approximately 300 feet north of Fargo Canyon Road and approximately 1,500 feet north of the existing DPV1 line. Other ancillary facilities include the Palm Springs Construction Yard at Devers Substation and modifications within Devers Substation. Viewing opportunities of concern along this route segment include I-10, Dillon Road, Thousand Palms Canyon Road, Varner Road, and other local roads as well as the Coachella Valley Preserve and numerous residential developments north of I-10.

Due to the relatively short duration of project construction, project construction impacts would generally constitute adverse, but less than significant (Class III) visual impacts. Mitigation Measures V-1a and V-1b (full text presented above) are recommended to further reduce construction impacts. While Impact V-1 in this segment would be less than significant, mitigation is recommended in compliance with NEPA requirements (please see the explanation of mitigation for less than significant impacts in Section D.1.2).

Mitigation Measures for Impact V-1: Visibility of Construction Activities and Equipment

V-1a Reduce visibility of construction activities and equipment.

V-1b Reduce construction night lighting impacts.

Impact V-2: Long-term visibility of land scars in arid and semi-arid landscapes (Class II)

This impact, described in Section D.3.6.1 above, would also occur in the area of the Cactus City Rest Area to Devers Substation segment. The following APMs must be implemented in this segment: B-14, B-23-25, B-30, W-9, W-17, G-10, G-11, V-4, L-1, and L-3. In addition, Mitigation Measures V-2a, V-2b, and V-2c are required in order to reduce the potentially significant impact (Class II) to less than significant levels.

Mitigation Measures for Impact V-2: Visibility of land scarring in arid and semi-arid landscapes (Class II)

V-2a Reduce in-line views of land scars.

V-2b Reduce visual contrast from unnatural vegetation lines.

V-2c Reduce color contrast of land scars.

Operational Impacts

From the Cactus City Rest Area to Devers Substation, the Proposed Project would parallel the existing DPV1 transmission line across the rapidly developing Coachella Valley. Long-term, adverse but less than significant (Class III) visual impacts along this route segment would occur at Devers Substation and along the transmission line route. At Devers Substation, the visual impacts associated with modifications to the substation would not be substantially noticeable in the context of the substantive existing structural complexity and industrial character and surrounding wind turbines. To the extent any modifications to the substation are perceived, the resulting visual impact would be adverse but less than significant (Class III). Mitigation Measures V-6a ~~through~~ and V-6c are recommended to reduce the visual and night lighting impacts of Devers Substation modifications, to the extent that those modifications require additional lighting.

Long-term, operational visual impacts would also be experienced from numerous locations along the transmission line route as it passes in close proximity to urban populations. Two representative Key Viewpoints (KVPs 13 and 14) were selected to characterize the visual impacts that would occur along this segment of the transmission line.

Impact V-19: Increased structure contrast, industrial character, and view blockage when viewed from Key Viewpoint 13 in the Terra Lago golf and residential development in Indio (VS-VC) (Class III)

Figure D.3-14A (see enclosed CD) presents the existing view to the north from Key Viewpoint 13 from the Terra Lago golf and residential development in the City of Indio. Figure D.3-14B (see enclosed CD) presents a visual simulation that depicts the transmission line passing north of the development at the base of the Indio Hills. As shown in the simulation, the DPV2 transmission line towers (2236XX through 2238X) would be located adjacent and to the north of the existing DPV1 towers and two other transmission lines. The Proposed Project would be similar in scale and design to the DPV1 line and conductor spans would generally be matched. However, tower locations would be somewhat offset which would cause a noticeable increase in structure prominence and industrial character. Additional blockage of the background hills would also occur. Visual contrast would be moderate and the Proposed Project would appear co-dominant with the existing landscape features. View blockage of background sky and mountains would be also be moderate.

The overall visual change would be moderate and in the context of the existing landscape's moderate-to-high visual sensitivity, the resulting visual impact would be adverse but less than significant (Class III).

Mitigation Measure V-3a is recommended to reduce the visual impact along this portion of the project. ~~One additional measure (V-19a) is also recommended to reduce the visual contrast and industrial character of this route segment from proposed tower location 2209 to 2239 in the vicinity of the Indio Hills.~~ While Impact V-19 would be less than significant, mitigation is recommended in compliance with NEPA requirements (please see the explanation of mitigation for less than significant impacts in Section D.1.2). This viewpoint analysis is considered representative of project views from other residential and golf developments in close proximity to the corridor in the vicinity of the Indio Hills.

Mitigation Measures for Impact V-19: Increased structure contrast, industrial character, and view blockage when viewed from Key Viewpoint 13 in the Terra Lago golf and residential development in Indio (and other golf and residential developments south of the Proposed Project in the vicinity of the Indio Hills)

V-3a Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors.

~~**V-19a Reduce visual contrast by painting towers with appropriate colors.** Existing and proposed transmission towers within the DPV1/DPV2 corridor from proposed tower location 2209 to 2239 in the vicinity of the Indio Hills shall be painted an appropriate color to more effectively blend the structures with the light tan color of the background vegetation and soils of the Indio Hills. This measure is limited to only the 31 tower locations (2209 to 2239) because the Indio Hills provide an immediate light tan backdrop to sensitive views from residences and recreational facilities to the immediate south of the corridor. It is recommended that a light tan color be used to match the background soils. SCE shall submit a Tower Painting Plan demonstrating compliance with this measure to the BLM and CPUC for review and approval at least 60 days prior to (a) the start of construction or (b) ordering the first structures that are to be color treated during manufacture, whichever comes first. If the BLM or CPUC notifies SCE that revisions to the Plan are needed before the Plan can be approved, within 30 days of receiving that notification, SCE shall prepare and submit for review and approval a revised Plan. The Tower Painting Plan shall include:~~

- ~~Specification, and 11"x17" color simulations at life size scale, of the treatment proposed for use on project structures, including structures treated during manufacture~~
- ~~A map showing the towers to be painted~~
- ~~Two sets of brochures and/or color chips for each alternative color~~
- ~~A detailed schedule for completion of the treatment~~
- ~~A procedure to ensure proper treatment maintenance for the life of the project.~~

~~SCE shall not specify to the vendors the treatment of towers or tower components treated during manufacture, or perform the final treatment on any towers until SCE receives notification of approval of the Tower Painting Plan by the BLM and CPUC. Within 30 days following the start of commercial operation, SCE shall notify the BLM and CPUC that the towers are ready for inspection.~~

Impact V-20: Increased structure contrast, industrial character, and view blockage when viewing the Santa Rosa Mountains to the south from Key Viewpoint 14 in the Coachella Valley Preserve, just west of Thousand Palms Canyon Road (VRM) (Class III)

Figure D.3-15A (see enclosed CD) presents the existing view to the south from Key Viewpoint 14 on a hiking/access trail in the Coachella Valley Preserve, just west of Thousand Palms Canyon Road. Figure D.3-15B (see enclosed CD) presents a visual simulation of the DPV2 transmission line adjacent and slightly to the north of the existing DPV1 transmission line, approximately 0.39 miles south of the viewpoint. Although the new structures would be of similar design and height as the existing DPV1 structures, the new structures would cause additional view blockage of the background Santa Rosa Mountains. The new line would also slightly increase the structural complexity and industrial character visible from the Coachella Valley Preserve and would not repeat the basic elements of the existing natural features in the landscape. However, the new line would repeat the characteristics of the existing three lattice tower transmission lines. Also, in the context of the existing facilities, the additional structures would not dominate the view, or attract the attention of the casual observer. The resulting visual contrast from the Proposed Project would be weak and the overall level of change would be low, which would meet the VRM Class II objective of a low degree of visual change. The resulting visual impact would be adverse but less than significant (Class III). Mitigation Measure V-3a is recommended to reduce the visual impact along this portion of the project. While Impact V-20 would be less than significant, mitigation is recommended in compliance with NEPA requirements (please see the explanation of mitigation for less than significant impacts in Section D.1.2). This viewpoint analysis is considered representative of project views from various locations in the southern portion of the Coachella Valley Preserve.

Mitigation Measure for Impact V-20

V-3a Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors.

D.3.7 Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures for the Proposed Project – West of Devers

Construction of the Proposed Project west of Devers Substation would involve replacement of an existing transmission line with a new line, removal of an existing transmission line (up to San Bernardino Junction), and reconductoring a third existing line. Although the facilities being constructed and changed west of Devers are different than the facilities being built east of Devers, construction activities would be similar though the number of spur roads west of Devers would be substantially fewer and tower demolition/removal would be required west of Devers. As a result, the impacts and mitigation measures identified for the Proposed Project east of Devers would also be applicable to construction west of Devers Substation.

D.3.7.1 Devers Substation to East Border of Banning

Construction Impacts

Construction impacts from Devers Substation to the east border of the City of Banning would be similar to that described above in Section D.3.6.1 and would include visibility of construction activities and equipment (Impact V-1) and visibility of land scarring (Impact V-2).

Impact V-1: Short-term visibility of construction activities, equipment and night lighting (Class III)

Construction yards associated with the West of Devers portion of the project are proposed to be located at existing facilities such as substations. However, if space at existing facilities is either unavailable or insufficient, up to two additional construction yards (three to 10 acres in size) could be established west of Devers though their location has not been specified.

Viewing opportunities of concern along this route segment include roads (I-10, SR 62, Dillon Road, Painted Hills Road, Whitewater Canyon Road, and other local roads), several residential developments north of I-10 (Painted Hills and West Palm Springs Village), and the Morongo Community Center and Outlet Mall at Cabazon.

Due to the relatively short duration of project construction, project construction impacts would generally constitute adverse, but less than significant (Class III) visual impacts. Mitigation Measures V-1a and V-1b (full text presented above) are recommended to further reduce construction impacts. While Impact V-1 in this segment would be less than significant, mitigation is recommended in compliance with NEPA requirements (please see the explanation of mitigation for less than significant impacts in Section D.1.2).

Mitigation Measures for Impact V-1: Visibility of Construction Activities and Equipment

V-1a Reduce visibility of construction activities and equipment.

V-1b Reduce construction night lighting impacts.

Impact V-2: Long-term visibility of land scars in arid and semi-arid landscapes (Class II)

This impact, described in Section D.3.6.1 above, would also occur in the area of the Devers Substation to the east border of the City of Banning segment. Mitigation Measures V-2a, V-2b, and V-2c are required in order to reduce the potentially significant impact (Class II) to less than significant levels.

Mitigation Measures for Impact V-2: Visibility of land scarring in arid and semi-arid landscapes (Class II)

V-2a Reduce in-line views of land scars.

V-2b Reduce visual contrast from unnatural vegetation lines.

V-2c Reduce color contrast of land scars.

Operational Impacts

Impact V-21: Increased structure contrast and skylining when viewing the San Jacinto Mountains from Key Viewpoint 15 on southbound State Route 62 (VS-VC) (Class III)

Figure D.3-16A (see enclosed CD) presents the existing view to the south-southeast from Key Viewpoint 15 from southbound SR 62 (a State-designated Scenic Highway), just north of the crossing of SR 62. Figure D.3-16B (see enclosed CD) presents a visual simulation that depicts the reconductoring of Tower M1-T1, removal of Tower M61-T2, and replacement of Tower T266 with new (and taller) Tower 207. Although the replacement tower would appear similar in design and height to that of Tower M1-T1, the increased height over the existing tower would cause additional skylining (extending above the horizon), view blockage (of sky), and increased structural prominence, resulting in a moderate degree

of visual contrast. However, it is the profusion of wind generation facilities covering the foreground landscape that tends to draw the viewer's attention. Also, the conductor spans of the replacement towers would generally be matched with the existing Devers–San Bernardino 1 and 2 line (DSB1/2). The Proposed Project would appear co-dominant with the existing transmission lines and wind generation facilities and subordinate to the dominant landform of Mt. San Jacinto. View blockage of background sky and mountains would be low-to-moderate.

The overall visual change would be moderate and in the context of the existing landscape's moderate-to-high visual sensitivity, the resulting visual impact would be adverse but less than significant (Class III). This conclusion is substantially influenced by the existing prominence of energy infrastructure and the reduction in transmission line complexity that would be achieved by eliminating one line (structures) and matching the tower design of the third with the DSB1/2 structures. Mitigation Measure V-3a is recommended to reduce the visual impact along this portion of the project. While Impact V-21 would be less than significant, mitigation is recommended in compliance with NEPA requirements (please see the explanation of mitigation for less than significant impacts in Section D.1.2). This viewpoint analysis is considered representative of project views from SR 62 in the vicinity of the highway crossing.

Mitigation Measure for Impact V-21

V-3a Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors.

Impact V-22: Increased structure contrast and skylining when viewed from Key Viewpoint 16 on Painted Hills Road in the Painted Hills rural residential community (VS-VC) (Class III)

Figure D.3-17A (see enclosed CD) presents the existing view to the south-southeast from Key Viewpoint 16 from Painted Hills Road, just east of Country View Road. Figure D.3-17B (see enclosed CD) presents a visual simulation that depicts the reconductoring of Tower M1-T3, removal of Tower M61-T4, and replacement of Tower T262 with new (and taller) Tower 209. Although the replacement tower would appear similar in design and height to that of Tower M1-T3, the increased height over the existing tower would cause additional skylining, view blockage (of sky), and increased structural prominence, resulting in a moderate degree of visual contrast. However, it is the prominence of wind generation facilities covering the foreground landscape that tends to draw the viewer's attention. Also, the conductor spans of the replacement towers would generally be matched with the existing DSB1/2 line. The Proposed Project would appear co-dominant with the existing transmission lines and wind generation facilities and subordinate to the regionally dominant landform of Mt. San Jacinto. View blockage of background sky and mountains would be low-to-moderate.

The overall visual change would be moderate and in the context of the existing landscape's moderate-to-high visual sensitivity, the resulting visual impact would be adverse but less than significant (Class III). This conclusion is substantially influenced by the existing profusion of energy infrastructure and the reduction in transmission line complexity that would be achieved by eliminating one line (structures) and matching the tower design of the DSB1/2 structures. Mitigation Measure V-3a is recommended to reduce the visual impact along this portion of the project route. While Impact V-22 would be less than significant, mitigation is recommended in compliance with NEPA requirements (please see the explanation of mitigation for less than significant impacts in Section D.1.2). This viewpoint analysis is considered representative of project views from the Painted Hills residential area.

Mitigation Measure for Impact V-22

V-3a Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors.

Impact V-23: Increased structure contrast when viewing the east rim of Whitewater Canyon and Mount San Jacinto from Key Viewpoint 17 on southbound Whitewater Canyon Road (VS-VC) (Class III)

Figure D.3-18A (see enclosed CD) presents the existing view to the southeast from Key Viewpoint 17 on Whitewater Canyon Road, south of the community of Bonnie Bell. Figure D.3-18B (see enclosed CD) presents a visual simulation that depicts the reconductoring of Tower M3-T1, removal of Tower M63-T2, and replacement of Tower T251 with new (and taller) Tower 215. The replacement tower would appear similar in design and height to that of Tower M3-T1. Although the increased height over the existing tower would cause additional skylining, structural prominence and view blockage (of sky), the removal of Tower M63-T2, which also skylines, would somewhat offsets the new skylining, and it should be noted that it is the wind generation facilities along the canyon rim and Mt. San Jacinto that tends to draw the viewer's attention. Also, the conductor spans of the replacement towers would generally be matched with the existing DSB1/2 line. The resulting visual contrast would be low-to-moderate and the Proposed Project would appear subordinate to co-dominant with the existing landscape features. View blockage would be low.

The overall visual change would be low-to-moderate and in the context of the existing landscape's moderate-to-high visual sensitivity, the resulting visual impact would be adverse but less than significant (Class III). This conclusion is influenced by the reduction in transmission line complexity that would be achieved by eliminating one line (structures) and matching the tower design (of the new structures) with the DSB1/2 structures. Mitigation Measure V-3a is recommended to reduce the visual impact along this portion of the project route. While Impact V-23 would be less than significant, mitigation is recommended in compliance with NEPA requirements (please see the explanation of mitigation for less than significant impacts in Section D.1.2). This viewpoint analysis is considered representative of project views from within Whitewater Canyon.

Mitigation Measure for Impact V-23

V-3a Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors.

Impact V-24: Increased structure contrast, industrial character, view blockage, and skylining when viewed from Key Viewpoint 18 on Haugen-Lehman Way in the West Palm Springs Village residential community (VS-VC) (Class III)

Figure D.3-19A (see enclosed CD) presents the existing view to the west from Key Viewpoint 18 on Haugen-Lehman Way, just south of the intersection with Amethyst Drive, in West Palm Springs Village. Figure D.3-19B (see enclosed CD) presents a visual simulation that depicts the replacement of the existing wood-pole H-frame structure (T231) with a new (and taller) lattice tower (226), reconductoring of Tower M6-T3, and the removal of Tower M66-T4. The replacement tower would appear substantially more complex and industrial compared to the wood-pole structure it would replace but similar in design and height to that of Tower M6-T3. Although the increased height over the existing tower would cause additional skylining, structural prominence and view blockage (of sky), the removal of Tower M66-T34 which also skylines and exhibits darker color contrast, would somewhat offset the new skylining. Also, the conductor spans of the replacement tower would generally be matched with the existing DSB1/2 line. The resulting visual contrast would be moderate and the Proposed Project would appear co-dominant with the existing landscape features. View blockage would be low-to-moderate.

The overall visual change would be moderate and in the context of the existing landscape's moderate-to-high visual sensitivity, the resulting visual impact would be adverse but less than significant (Class III). Mitigation Measure V-3a is recommended to reduce the visual impact along this portion of the project route. While Impact V-24 would be less than significant, mitigation is recommended in compliance with NEPA requirements (please see the explanation of mitigation for less than significant impacts in Section D.1.2). This viewpoint analysis is considered representative of project views within West Palm Springs Village.

Mitigation Measure for Impact V-24

V-3a Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors.

Impact V-25: Increased structure contrast, structure prominence, and skylining when viewed from Key Viewpoint 19 at the Morongo Community Center (VS-VC) (Class III)

Figure D.3-20A (see enclosed CD) presents the existing view to the southwest from Key Viewpoint 19 at the Morongo Community Center at 13000 Fields Road, just north of I-10. Figure D.3-20B (see enclosed CD) presents a visual simulation that depicts the reconductoring of Tower M14-T1, removal of the shorter lattice Tower M74-T2, and replacement of the existing wood-pole H-frame structures (Towers T173 and T174) with new (and taller) lattice towers (256 and 257). The replacement towers would appear substantially more complex and industrial compared to the wood-pole structures they would replace but similar in design and height to that of Tower M14-T1. The increased height over the existing H-frame towers would cause additional skylining, structural prominence and view blockage (of sky), which would be partially offset by the removal of one of the existing lattice structure transmission lines and consolidation of structure locations. Also, the conductor spans of the replacement towers would generally be matched with the existing DSB1/2 line. The resulting visual contrast would be moderate and the Proposed Project would appear co-dominant with the existing landscape features. View blockage would be low-to-moderate.

The overall visual change would be moderate and in the context of the existing landscape's moderate-to-high visual sensitivity, the resulting visual impact would be adverse but less than significant (Class III). Mitigation Measure V-3a is recommended to reduce the visual impact along this portion of the project. While Impact V-25 would be less than significant, mitigation is recommended in compliance with NEPA requirements (please see the explanation of mitigation for less than significant impacts in Section D.1.2). This viewpoint analysis is considered representative of project views from both the Community Center and southbound on Fields Road as people exit the Reservation.

Mitigation Measure for Impact V-25

V-3a Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors.

D.3.7.2 Banning and Beaumont

Construction Impacts

Construction impacts within the Cities of Banning and Beaumont would be similar to that described above in Section D.3.6.1 and would include visibility of construction activities and equipment (Impact V-1) and visibility of land scarring (Impact V-2).

Impact V-1: Short-term visibility of construction activities, equipment and night lighting (Class III)

Construction yards associated with the West of Devers portion of the project are proposed to be located at existing facilities such as substations. However, if space at existing facilities is either unavailable or insufficient, up to two additional construction yards (3 to 10 acres in size) could be established west of Devers though their location has not been specified.

Viewing opportunities of concern along this route segment include local roads paralleling and crossing under the corridor, residential areas adjacent to the corridor, and park facilities either crossed by or adjacent to the existing transmission lines.

Due to the relatively short duration of project construction, project construction impacts would generally constitute adverse, but less than significant (Class III) visual impacts. Mitigation Measures V-1a and V-1b (full text presented above) are recommended to further reduce construction impacts. While Impact V-1 in this segment would be less than significant, mitigation is recommended in compliance with NEPA requirements (please see the explanation of mitigation for less than significant impacts in Section D.1.2).

Mitigation Measures for Impact V-1: Visibility of Construction Activities and Equipment

V-1a Reduce visibility of construction activities and equipment.

V-1b Reduce construction night lighting impacts.

Impact V-2: Long-term visibility of land scars in arid and semi-arid landscapes (Class II)

This impact, described in Section D.3.6.1 above, would also occur in the Cities of Banning and Beaumont segment. Mitigation Measures V-2a, V-2b, and V-2c are required in order to reduce the potentially significant impact (Class II) to less than significant levels.

Mitigation Measures for Impact V-2: Visibility of land scarring in arid and semi-arid landscapes (Class II)

V-2a Reduce in-line views of land scars.

V-2b Reduce visual contrast from unnatural vegetation lines.

V-2c Reduce color contrast of land scars.

Operational Impacts

Impact V-26: Increased structure contrast, view blockage, and skylining when viewed from Key Viewpoint 20 on Murray Street in Banning (VS-VC) (Class III)

Figure D.3-21A (see enclosed CD) presents the existing view to the northeast from Key Viewpoint 20 on Murray Street in the City of Banning. Figure D.3-21B (see enclosed CD) presents a visual simulation that depicts the reconductoring of Tower M17-T1, removal of the shorter lattice Tower M77-T1, and replacement of H-frame structures T152 and T153 with new (and taller) lattice towers (102 and 103). The replacement towers would appear substantially more complex and industrial compared to the H-frame structures they would replace but similar in design and height to that of Tower M17-T1. The increased height over the existing H-frame towers would cause additional skylining, structural prominence and view blockage (of sky and hills), which would be partially offset by the removal of one of the existing lattice structure transmission lines and consolidation of structure locations. Also, the conductor spans of the

replacement tower would generally be matched with the existing DSB1/2 line and the lattice design of the new structures would enable the structures to better blend with the background hills. The resulting visual contrast would be low-to-moderate and the Proposed Project would appear co-dominant with the existing landscape features. View blockage would be low-to-moderate.

The overall visual change would be low-to-moderate and in the context of the existing landscape's moderate-to-high visual sensitivity, the resulting visual impact would be adverse but less than significant (Class III). Mitigation Measure V-3a is recommended to reduce the visual impact along this portion of the project. While Impact V-26 would be less than significant, mitigation is recommended in compliance with NEPA requirements (please see the explanation of mitigation for less than significant impacts in Section D.1.2). This viewpoint analysis is considered representative of project views from residential areas bordering the corridor in Banning.

Mitigation Measure for Impact V-26

V-3a Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors.

Impact V-27: Reduced structure prominence and view blockage when viewed from Key Viewpoint 21 on Cedar Hollow Road in Beaumont (VS-VC) (Class IV)

Figure D.3-22A (see enclosed CD) presents the existing view to the west-southwest from Key Viewpoint 21 on Cedar Hollow Road, immediately south of Beaumont High School in the City of Beaumont. Figure D.3-22B (see enclosed CD) presents a visual simulation that illustrates the reconductoring of Towers M22-T4 and M23-T1, removal of the shorter lattice Towers M82-T4 through M83-T2, and replacement of the H-frame transmission line with a new (and taller) lattice tower transmission line. The replacement towers (Nos. 127 and 128) would appear substantially more complex and industrial compared to the H-frame structures they would replace but similar in design and height to that of Tower M22-T4. With removal of one lattice structure transmission line and replacement of the visually prominent H-frame structures with their asynchronous conductor spans (relative to the reconductored lattice towers to be retained), tower locations would be consolidated and conductor spans would be synchronized (with the DSB1/2 line). As a result, overall visual contrast within the corridor would be low while visual complexity, structural dominance, and view blockage would actually be reduced (fewer new lattice structures would be required to replace the shorter-span H-frame structures).

The overall visual change would be improved and in the context of the existing landscape's moderate-to-high visual sensitivity, the resulting visual impact would be beneficial (Class IV). This viewpoint analysis is considered representative of unobstructed project views from residential areas bordering the corridor in Beaumont.

Impact V-28: Reduced structure prominence and view blockage when viewed from Key Viewpoint 22 at the intersection of Stargazer Street and Rose Avenue in Beaumont (VS-VC) (Class IV)

Figure D.3-23A (see enclosed CD) presents the existing view to the east-southeast from Key Viewpoint 22 at the intersection of Stargazer Street and Rose Avenue in The Estates residential subdivision in the City of Beaumont. Figure D.3-23B (see enclosed CD) presents a visual simulation that illustrates the reconductoring of Towers M23-T3 and M24-T1, removal of the shorter lattice Towers M83-T3 and M84-T1, and replacement of the H-frame transmission line (Towers T105 through T107) with a new (and taller) lattice tower transmission line. The replacement towers (Nos. 129 and 130) would appear more complex and industrial compared to the H-frame structures they would replace but similar in design and height to that of Towers M23-T3 and M24-T1. With removal of one lattice structure transmission line and replacement of the visually prominent H-frame structures with their asynchronous con-

ductor spans (relative to the reconductored lattice towers to be retained), tower locations would be consolidated and conductor spans would be synchronized (with the DSB1/2 line). As a result, visual contrast would be low while structural dominance and view blockage would actually be reduced (fewer new lattice structures would be required to replace the shorter-span H-frame structures).

The overall visual change would be improved and in the context of the existing landscape's moderate-to-high visual sensitivity, the resulting visual impact would be beneficial (Class IV). This viewpoint analysis is considered representative of partially obstructed project views from residential areas bordering the corridor in Beaumont.

Impact V-29: Reduced structure prominence and view blockage when viewed from Key Viewpoint 23 on the Oak Valley Golf Course in Beaumont (VS-VC) (Class IV)

Figure D.3-24A (see enclosed CD) presents the existing view to the east from Key Viewpoint 23 on the Oak Valley Golf Course. Figure D.3-24B (see enclosed CD) presents a visual simulation that illustrates the reconductoring of Towers M24-T1 and M24-T2, removal of the shorter lattice Towers M84-T1 and M84-T2, and replacement of the H-frame transmission line (Towers T104 through T106) with a new (and taller) lattice tower transmission line. The replacement towers (Nos. 130 and 131) would appear more complex and industrial compared to the H-frame structures they would replace but similar in design and height to that of Towers M24-T1 and M24-T2. With removal of one lattice structure transmission line and replacement of the visually prominent H-frame structures with their asynchronous conductor spans (relative to the reconductored lattice towers to be retained), tower locations would be consolidated and conductor spans would be synchronized (with the DSB1/2 line). As a result, visual contrast would be low while structural dominance and view blockage would actually be reduced (fewer new lattice structures would be required to replace the shorter-span H-frame structures).

The overall visual change would be improved and in the context of the existing landscape's moderate-to-high visual sensitivity, the resulting visual impact would be beneficial (Class IV). This viewpoint analysis is considered representative of project views from recreation and park areas bordering the corridor in Beaumont.

D.3.7.3 Calimesa and San Timoteo Canyon

Construction Impacts

Construction impacts within Calimesa and San Timoteo Canyon would be similar to that described above in Section D.3.6.1 and would include visibility of construction activities and equipment (Impact V-1) and visibility of land scarring (Impact V-2).

Impact V-1: Short-term visibility of construction activities, equipment and night lighting (Class III)

Construction yards associated with the West of Devers portion of the project are proposed to be located at existing facilities such as substations. However, if space at existing facilities is either unavailable or insufficient, up to two additional construction yards (three to 10 acres in size) could be established west of Devers though their location has not been specified.

Viewing opportunities of concern along this route segment would be available from I-10 at the freeway span, San Timoteo Canyon Road, local roads paralleling and crossing the corridor, and rural residences.

Due to the relatively short duration of project construction, project construction impacts would generally constitute adverse, but less than significant (Class III) visual impacts. Mitigation Measures V-1a and V-1b (full text presented above) are recommended to further reduce construction impacts. While Impact V-1 in this segment would be less than significant, mitigation is recommended in compliance with NEPA requirements (please see the explanation of mitigation for less than significant impacts in Section D.1.2).

Mitigation Measures for Impact V-1: Visibility of Construction Activities and Equipment

V-1a Reduce visibility of construction activities and equipment.

V-1b Reduce construction night lighting impacts.

Impact V-2: Long-term visibility of land scars in arid and semi-arid landscapes (Class II)

This impact, described in Section D.3.6.1 above, would also occur in the Calimesa and San Timoteo Canyon segment. Mitigation Measures V-2a, V-2b, and V-2c are required in order to reduce the potentially significant impact (Class II) to less than significant levels.

Mitigation Measures for Impact V-2: Visibility of land scarring in arid and semi-arid landscapes (Class II)

V-2a Reduce in-line views of land scars.

V-2b Reduce visual contrast from unnatural vegetation lines.

V-2c Reduce color contrast of land scars.

Operational Impacts

Impact V-30: Increased view blockage when viewed from Key Viewpoint 24 on Pilgrim Road in San Timoteo Canyon (VS-VC) (Class III)

Figure D.3-25A (see enclosed CD) presents the existing view to the west-southwest from Key Viewpoint 24 on Pilgrim Road, off of San Timoteo Canyon Road in San Timoteo Canyon. Figure D.3-25B (see enclosed CD) presents a visual simulation that depicts the reconductoring of Tower M38-T2, removal of the shorter lattice Tower M98-T2, and replacement of H-frame lattice structures T28 and T29 with new (and taller) lattice towers (183 and 184). The replacement towers would appear similar in design and height to Tower M38-T2. The increased height over the existing H-frame towers would cause additional skylining, though overall structural prominence would be somewhat reduced with the elimination of structures, consolidation of structure locations, and synchronization of conductor spans (with the existing DSB1/2 line). However, the conductors would appear slightly more prominent and would cause additional view blockage (of sky and hills). The resulting visual contrast would be low and the Proposed Project would appear co-dominant with the existing landscape features. View blockage would be low.

The overall visual change would be low-to-moderate and in the context of the existing landscape's moderate-to-high visual sensitivity, the resulting visual impact would be adverse but less than significant (Class III). Mitigation Measure V-3a is recommended to reduce the visual impact along this portion of the project. While Impact V-30 would be less than significant, mitigation is recommended in compliance with NEPA requirements (please see the explanation of mitigation for less than significant impacts in Section D.1.2). This viewpoint analysis is considered representative of project views from rural residential areas and San Timoteo Canyon Road in San Timoteo Canyon.

Mitigation Measure for Impact V-30

V-3a Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors.

D.3.7.4 San Bernardino Junction to Vista Substation

Construction Impacts

Construction impacts within San Bernardino Junction to Vista Substation segment would be similar to that described above in Section D.3.6.1 and would include visibility of construction activities and equipment (Impact V-1) and visibility of land scarring (Impact V-2).

Impact V-1: Short-term visibility of construction activities, equipment and night lighting (Class III)

Construction yards associated with the West of Devers portion of the project are proposed to be located at existing facilities such as substations. However, if space at existing facilities is either unavailable or insufficient, up to two additional construction yards (three to 10 acres in size) could be established west of Devers. Although the possible yard locations have not been specified, it is not anticipated that a construction yard would be located along this route segment.

Viewing opportunities of concern would be available from local roads paralleling and crossing the corridor and residential neighborhoods adjacent to the transmission line.

Due to the relatively short duration of project construction, project construction impacts would generally constitute adverse, but less than significant (Class III) visual impacts. Mitigation Measures V-1a and V-1b (full text presented above) are recommended to further reduce construction impacts. While Impact V-1 in this segment would be less than significant, mitigation is recommended in compliance with NEPA requirements (please see the explanation of mitigation for less than significant impacts in Section D.1.2).

Mitigation Measures for Impact V-1: Visibility of Construction Activities and Equipment

V-1a Reduce visibility of construction activities and equipment.

V-1b Reduce construction night lighting impacts.

Impact V-2: Long-term visibility of land scars in arid and semi-arid landscapes (Class II)

This impact, described in Section D.3.6.1 above, would also occur in the San Bernardino Junction to Vista Substation segment. Mitigation Measures V-2a, V-2b, and V-2c are required in order to reduce the potentially significant impact (Class II) to less than significant levels.

Mitigation Measures for Impact V-2: Visibility of land scarring in arid and semi-arid landscapes (Class II)

V-2a Reduce in-line views of land scars.

V-2b Reduce visual contrast from unnatural vegetation lines.

V-2c Reduce color contrast of land scars.

Operational Impacts

Visual impacts during project operation would occur at Vista Substation and along the route segments. At Vista Substation, the visual impacts associated with modifications to the substation would not be noticeable (from nearby residences and roads) in the context of the substation's existing substantial structural

complexity and industrial character. To the extent that any change is perceived, the resulting visual impact would be adverse but less than significant (Class III) and no mitigation measures are proposed. Visual impacts along the route are addressed in the following discussion of representative Key Viewpoint 25.

Impact V-31: Increased view blockage when viewed from Key Viewpoint 25 at the intersection of Canyon Vista Drive and Chase Canyon Lane (VS-VC) (Class III)

Figure D.3-26A (see enclosed CD) presents the existing view to the west from Key Viewpoint 25 at the intersection of Canyon Vista Drive and Chase Canyon Lane in the City of Colton. Figure D.3-26B (see enclosed CD) presents a visual simulation that illustrates the reconductoring of the Devers-Vista No. 1 and No. 2 (DV1/2) lines (Towers M42-T2 and M42-T3 respectively). The reconductoring would result in slightly more prominent DV1/2 conductors with slightly increased visual contrast and view blockage. The resulting visual contrast would be low and the Proposed Project would appear co-dominant with the existing landscape features. View blockage would also be low.

The overall visual change would be low-to-moderate and in the context of the existing landscape's moderate-to-high visual sensitivity, the resulting visual impact would be adverse but less than significant (Class III). Mitigation Measure V-3a is recommended to reduce the visual impact along this portion of the project route. While Impact V-31 would be less than significant, mitigation is recommended in compliance with NEPA requirements (please see the explanation of mitigation for less than significant impacts in Section D.1.2). This viewpoint analysis is considered representative of project views from residential areas bordering the corridor in Colton.

Mitigation Measure for Impact V-31

V-3a Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors.

D.3.7.5 San Bernardino Junction to San Bernardino Substation

Construction Impacts

Construction impacts within San Bernardino Junction to San Bernardino Substation segment would be similar to that described above in Section D.3.6.1 and would include visibility of construction activities and equipment (Impact V-1) and visibility of land scarring (Impact V-2).

Impact V-1: Short-term visibility of construction activities, equipment and night lighting (Class III)

Construction yards associated with the West of Devers portion of the project are proposed to be located at existing facilities such as substations. However, if space at existing facilities is either unavailable or insufficient, up to two additional construction yards (three to 10 acres in size) could be established west of Devers though the possible yard locations have not been specified.

Viewing opportunities of concern along this route segment would be available from local roads paralleling and crossing the corridor, residential neighborhoods adjacent to the transmission line corridor, parks within the corridor right-of-way, and I-10 where the transmission lines span the freeway.

Due to the relatively short duration of project construction, project construction impacts would generally constitute adverse, but less than significant (Class III) visual impacts. Mitigation Measures V-1a and V-1b (full text presented above) are recommended to further reduce construction impacts. While Impact V-1 in this segment would be less than significant, mitigation is recommended in compliance with NEPA requirements (please see the explanation of mitigation for less than significant impacts in Section D.1.2).

Mitigation Measures for Impact V-1: Visibility of Construction Activities and Equipment

V-1a Reduce visibility of construction activities and equipment.

V-1b Reduce construction night lighting impacts.

Impact V-2: Long-term visibility of land scars in arid and semi-arid landscapes (Class II)

This impact, described in Section D.3.6.1 above, would also occur in the San Bernardino Junction to San Bernardino Substation segment. Mitigation Measures V-2a, V-2b, and V-2c are required in order to reduce the potentially significant impact (Class II) to less than significant levels.

Mitigation Measures for Impact V-2: Visibility of land scarring in arid and semi-arid landscapes (Class II)

V-2a Reduce in-line views of land scars.

V-2b Reduce visual contrast from unnatural vegetation lines.

V-2c Reduce color contrast of land scars.

Operational Impacts

Long-term visual impacts along this route segment would occur at San Bernardino Substation and along the transmission line route. At San Bernardino Substation, the visual impacts associated with modifications to the substation would not be noticeable (from nearby residences and roads) in the context of the substation's existing substantial structural complexity and industrial character. To the extent that any change is perceived, the resulting visual impact would be adverse but less than significant (Class III) and no mitigation measures are proposed. Visual impacts along the route are addressed in the following discussion of representative Key Viewpoint 26.

Impact V-32: Increased view blockage when viewed from Key Viewpoint 26 in the Right-of-Way Park just off Beaumont Avenue (VS-VC) (Class III)

Figure D.3-27A (see enclosed CD) presents the existing view to the north from Key Viewpoint 26 at the top of the Right-of-Way Park, adjacent to Beaumont Avenue in the City of Loma Linda. Figure D.3-27B (see enclosed CD) presents a visual simulation that illustrates the reconductoring of the Devers–San Bernardino No. 1 and No. 2 (DSB1/2) lines (Towers M2-T4). The existing lattice structures would have the outside circuits reconductored, which would then match the bundled inside circuits along the center-line of the right-of-way. The result would be slightly more prominent conductors and slightly increased view blockage. The resulting visual contrast would be low and the Proposed Project would appear subordinate to the existing landscape features. View blockage would also be low.

The overall visual change would be low and in the context of the existing landscape's moderate-to-high visual sensitivity, the resulting visual impact would be adverse but less than significant (Class III). Mitigation Measure V-3a is recommended to reduce the visual impact along the portion of the project. While Impact V-32 would be less than significant, mitigation is recommended in compliance with NEPA requirements (please see the explanation of mitigation for less than significant impacts in Section D.1.2). This viewpoint analysis is considered representative of project views from the park that is located within the ROW, residences located adjacent to the corridor, and roads crossing the corridor in Loma Linda.

Mitigation Measure for Impact V-32

V-3a Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors.

D.3.8 Alternatives for Devers-Harquahala

D.3.8.1 SCE Harquahala-West Alternative

Environmental Setting

The SCE Harquahala-West Alternative extends west from Harquahala Switchyard across primarily State and private lands on the flat, expansive, relatively undeveloped southern end of the Harquahala Plain before turning to the northwest, crossing BLM lands at the base of the Eagletail Mountains. Continuing to the northwest, this alternative route connects with the Proposed Project route at the north end of the Eagletail Mountains at Alternative Milepost 21 and Proposed Project Milepost 35. This relatively flat, desert landscape supports a low diversity of vegetation, composed primarily of short grass and shrubs.

Views of the Harquahala-West Alternative would be available from several rural residences along West Courthouse Road as well as several roads including Interstate 10, Salome Highway, West Courthouse Road, Centennial Road, North Harquahala Valley Road, Pipeline Road, BLM Access Road YE013 to Courthouse Rock, and other BLM access roads into the Eagletail Mountains.

Points of access into the Eagletail Mountains and Wilderness and Courthouse Rock in particular were selected for detailed analysis along this alternative route (KVP 27). The location of KVP 27 is shown on Figure D.3-1A (see enclosed CD). The results of the visual analysis are summarized in Appendix VR-1 (see enclosed CD). A discussion of the existing visual setting for KVP 27 is presented in the following paragraph.

Key Viewpoint 27 – Eagletail Mountains Courthouse Rock *(VRM)*

Key Viewpoint 27 was established on BLM Access Road YE013 to Courthouse Rock, just east of the Eagletail Mountains and approximately 0.9 miles from the intersection with Pipeline Road (see Figure D.3-28A on enclosed CD). Viewing to the east-northeast across the Harquahala Plains toward Big Horn Mountain, this location was selected to generally characterize the existing landscape visible to backcountry and off-road recreationists accessing the Eagletail Mountains and Courthouse Rock. Views in all directions encompass a predominantly natural setting. The foreground landform of the Harquahala Plain appears flat and horizontal. The rugged, angular form of the distant Big Horn Mountains provides a dramatic contrast to the level plains they backdrop though the mountains do appear relatively low on the horizon. Landform colors are predominantly tan with lavender and bluish hues for the distant mountains. Landform textures appear smooth to granular. Vegetation is patchy with clumps, transitioning to continuous blocks at greater distance and punctuated by the prominent vertical forms of Saguaro. Vegetation colors include tans to pale yellow for grasses with muted to light and dark greens for the shrubs. Vegetation exhibits a matte texture. The view from KVP 27 encompasses the alternative route in the vicinity of Mileposts 13 and 14. There are no visible built structural landscape features (although large trucks on I-10 are barely discernible at a distance of approximately 7.5 miles). The existing BLM scenic quality classification or viewer sensitivity are not available but the VRM Class Rating is III as identified in the existing Resource Management Plan.

Construction Impacts

Construction impacts from the SCE Harquahala-West Alternative would occur from the Harquahala Switchyard to the intersection with the DPV1 transmission line, immediately north of the El Paso Wendon Pump Station would be as described above for the Harquahala to Kofa segment in Section D.3.6.1 and

would include the visual intrusion of construction activities and equipment (Impact V-1) and visibility of land scarring (Impact V-2).

Impact V-1: Short-term visibility of construction activities, equipment and night lighting (Class III)

Construction yards associated with the SCE Harquahala-West Alternative are proposed to be located at existing facilities such as substations. However, if space at existing facilities is either unavailable or insufficient, up to two additional construction yards (three to 10 acres in size) could be established west of Devers though the possible yard locations have not been specified.

Ancillary facilities associated with this route segment would include the Tonopah Construction Yard located northwest of the intersection of West Indian School Road and North 411th Avenue and the Vicksburg Construction Yard (potentially) located south of a fuel station on the south side of I-10 on Vicksburg Road.

Viewing opportunities of concern along this route segment would be available from rural residences along West Courthouse Road, nearby highways (I-10 and Salome Highway), and local roads including West Courthouse Road, Centennial Road, and North Harquahala Valley Road). Also of concern would be views from 4WD access roads into the Eagletail Mountains including Pipeline Road and several BLM access roads. While Impact V-1 in this segment would be less than significant (Class III), mitigation is recommended in compliance with NEPA requirements (please see the explanation of mitigation for less than significant impacts in Section D.1.2).

Mitigation Measures for Impact V-1: Visibility of Construction Activities and Equipment

V-1a Reduce visibility of construction activities and equipment.

V-1b Reduce construction night lighting impacts.

Impact V-2: Long-term visibility of land scars in arid and semi-arid landscapes (Class II)

This impact, described in Section D.3.6.1 above, would also occur in the SCE Harquahala-West Alternative. Mitigation Measures V-2a, V-2b, and V-2c are required in order to reduce the potentially significant impact (Class II) to less than significant levels.

Mitigation Measures for Impact V-2: Visibility of land scarring in arid and semi-arid landscapes (Class II)

V-2a Reduce in-line views of land scars.

V-2b Reduce visual contrast from unnatural vegetation lines.

V-2c Reduce color contrast of land scars.

Operational Impacts

Impact V-33: Inconsistency with BLM VRM Class III Management objective due to introduction of structure contrast, industrial character, view blockage and skylining when viewed from Key Viewpoint 27 on a BLM access road to Courthouse Rock and the Eagletail Mountains (VRM) (Class I)

Figure D.3-28A (see enclosed CD) presents the existing view to the east-northeast across Harquahala Plain toward Big Horn Mountain, from Key Viewpoint 27 on BLM access road YE013 to Courthouse Rock, east of the Eagletail Mountains. Figure D.3-28B (see enclosed CD) presents a visual simulation

of the Harquahala-West Alternative as it passes along the east side of the Eagletail Mountains. The Harquahala-West Alternative would result in the introduction of a new transmission line into a natural appearing landscape lacking similar built structures and industrial character. The resulting vertical structural form and line contrast would be strong (compared to the predominantly horizontal form and line of Harquahala Plain) and the color contrast would be weak-to-moderate. The new line would not repeat the basic elements of the existing natural features in the landscape and would cause view blockage of background sky, Harquahala Plain and distant mountain ranges. The new line would also dominate the views of the casual observer, particularly along Pipeline Road, the main access road running along the east side of the Eagletail Mountains. The overall level of change would be moderate-to-high, which would not meet the VRM Class III objective of a moderate degree of visual change. The resulting visual impact would be adverse and significant (Class I). There is no mitigation available to reduce the significant visual impact to a level that would be less than significant. However, Mitigation Measure V-3a is recommended to reduce the visual impact along this alternative. This viewpoint analysis is considered representative of views of this alternative from BLM access roads to the Eagletail Mountains. Also, a similar level of visual impact would be experienced by rural residences along West Courthouse Road with views of the route.

Mitigation Measure for Impact V-33

V-3a Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors.

D.3.8.2 SCE Palo Verde Alternative

Environmental Setting

The SCE Palo Verde Alternative parallels existing transmission lines, diverging to the southeast from the Proposed Project route at Milepost 5, crossing Salome Highway and passing between Saddle Mountain and the Palo Verde Hills on public lands administered by the BLM. South of the Palo Verde Hills, this alternative route turns east passing briefly through private lands before crossing South Wintersburg Road and turning to the northeast to the Palo Verde Nuclear Generating Station. The landscape along this alternative is for the most part undeveloped and natural appearing though there are several rural residences west of South Wintersburg Road. The regional landscape is dominated by scale and unique formation of Saddle Mountain. The arid desert landscape supports a low diversity of vegetation, composed primarily of short grass and shrubs.

Views of the Palo Verde Alternative would be available from several rural residences to the west of South Wintersburg Road (both north and south of the corridor). Views would also be available to travelers on West Elliot Road, Salome Highway, and West Courthouse Road.

Views from Salome Highway toward Saddle Mountain were selected for detailed analysis along this alternative route (KVP 28). The location of KVP 28 is shown on Figure D.3-1A (see enclosed CD). The results of the visual analysis are summarized in Appendix VR-1 (see enclosed CD). A discussion of the existing visual setting for KVP 28 is presented in the following paragraph.

Key Viewpoint 28 – Salome Highway–Saddle Mountain (VRM)

Key Viewpoint 28 was established on Salome Highway at the highway mile marker 42, approximately 1.2 miles east of the highway crossing (see Figure D.3-29A on enclosed CD). Viewing to the south-southwest toward Palo Verde Alternative tower locations D-123 through D-125 and Saddle Mountain

beyond, this location was selected to characterize the existing views of Saddle Mountain visible to travelers on Salome Highway. The rugged, angular form of Saddle Mountain stands in dramatic visual contrast to the surrounding flat desert plain with its horizontal form. Landform colors are predominantly tan with additional lavender and bluish hues for the mountain. Landform textures appear smooth to granular. Vegetation is patchy with clumps, transitioning to a more continuous distribution punctuated by the prominent vertical forms of Saguaro. Vegetation colors include tans to pale yellow for grasses with light and dark greens for the shrubs. Vegetation exhibits a matte texture. The view from KVP 28 encompasses the alternative tower locations D-123 through D-125 in the vicinity of Mileposts 2 and 3. The two existing lattice structure transmission lines with their vertical linear forms and industrial character are prominent structural features in the foreground of Saddle Mountain though they are dominated by the scale of the mountain. Structure colors are light to dark gray and textures are smooth. The existing BLM scenic quality classification or viewer sensitivity are not available but the VRM Class Rating is III as identified in the existing Resource Management Plan.

Construction Impacts

Construction impacts along the SCE Palo Verde Alternative would be as described above for the Harquahala to Kofa segment in Section D.3.6.1 and would include the visual intrusion of construction activities and equipment (Impact V-1) and visibility of land scarring (Impact V-2).

Impact V-1: Short-term visibility of construction activities, equipment and night lighting (Class III)

Ancillary facilities associated with this route segment would include the Tonopah Construction Yard located northwest of the intersection of West Indian School Road and North 411th Avenue. Viewing opportunities of concern along this route segment would include several rural residences to the west of South Wintersburg Road (both north and south of the corridor), West Elliot Road, Salome Highway, and West Courthouse Road. While Impact V-1 in this alternative would be less than significant, mitigation is recommended in compliance with NEPA requirements (please see the explanation of mitigation for less than significant impacts in Section D.1.2).

Mitigation Measures for Impact V-1: Visibility of Construction Activities and Equipment

V-1a Reduce visibility of construction activities and equipment.

V-1b Reduce construction night lighting impacts.

Impact V-2: Long-term visibility of land scars in arid and semi-arid landscapes (Class II)

This impact, described in Section D.3.6.1 above, would also occur in the SCE Palo Verde Alternative. Mitigation Measures V-2a, V-2b, and V-2c are required in order to reduce the potentially significant impact (Class II) to less than significant levels.

Mitigation Measures for Impact V-2: Visibility of land scarring in arid and semi-arid landscapes (Class II)

V-2a Reduce in-line views of land scars.

V-2b Reduce visual contrast from unnatural vegetation lines.

V-2c Reduce color contrast of land scars.

Operational Impacts

Impact V-34: Increased structure contrast and view blockage when viewing Saddle Mountain from Key Viewpoint 28 on Salome Highway (VRM) (Class III)

Figure D.3-29A (see enclosed CD) presents the existing view to the south-southwest toward Saddle Mountain from Salome Highway, approximately 1.2 miles east of the highway crossing. Figure D.3-29B (see enclosed CD) presents a visual simulation of the Palo Verde Alternative as it passes east of Saddle Mountain in a corridor with two other lattice structure transmission lines. The Palo Verde Alternative would parallel the existing DPV1 line to the west. Although the new structures would be the same design and height as the existing DPV1 structures, the new structures would cause some additional view blockage of Saddle Mountain in the background. While the new line would slightly increase the structural complexity and industrial character visible from Salome Highway, it would also blend substantially with the background landform. In the context of the two existing lattice structure transmission lines, the resulting visual contrast would be weak. Although the new line would not repeat the basic elements of the existing natural features in the landscape, it would repeat the characteristics of the two existing transmission lines it would parallel. The new line would not dominate the views of the casual observer from any of the nearby roads including Salome Highway. The overall level of change would be low, which would meet the VRM Class III objective of a moderate degree of visual change. The resulting visual impact would be adverse but less than significant (Class III). Mitigation Measure V-3a is recommended to reduce the visual impact along this alternative. While Impact V-34 would be less than significant, mitigation is recommended in compliance with NEPA requirements (please see the explanation of mitigation for less than significant impacts in Section D.1.2). This viewpoint analysis is considered representative of views of this alternative from Salome Highway toward Saddle Mountain.

Mitigation Measure for Impact V-34

V-3a Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors.

D.3.8.3 Harquahala Junction Switchyard Alternative

Environmental Setting

This switchyard alternative would be located on State lands adjacent to the east side of Salome Highway, just north of West Courthouse Road. Although the existing flat landform and vegetation (consisting of a low diversity of short grasses and low-growing shrubs) of this desert landscape are natural appearing, there is substantial built energy infrastructure present, including the complex industrial forms of Harquahala power plant and switchyard to the west and several transmission lines including those adjacent to the alternative switchyard site. However, the regional landscape is dominated by the scale and unique formation of Saddle Mountain. Views of the substation alternative would be available from Salome Highway and West Courthouse Road. Northbound views on Salome Highway in the vicinity of the substation site tend to be drawn toward the northwest and north toward the open Harquahala Plain, Courthouse Rock, and the Big Horn Mountains. Southbound views on Salome Highway are drawn to the unique form of Saddle Mountain. Views from eastbound West Courthouse Road are drawn away from the substation site toward Saddle Mountain.

Key Viewpoint 29 – Salome Highway (VS-VC)

Key Viewpoint 29 was established on southbound Salome Highway, at mile marker 39 (see Figure D.3-30a on enclosed CD). Viewing to the southeast, this viewpoint was selected to characterize the existing visual setting for the alternative substation site and its visibility from Salome Highway.

Visual Quality. Low-to-moderate. The foreground flat, desert landscape is sparsely vegetated by short grasses and low-growing shrubs of subdued yellow and green colors. The rounded to angular forms and jagged ridgelines of the Palo Verde Hills and Saddle Mountain (just out of view of the photograph) provide visual interest and contrast with the horizontal form of the foreground plain they backdrop. Prominent, skylined transmission line structures of tubular and lattice design, exhibit industrial character and, with the nearby Harquahala power plant and substation (out of view to the west), compromise landscape coherence and overall visual quality.

Viewer Concern. High. Although energy infrastructure (transmission lines, power plant, and substation) in the vicinity of the alternative substation site features prominently in the foreground views from Salome Highway, travelers would consider any increase in industrial character, structure prominence, or view blockage of higher value landscape features (background sky or mountains) and adverse visual change.

Viewer Exposure. Moderate-to-high. The alternative substation site would be highly visible in the foreground of views from Salome Highway in general and KVP 29 specifically as the substation site would be located immediately adjacent and to the east of Salome Highway. The number of viewers would be low-to-moderate though the duration of view would be extended given the close proximity of the project to the road and the site's location within the primary cone of vision (45^{o} either side of the primary direction of travel) of travelers on Salome Highway for considerable distances (particularly for southbound viewers).

Overall Visual Sensitivity. Moderate-to-high. For travelers on Salome Highway, the low-to-moderate visual quality, high viewer concern, and moderate-to-high viewer exposure lead to a moderate-to-high overall visual sensitivity of the visual setting and viewing characteristics.

Construction Impacts

Construction impacts from the Harquahala Junction Switchyard Alternative would be similar to those described above for the Harquahala to Kofa segment in Section D.3.6.1 and would include the visual intrusion of construction activities and equipment (Impact V-1) and visibility of land scarring (Impact V-2).

Impact V-1: Short-term visibility of construction activities, equipment and night lighting (Class III)

Ancillary facilities associated with this route segment would include the Tonopah Construction Yard located northwest of the intersection of West Indian School Road and North 411th Avenue. Viewing opportunities of concern would include rural residences along West Courthouse Road and nearby roads including Salome Highway and West Courthouse Road. While Impact V-1 in this alternative would be less than significant, mitigation is recommended in compliance with NEPA requirements (please see the explanation of mitigation for less than significant impacts in Section D.1.2).

Mitigation Measures for Impact V-1: Visibility of Construction Activities and Equipment

V-1a **Reduce visibility of construction activities and equipment.**

V-1b **Reduce construction night lighting impacts.**

Impact V-2: Long-term visibility of land scars in arid and semi-arid landscapes (Class II)

This impact, described in Section D.3.6.1 above, would also occur in the Harquahala Junction Switchyard Alternative. Mitigation Measures V-2a, V-2b, and V-2c are required in order to reduce the potentially significant impact (Class II) to less than significant levels.

Mitigation Measures for Impact V-2: Visibility of land scarring in arid and semi-arid landscapes (Class II)

V-2a **Reduce in-line views of land scars.**

V-2b **Reduce visual contrast from unnatural vegetation lines.**

V-2c **Reduce color contrast of land scars.**

Operational Impacts

Impact V-35: Increased structure contrast, industrial character, view blockage, and skylining when viewing the Harquahala Junction Switchyard Alternative site from Key Viewpoint 29 on Salome Highway (VS-VC) (Class II)

Figure D.3-30A (see enclosed CD) presents the existing view to the north toward the Harquahala Junction Switchyard alternative site from Key Viewpoint 29 on Salome Highway at the mile 39 marker. The placement of a 500 kV switchyard immediately adjacent to Salome Highway would introduce substantial industrial character, visual contrast and view blockage into views from Salome Highway. The resulting visual contrast would be moderate-to-high and the switchyard would appear co-dominant with the existing landscape features. View blockage would be moderate. The overall visual change would be moderate and in the context of the existing landscape's moderate-to-high visual sensitivity, the resulting visual impact would be adverse and potentially significant (Class II). The switchyard would also have the potential to cause light and glare impacts if night lighting is not properly controlled.

Successful implementation of Mitigation Measures V-6a through V-6c ~~are~~ is required to reduce the visual impacts of the Harquahala Junction Switchyard Alternative to levels that would not be significant. Mitigation Measure V-35a is further required to augment Mitigation Measure V-6b (Screen ancillary facilities) in order to achieve adequate screening of the switchyard from Salome Highway views. This viewpoint analysis is considered representative of views of this alternative from Salome Highway in the vicinity of the alternative switchyard site.

Mitigation Measures for Impact V-35: Increased structure contrast, industrial character, view blockage, and skylining when viewing the Harquahala Junction Switchyard Alternative site from Key Viewpoint 29 on Salome Highway

V-6a **Reduce Visual Contrast Associated with Ancillary Facilities.**

V-6b **Screen ancillary facilities.** For the Harquahala Junction Switchyard Alternative, SCE shall provide a Screening Plan for screening vegetation, walls, and fences that reduces visibility and helps the facility blend in with the landscape. The use of berms to facilitate project

screening may also be incorporated into the Plan. SCE shall submit the Plan to the BLM for review and approval at least 90 days prior to installing the landscape screening. If the BLM notifies SCE that revisions to the Plan are needed before the Plan can be approved, within 30 days of receiving that notification, SCE shall prepare and submit for review and approval a revised Plan. The plan shall include but not necessarily be limited to:

- An 11"x17" color simulation of the proposed landscaping at 5 years
- A plan view to scale depicting the project and the location of screening elements
- A detailed list of any plants to be used; their size and age at planting; the expected time to maturity, and the expected height at five years and at maturity.

SCE shall complete installation of the screening prior to the start of project operation. SCE shall notify the BLM within seven days after completing installation of the screening, that the screening components are ready for inspection.

V-6c **Reduce night lighting impacts.**

V-35a **Screen alternative switchyard site from Salome Highway views.** This measure is required to augment and not replace Mitigation Measure V-6b in order to provide more detailed direction pertaining to the planting of roadside screening vegetation along Salome Highway. Screening vegetation shall be planted along the east side of Salome Highway between mile markers 39 and 40. Vegetation shall be comprised of native species and shall be selected to achieve heights and screen effectiveness comparable to that shown in Figure D.3-30B (see enclosed CD). SCE shall submit a Screening Plan demonstrating compliance with this measure to the ~~CPUC~~ BLM for review and approval at least 90 days prior to installing the landscape screening. If the ~~CPUC~~ BLM notifies SCE that revisions to the Plan are needed before the Plan can be approved, within 30 days of receiving that notification, SCE shall prepare and submit for review and approval a revised Plan. The Screening Plan shall include but not necessarily be limited to:

- An 11"x17" color simulation of the proposed landscaping at 5 years
- A plan view to scale depicting the project and the location of screening elements
- A detailed list of any plants to be used; their size and age at planting; the expected time to maturity, and the expected height at five years and at maturity

SCE shall complete installation of the screening prior to the start of project operation. SCE shall notify the CPUC within seven days after completing installation of the screening, that the screening components are ready for inspection.

D.3.8.4 Desert Southwest Transmission Project Alternative

Environmental Setting

A majority of the Desert Southwest Transmission Project (DSWTP) Alternative would follow a route similar to the Proposed Project from the vicinity of Midpoint Substation to Devers Substation. Therefore, the reader is referred to the visual setting discussions of this desert basin and range landscape provided in Sections D.3.2.5 and D.3.2.6. However, the DSWTP Alternative would vary from the Proposed Project in three respects:

- DSWTP would originate at the new Keim Substation/Switching Station on the south side of Hobsonway, adjacent to Interstate 10 and just southeast of the existing Blythe Energy Project power plant. From Keim, the transmission line would traverse southwest along existing transmission line rights-of-way for approximately 1.8 miles before turning west for approximately 7 miles to the intersection point with the existing DPV1 corridor where a new 25- to 50-acre Midpoint Substation/Switching station would be built (also an option under the Proposed Project but in a different location). The line from Keim to Midpoint would be either a double-circuit facility or two parallel 500 kV lines.
- DSWTP would diverge from the DPV1 corridor to the north (closer to I-10) in the vicinity of Alligator Rock for approximately 9.5 miles.
- DSWTP would require the construction of a third substation/switching station adjacent to the existing DPV1 line west of Dillon Road near Indio.

From Keim to Midpoint, the route would traverse the Palo Verde Mesa, passing adjacent or through private agricultural fields and open, undeveloped and sparsely vegetated public lands administered by the BLM. Views across the mesa are panoramic in scope with little topographic variation. Colors are subdued tans and yellows for grasses and greens for shrubs. At greater distances, mountain ranges of lavender and bluish hues appear low on the horizon. The existing transmission lines with their linear forms and vertical to horizontal lines and industrial character contrast with the otherwise natural appearing or agricultural landscape.

Views of the Keim to Midpoint segment would be available from Hobsonway and I-10. Views would also be available to residents of the Mesa Verde (Nicholls Warm Springs) residential community. However, views to the east would be limited because the 1.8-mile segment would be located on a lower terrace of the mesa. Views to the south toward the seven-mile segment would be open but at a greater distance. Views would also be available to a few local access roads south of Mesa Verde, and a very few rural residences. The deviation around Alligator Rock would be visible from I-10. Views of the Dillon Road Substation would be available from Dillon Road.

The route deviation around Alligator Rock was selected for detailed analysis along this route segment. The location of KVP 30 is shown on Figure D.3-1C (see enclosed CD). The results of the visual analysis are summarized in Appendix VR-1 (see enclosed CD). A discussion of the existing visual setting for KVP 30 is presented in the following paragraph.

Key Viewpoint 30 – Eastbound Interstate 10 at Alligator Rock (VRM)

Key Viewpoint 30 was established on eastbound I-10, approximately one mile west of the Desert Center overpass (see Figure D.3-31A on enclosed CD). Viewing to the east toward the route location for both the Desert Southwest Transmission Project Alternative and the Alligator Rock South of I-10 Frontage Alternative, and Alligator Rock beyond, this location was selected to characterize the existing views of Alligator Rock available to travelers on Interstate 10. The rugged, angular form of Alligator Rock rises from the flat valley floor characterized by desert scrub vegetation. Landform colors are predominantly tan and brown. Further to the south (out of the frame of the image presented in Figure D.3-31A on enclosed CD) are the steeply rising Chuckwalla Mountains. Although the Chuckwallas are not part of this scenic quality rating unit, they do provide a backdrop of visual interest. Landform textures appear smooth to granular. Vegetation is patchy with clumps, transitioning to a more continuous distribution. Vegetation colors include tans to pale yellow for grasses with light and dark greens for the shrubs. Vegetation exhibits a matte texture. Existing built structures (aside from the linear form of I-10) are

limited to a simple wood-pole utility line and a roadside fence though these are not prominent features in comparison to Alligator Rock. The existing DPV1 line is of limited visibility and is located to the south (out of the view of Figure D.3-31A on enclosed CD) of Alligator Rock and does not impair views of the unusual ridge formation. Structures appear gray to dark brown in color and smooth in texture. Overall, the landscape consists of an interesting combination of flat valley floor with desert scrub vegetation, punctuated by unusual rock formations and the alligator-shaped ridge that gives rise to the area's name. The resulting Interim Scenic Quality classification is Class B and Viewer Sensitivity is high because of its status within the Desert Conservation Area and the Alligator Rock Area of Critical Environmental Concern. Combined with the foreground to middleground viewing opportunities, the resulting VRM Class Rating is II (see Appendix VR-3 on enclosed CD).

Construction Impacts

Construction impacts from the Desert Southwest Transmission Project Alternative would be as described above in Section D.3.6.1 and would include the visual intrusion of construction activities and equipment (Impact V-1) and visibility of land scarring (Impact V-2).

Impact V-1: Short-term visibility of construction activities, equipment and night lighting (Class III)

Ancillary facilities associated with this alternative would include those described above for the Proposed Project between Midpoint Substation and Devers substation as well as the following additional substations/switching stations: Keim, Midpoint (different location), and Dillon Road.

In addition to the viewing opportunities described above for the Proposed Project between Midpoint Substation and Devers Substation, views of the Keim to Midpoint segment would be available from Hobsonway, I-10, residences along the east and south sides of the Mesa Verde (Nicholls Warm Springs) residential community, a few local access roads south of Mesa Verde, and a very few rural residences. Views of the deviation around Alligator Rock would be visible from I-10 and access roads into the Alligator Rock ACEC. Views of the Dillon Road Substation would be available from Dillon Road. While Impact V-1 in this alternative would be less than significant, mitigation is recommended in compliance with NEPA requirements (please see the explanation of mitigation for less than significant impacts in Section D.1.2).

Mitigation Measures for Impact V-1: Visibility of Construction Activities and Equipment

V-1a Reduce visibility of construction activities and equipment.

V-1b Reduce construction night lighting impacts.

Impact V-2: Long-term visibility of land scars in arid and semi-arid landscapes (Class II)

This impact, described in Section D.3.6.1 above, would also occur in the Desert Southwest Transmission Project Alternative. Mitigation Measures V-2a, V-2b, and V-2c are required in order to reduce the potentially significant impact (Class II) to less than significant levels.

Mitigation Measures for Impact V-2: Visibility of land scarring in arid and semi-arid landscapes (Class II)

V-2a Reduce in-line views of land scars.

V-2b Reduce visual contrast from unnatural vegetation lines.

V-2c Reduce color contrast of land scars.

Operational Impacts

Impact V-36: Inconsistency with Interim BLM VRM Class II management objective due to introduction of structure contrast, industrial character, view blockage, and skylining when viewing Alligator Rock from Key Viewpoint 30 on Eastbound I-10 (VRM) (Class I)

Figure D.3-31A (see enclosed CD) presents the existing view to the east toward Alligator Rock from eastbound I-10, approximately one mile west of the Desert Center off-ramp. Figure D.3-31B (see enclosed CD) presents a visual simulation of the Desert Southwest Transmission Project Alternative and the Alligator Rock South of I-10 Frontage Alternative, which are identical routes in this location. This alternative route would result in the introduction of a new 500 kV transmission line into a predominantly natural appearing landscape south of I-10. Although the landscape does include a simple wood pole utility line, the existing landscape is lacking the large scale, complex, and industrial structures characteristic of a high-voltage transmission line. The resulting structural form and line contrast would be strong and the color contrast would be moderate. The new line would not repeat the basic elements of the existing natural features in the landscape and would cause view blockage of sky and Alligator Rock. The new line would also appear co-dominant to the casual observer on I-10 as they approach Alligator Rock. The overall level of change would be moderate-to-high, which would not meet the VRM Class II objective of a low degree of visual change. The resulting visual impact would be adverse and significant (Class I). There is no mitigation available to reduce the significant visual impact to a level that would be less than significant. However, Mitigation Measure V-3a is recommended to reduce the visual impact along this alternative route. This viewpoint analysis is considered representative of views of this alternative from eastbound I-10 toward Alligator Rock.

Mitigation Measure for Impact V-36

V-3a Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors.

D.3.8.5 Alligator Rock–North of Desert Center Alternative

Environmental Setting

The Alligator Rock–North of Desert Center Alternative diverges from the proposed route approximately 5 miles east of Desert Center, crosses to the north of I-10 and then passes immediately north of Desert Center. The route then converges on I-10 and crosses to the south side of the freeway approximately 4 miles west of Desert Center, reconnecting to the proposed route approximately 1.5 miles further west.

This alternative route primarily crosses public lands administered by the BLM and a few private land holdings near the western crossing of I-10. The landscape consists primarily of the broad, open floor of Chuckwalla Valley, a desert basin characterized by low-growing grasses and shrubs and surrounded by rugged, angular mountains including the Chuckwalla Mountains immediately to the south of I-10. The most notable built structures include I-10 and the somewhat dilapidated collection of buildings housing limited commercial and traveler services at Desert Center.

Views of this alternative would be available to travelers on Kaiser Road, SR 177 (Rice Road), I-10, as well as visitors to Desert Center and the Alligator Rock ACEC. More distant views of the project would be available to residents and visitors at Lake Tamarisk to the north.

Several areas of potential visual sensitivity were identified including views from I-10, SR 177, Kaiser Road, Desert Center, and Lake Tamarisk. The view from southbound Kaiser Road was selected for detailed

analysis. The location of KVP 31 is shown on Figure D.3-1C (see enclosed CD). The results of the visual analysis are summarized in Appendix VR-1 (see enclosed CD). A discussion of the existing visual setting for KVP 31 is presented in the following paragraphs.

Key Viewpoint 31 – Kaiser Road at Desert Center (VRM)

Key Viewpoint 31 was established on southbound Kaiser Road, approximately one mile north of I-10 and Desert Center and approximately 0.3 miles north of the route crossing of Kaiser Road (see Figure D.3-32A on enclosed CD). Viewing to the south toward Desert Center and the alternative route, this location was selected to characterize the existing landscape in the vicinity of Desert Center as viewed from the north (Kaiser Road and SR 177). The landscape north of I-10 and Desert Center is within the central portion of Chuckwalla Valley and is flat, exhibits a prominent horizontal line, and is relatively non descript. The more distant, angular Chuckwalla Mountains and Alligator Rock provide a backdrop of visual interest. Landform colors are tan to lavender and bluish hues for the more distant mountains. Vegetation is characterized by grass and low-growing shrubs with patchy to continuous distributions. Vegetative lines are irregular to distinct where defined by the line of the valley floor and roads. Vegetation colors range from tan to pale yellow for grasses and muted to dark greens for shrubs. The overall landscape character and visual quality is predominantly natural in appearance with a few structures at Desert Center slightly visible above the vegetative line. The Interim Scenic Quality classification is Class C and Viewer Sensitivity is high because of its status within the Desert Conservation Area. Combined with the foreground to middleground viewing opportunities, the resulting VRM Class Rating is III (see Appendix VR-3 on enclosed CD).

Construction Impacts

Construction impacts from the Alligator Rock–North of Desert Center Alternative would be similar to those described above in Section D.3.6.1 and would include the visual intrusion of construction activities and equipment (Impact V-1) and visibility of land scarring (Impact V-2).

Impact V-1: Short-term visibility of construction activities, equipment and night lighting (Class III)

Ancillary facilities associated with this route segment would include the Desert Center Construction Yard located approximately 1,000 feet northwest of the intersection of SR 177 and Ragsdale Road.

Viewing opportunities of concern along this alternative would include Kaiser Road, SR 177, I-10, Desert Center, and Alligator Rock ACEC. More distant views of the project would be available to residents and visitors at Lake Tamarisk. While Impact V-1 in this alternative would be less than significant, mitigation is recommended in compliance with NEPA requirements (please see the explanation of mitigation for less than significant impacts in Section D.1.2).

Mitigation Measures for Impact V-1: Visibility of Construction Activities and Equipment

V-1a Reduce visibility of construction activities and equipment.

V-1b Reduce construction night lighting impacts.

Impact V-2: Long-term visibility of land scars in arid and semi-arid landscapes (Class II)

This impact, described in Section D.3.6.1 above, would also occur in the Alligator Rock–North of Desert Center Alternative. Mitigation Measures V-2a, V-2b, and V-2c are required in order to reduce the potentially significant impact (Class II) to less than significant levels.

Mitigation Measures for Impact V-2: Visibility of land scarring in arid and semi-arid landscapes (Class II)

V-2a Reduce in-line views of land scars.

V-2b Reduce visual contrast from unnatural vegetation lines.

V-2c Reduce color contrast of land scars.

Operational Impacts

Impact V-37: Inconsistency with Interim BLM VRM Class III management objectives due to the introduction of structure contrast, industrial character, view blockage, and skylining when viewing the Chuckwalla Mountains from Key Viewpoint 31 on southbound Kaiser Road, north of Desert Center (VRM) (Class I)

Figure D.3-32A (see enclosed CD) presents the existing view to the south toward Desert Center and the Chuckwalla Mountains from southbound Kaiser Road, approximately one mile north of I-10 and Desert Center. Figure D.3-32B (see enclosed CD) presents a visual simulation of the Alligator Rock North Alternative. This alternative route would result in the introduction of a new 500 kV transmission line into a rural landscape lacking similar built structures of industrial character. Although other built structures are visible in the Desert Center landscape, only a single telecommunications tower shares the structural complexity or vertical extent of the lattice transmission towers. The resulting structural form and line contrast would be moderate to strong, color contrast would be weak-to-moderate, and texture contrast would be weak. The new line would not repeat the basic elements of the existing natural features in the landscape and would cause view blockage of sky and portions of the Chuckwalla Mountains and Alligator Rock depending on viewpoint location. The new line would also appear co-dominant to the casual observer. The overall level of change would be moderate-to-high, which would not meet the VRM Class III objective of a moderate degree of visual change. The resulting visual impact would be adverse and significant (Class I). There is no mitigation available to reduce the significant visual impact to a level that would be less than significant. However, Mitigation Measure V-3a is recommended to reduce the visual impact along this alternative route. This viewpoint analysis is considered representative of views of this alternative from north of the alternative and Desert Center.

Mitigation Measure for Impact V-37

V-3a Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors.

D.3.8.6 Alligator Rock–Blythe Energy Transmission Alternative

Environmental Setting

The Alligator Rock–Blythe Energy Transmission Alternative diverges from the proposed route approximately 3.5 miles east of Desert Center, where it begins to converge on and then parallel I-10 on the south side of the freeway until just before the Desert Center Overpass. At that point the route would

turn to the southwest to parallel an existing access road along the east side of Alligator Rock, eventually rejoining the proposed route south of Alligator Rock at approximately Proposed Project Milepost 155.

Views of this alternative would be available to travelers on I-10, visitors to Desert Center, and recreationists accessing the Alligator Rock ACEC south of I-10.

The primary area of potential visual sensitivity identified was the view from westbound I-10 on approach to Desert Center and Alligator Rock from the east. The location of KVP 32 is shown on Figure D.3-1C (see enclosed CD). The results of the visual analysis are summarized in Appendix VR-1 (see enclosed CD). A discussion of the existing visual setting for KVP 32 is presented in the following paragraphs.

Key Viewpoint 32 – Westbound Interstate 10 at Alligator Rock (VRM)

Key Viewpoint 32 was established on westbound I-10, approximately 0.72 miles east of the Desert Center overpass (see Figure D.3-33A on enclosed CD). Viewing to the southwest toward Alligator Rock south of I-10, this location was selected to characterize the existing views of Alligator Rock available to westbound travelers on Interstate 10. The rugged, angular form of Alligator Rock rises from the flat valley floor characterized by desert scrub vegetation. Landform colors are predominantly tan and brown. Further to the south (left side of the image presented in Figure D.3-33A on enclosed CD) are the steeply rising Chuckwalla Mountains. Although the Chuckwallas are not part of this scenic quality rating unit, they do provide a backdrop of visual interest. Landform textures appear smooth to granular. Vegetation is patchy with clumps, transitioning to a more continuous distribution. Vegetation colors include tans to pale yellow for grasses with light and dark greens for the shrubs. Vegetation exhibits a matte texture. Existing built structures (aside from the linear form of I-10) are limited to a simple wood-pole utility line and a roadside fence though these are not prominent features in comparison to Alligator Rock. The existing DPV1 line is of limited visibility and is located to the south (out of the view of Figure D.3-33A) of Alligator Rock and does not impair views of the unusual ridge formation. Structures appear gray to dark brown in color and smooth in texture. Overall, the landscape consists of an interesting combination of flat valley floor with desert scrub vegetation, punctuated by unusual rock formations and the alligator-shaped ridge that gives rise to the area's name. The resulting Interim Scenic Quality classification is Class B and Viewer Sensitivity is high because of its status within the Desert Conservation Area and the Alligator Rock Area of Critical Environmental Concern. Combined with the foreground to middleground viewing opportunities, the resulting VRM Class Rating is II (see Appendix VR-3 on enclosed CD).

Construction Impacts

Construction impacts from the Alligator Rock–Blythe Energy Transmission Alternative would be as described above in Section D.3.6.1 and would include the visual intrusion of construction activities, vehicles and equipment (Impact V-1) and visibility of land scarring (Impact V-2).

Impact V-1: Short-term visibility of construction activities, equipment and night lighting (Class III)

Ancillary facilities associated with this route segment would include the Desert Center Construction Yard located approximately 1,000 feet northwest of the intersection of SR 177 and Ragsdale Road. Viewing opportunities of concern for this alternative would include I-10, Desert Center, and Alligator Rock ACEC south of I-10. While Impact V-1 in this alternative would be less than significant, mitigation is recommended in compliance with NEPA requirements (please see the explanation of mitigation for less than significant impacts in Section D.1.2).

Mitigation Measures for Impact V-1: Visibility of Construction Activities and Equipment

V-1a Reduce visibility of construction activities and equipment.

V-1b Reduce construction night lighting impacts.

Impact V-2: Long-term visibility of land scars in arid and semi-arid landscapes (Class II)

This impact, described in Section D.3.6.1 above, would also occur in the Alligator Rock–Blythe Energy Transmission Alternative. Mitigation Measures V-2a, V-2b, and V-2c are required in order to reduce the potentially significant impact (Class II) to less than significant levels.

Mitigation Measures for Impact V-2: Visibility of land scarring in arid and semi-arid landscapes (Class II)

V-2a Reduce in-line views of land scars.

V-2b Reduce visual contrast from unnatural vegetation lines.

V-2c Reduce color contrast of land scars.

Operational Impacts

Impact V-38: Inconsistency with Interim BLM VRM Class II management objective due to introduction of structure contrast, industrial character, view blockage and skylining when viewing Alligator Rock from Key Viewpoint 32 on westbound Interstate 10 east of Desert Center (VRM) (Class I)

Figure D.3-33A (see enclosed CD) presents the existing view to the southwest toward Alligator Rock from westbound I-10, approximately 0.72 miles east of the Desert Center overpass. Figure D.3-33B (see enclosed CD) presents a visual simulation of the Alligator Rock Blythe Energy Transmission Alternative as it passes adjacent to I-10 and then immediately east of Alligator Rock. This alternative route would result in the introduction of a new 500 kV transmission line into a landscape generally lacking similar built structures of industrial character. Although the DPV1 line passes through the Alligator Rock ACEC, it is sufficiently to the south that it does not appear noticeable in views from Interstate 10. The resulting structural form and line contrast would be strong, while color and texture contrast would be weak. The new line would not repeat the basic elements of the existing natural features in the landscape and would cause view blockage of sky, Alligator Rock, and the Chuckwalla Mountains when viewed by westbound travelers on Interstate 10. The new line would also appear co-dominant to the casual observer. The overall level of change would be moderate-to-high, which would not meet the VRM Class II objective of a low degree of visual change. The resulting visual impact would be adverse and significant (Class I). There is no mitigation available to reduce the significant visual impact to a level that would be less than significant. However, Mitigation Measure V-3a is recommended to reduce the visual impact along this alternative route. This viewpoint analysis is considered representative of views of this alternative from westbound I-10 toward Alligator Rock.

Mitigation Measure for Impact V-38

V-3a Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors.

D.3.8.7 Alligator Rock–South of I-10 Frontage Alternative

Environmental Setting

The Alligator Rock–South of I-10 Frontage Alternative follows the same route as the Desert Southwest Transmission Line Project around Alligator Rock. The reader is therefore referred to Section D.3.8.4 and specifically to the discussion about Key Viewpoint 30 on eastbound I-10. The reader is also referred to the summary of the KVP 30 analysis presented in Appendix VR-1 (see enclosed CD) and the existing view photograph and visual simulation presented in Figures D.3-31A and D.3-31B (see enclosed CD) respectively.

Construction Impacts

Construction impacts from the Alligator Rock–South of I-10 Frontage Alternative would be as described above in Section D.3.6.1 and would include the visual intrusion of construction activities, vehicles and equipment (Impact V-1) and visibility of land scarring (Impact V-2).

Impact V-1: Short-term visibility of construction activities, equipment and night lighting (Class III)

Ancillary facilities associated with this route segment would include the Desert Center Construction Yard located approximately 1,000 feet northwest of the intersection of SR 177 and Ragsdale Road. Viewing opportunities of concern for this alternative would include I-10, Desert Center, and e Alligator Rock ACEC south of I-10. While Impact V-1 in this alternative would be less than significant, mitigation is recommended in compliance with NEPA requirements (please see the explanation of mitigation for less than significant impacts in Section D.1.2).

Mitigation Measures for Impact V-1: Visibility of Construction Activities and Equipment

V-1a Reduce visibility of construction activities and equipment.

V-1b Reduce construction night lighting impacts.

Impact V-2: Long-term visibility of land scars in arid and semi-arid landscapes (Class II)

This impact, described in Section D.3.6.1 above, would also occur in the Alligator Rock–South of I-10 Frontage Alternative. Mitigation Measures V-2a, V-2b, and V-2c are required in order to reduce the potentially significant impact (Class II) to less than significant levels.

Mitigation Measures for Impact V-2: Visibility of land scarring in arid and semi-arid landscapes (Class II)

V-2a Reduce in-line views of land scars.

V-2b Reduce visual contrast from unnatural vegetation lines.

V-2c Reduce color contrast of land scars.

Operational Impacts

Impact V-39: Inconsistency with Interim BLM VRM Class II management objective due to introduction of structure contrast, industrial character, view blockage, and skylining when viewing Alligator Rock from Key Viewpoint 30 on eastbound Interstate 10 (VRM) (Class I)

The Alligator Rock–South of I-10 Frontage Alternative follows the same route as the Desert Southwest Transmission Line Project around Alligator Rock. The reader is therefore referred to Section D.3.8.4 and specifically to the discussion about Key Viewpoint 30 on eastbound I-10. The reader is also referred to the summary of the KVP 30 analysis presented in Appendix VR-1 (see enclosed CD) and the existing view photograph and visual simulation presented in Figures D.3-31A and D.3-31B (see enclosed CD) respectively. The resulting visual impact would be adverse and significant (Class I). There is no mitigation available to reduce the significant visual impact to a level that would be less than significant. However, Mitigation Measure V-3a is recommended to reduce the visual impact along this alternative route. This viewpoint analysis is considered representative of views of this alternative from eastbound I-10 toward Alligator Rock.

Mitigation Measure for Impact V-39

V-3a Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors.

D.3.9 Alternatives for West of Devers

D.3.9.1 Devers-Valley No. 2 Alternative

Environmental Setting

The eastern portion of the Devers-Valley Alternative transitions from a desert basin environment that is host to a profusion of wind turbines and energy transmission infrastructure and ringed by rugged mountain ranges, to the steeply rising northern ridges of the San Jacinto Mountains south of Interstate 10 (I-10). South of I-10, the route passes through private lands and public lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management (on the desert floor) and the U.S. Forest Service (on the upper ridges). The existing Devers-Valley No. 1 (D-V1) transmission line, with its large 500 kV structures, is a prominent built feature in the landscape along with the other energy infrastructure. This portion of the route is visible to travelers on I-10, SR 62 (a State-designated scenic highway), SR-111 (a State-eligible scenic highway), and Snow Creek Road; hikers on the Pacific Crest Trail; and residents in the Painted Hills residential area north of I-10 and the Snow Creek Village residential community south of I-10. After traversing a portion of the northern ridges of the San Jacinto Mountains, the route descends rocky slopes and passes through the residential community of Cabazon in San Gorgonio Pass, an arid desert pass characterized by desert scrub vegetation and bordered by the rugged San Bernardino Mountains on the north and the San Jacinto Mountains on the south. Extending west from Cabazon, the route crosses SR 243 (a State designated scenic highway) and passes through the cities of Banning and Beaumont. This portion of the route is visible at the base of the San Jacinto Mountains from I-10, numerous local roads, SR 243, scattered rural residences in Banning, and new residential subdivisions in Beaumont. The existing D-V1 line continues to be a prominent built feature in the landscape.

Heading southwest from Beaumont, the route passes through the rocky western portion of the San Jacinto Mountains, crossing SR 74 before descending into the San Jacinto Valley, which is characterized by open agricultural fields and rural residences. Panoramic vista views encompassing this alternative route

are available from SR 74, Gilman Springs Road, and Ramona Expressway, all three of which are County-eligible scenic highways. Continuing to the southwest, the route enters the rugged Lakeview Mountains, exiting north of Romoland and passing through a landscape characterized by open grassy fields that are bordered by low, rolling, rocky hills, and punctuated by numerous, scattered rural residences. The D-V1 transmission line with its distinctive "Tetra" tower design is a prominent, built landscape feature. Views of this portion of the route are available to the numerous local roads and rural residences surrounding the route.

Four key viewpoints (KVPs) were selected for detailed analysis along this Alternative and are considered representative of the various viewing opportunities that are available along the route. From north to south, the viewpoints include: (1) KVP 33 on the Pacific Crest Trail near the Snow Creek Village residential community; (2) KVP 34 on Riza Avenue in a residential community in Cabazon; (3) KVP 35 on southbound SR 243, which is a State-designated scenic highway; and KVP 36 on Mapes Road, just west of Menifee Road and north of Romoland. The locations of these four KVPs are shown on Figure D.3-1G (see enclosed CD). The results of the visual analysis are summarized in Appendix VR-1 (see enclosed CD). A discussion of the existing visual setting for each KVP is presented in the following paragraphs.

Key Viewpoint 33 – Pacific Crest Trail near Snow Creek Village (VS-VC)

Key Viewpoint 33 was established on the Pacific Crest Trail, just west of Snow Creek Road and just north of the Snow Creek Village Residential community (see Figure D.3-34A on enclosed CD). Viewing to the west toward the existing D-V1 line and the northern ridges of the San Jacinto Mountains, this location was selected to represent the existing views from the Pacific Crest Trail, Snow Creek Road, and the Snow Creek Village rural residential area.

Visual Quality: moderate. The foreground, flat desert floor is characterized by desert scrub vegetation and is backdropped by the dominant, rugged and steeply rising northern ridges of the San Jacinto Mountains. The existing D-V1 transmission line is a prominent feature made more noticeable by the visible skylining (extending above the horizon line) that occurs as the transmission line ascends the ridges and is viewed from lower elevation vantagepoints. In addition to the transmission line structures, the existing D-V1 conductors also appear as discordant built features in the predominantly natural landscape when highlighted by the afternoon sun (see Figure D.3-35 on enclosed CD).

Viewer Concern: high. Residents of the Snow Creek Village residential community and hikers on the Pacific Crest Trail would consider any increase in industrial character, structure prominence, or view blockage of higher value landscape features (background sky and mountain ridges) an adverse visual change. Also, portions of the route in this area are located within the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument. The special status of these lands also imparts a high degree of public concern.

Viewer Exposure: moderate-to-high. The proposed route would be highly visible in the foreground, of views from the Pacific Crest Trail, the Snow Creek Village residential community, and Snow Creek Road. Although the number of viewers would be low, the duration of view would be extended.

Overall Visual Sensitivity: moderate-to-high. For Snow Creek Village residents and travelers on the Pacific Crest Trail and Snow Creek Road, the moderate visual quality, high viewer concern, and moderate-to-high viewer exposure lead to a moderate-to-high overall visual sensitivity of the visual setting and viewing characteristics.

Key Viewpoint 34 – Riza Avenue in Cabazon (VS-VC)

Key Viewpoint 34 was established on Riza Avenue, approximately 0.2 miles west of Elm Street in Cabazon (see Figure D.3-36A on enclosed CD). Viewing to the northeast toward existing D-V1 structures DV 49 through DV 51, this location was selected to represent the existing views from the surrounding rural residences in Cabazon.

Visual Quality: low-to-moderate. The foreground relatively non-descript, grass- and shrub-covered desert landscape is punctuated by rural residences and prominent utility towers that are structurally complex and exhibit a pronounced industrial character. The foreground, landscape is backdropped by the undulating northern ridges of the San Jacinto Mountains and a wind farm development to the east. The existing D-V1 transmission line is a prominent built feature made more noticeable by the visible skylining that occurs when viewed from south of the line.

Viewer Concern: high. Although the existing energy generation and transmission infrastructure feature prominently in the landscape visible from within this community, residential viewers would consider any increase in industrial character, structure prominence, or view blockage of higher value landscape features (background sky and mountain ridges) an adverse visual change.

Viewer Exposure: moderate-to-high. The proposed route would be highly visible in the foreground, of residential views in Cabazon. Although the number of viewers would be low, the duration of view would be extended.

Overall Visual Sensitivity: moderate-to-high. For Cabazon residents and travelers on local roads, the low-to-moderate visual quality, high viewer concern, and moderate-to-high viewer exposure lead to a moderate-to-high overall visual sensitivity of the visual setting and viewing characteristics.

Key Viewpoint 35 – State Route 243 Scenic Highway (VS-VC)

Key Viewpoint 35 was established on southbound SR 243, just north of the crossing of SR 243 (see Figure D.3-37A on enclosed CD). Viewing to the east toward existing D-V1 towers DV 73 through DV 75, this location was selected to represent the existing view from the State scenic highway.

Visual Quality: moderate. SR 243 affords a panoramic view of the San Gorgonio Pass area and the northern ridges of the San Jacinto Mountains. Foreground, views are dominated by rugged, rocky ridgelines, punctuated by prominent utility towers with industrial character, made more prominent where structure skylining occurs. These landscape features are backdropped by distant mountains and the urban development within the Pass area.

Viewer Concern: high. Travelers on a State Scenic Highway typically have expectations for views of notable scenic quality. Although some local travelers on SR 243 may anticipate the presence of the existing transmission infrastructure, any addition of industrial character or prominence or blockage of higher quality landscape features (sky, mountain ridges, or panoramic views of the Pass) would be seen as an adverse visual change.

Viewer Exposure: moderate to high. The proposed route would be highly visible in the foreground, of views from SR 243 in general and KVP 35 specifically as the route approaches and then spans the highway. The number of viewers would be moderate and the duration of view would be moderate-to-extended.

Overall Visual Sensitivity: moderate-to-high. For travelers on SR 243, the moderate visual quality, high viewer concern, and moderate-to-high viewer exposure lead to a moderate-to-high overall visual sensitivity of the visual setting and viewing characteristics.

Residential Views in Banning and Beaumont

Figure D.3-38 (see enclosed CD) presents the existing view to the northeast from Del Rita Road in Banning. This view is representative the rural residential views of the existing D-V1 line and D-V2 Alternative route in Banning. Visual quality is moderate with views of open fields and the San Bernardino Mountains (or San Jacinto Mountains if viewing to the south) in the background. Viewer concern would be high with any increase in industrial character or view blockage perceived as an adverse visual change. Viewer exposure would be moderate-to-high due to highly visible foreground, views available to a relatively low number of viewers but with extended view duration. The overall visual sensitivity of the existing visual setting and viewing characteristics would be moderate-to-high based on the moderate visual quality, high viewer concern, and moderate-to-high viewer exposure.

Figure D.3-39 (see enclosed CD) presents the existing view to the southwest from the Four Seasons residential development, just west of Highland Springs Avenue in Beaumont. The existing D-V1 transmission line is a prominent feature crossing the hilltops to the south of the residential development. This view is considered representative of residential views in the southern portion of Beaumont though there are other residential developments east of Highland Springs Avenue that are located in closer proximity to the transmission line. Visual quality is moderate with foreground, views of developed landscaping backdropped by natural appearing grass-covered rolling hills. Viewer concern would be high with any increase in industrial character or view blockage perceived as an adverse visual change. Viewer exposure would be moderate-to-high due to highly visible foreground, views (made more pronounced by structure skylining) available to a relatively low number of viewers but with extended view duration. The overall visual sensitivity of the existing visual setting and viewing characteristics would be moderate-to-high based on the moderate visual quality, high viewer concern, and moderate-to-high viewer exposure.

Key Viewpoint 36 – Mapes Road West of Menifee Road (VS-VC)

Key Viewpoint 36 was established on Mapes Road, just west of Menifee Road and north of Romoland (see Figure D.3-40A on enclosed CD). Viewing to the south toward existing D-V1 structures DV 146 through DV 151, this location was selected to represent the existing views from the surrounding rural residences along the southern portion of this alternative.

Visual Quality: moderate. Foreground open panoramic views encompass a flat, rural residential landscape consisting of grass-covered fields ringed by rolling to angular hills and rocky ridges. Numerous rural residences dot the landscape and the existing D-V1 transmission line is the prominent built feature with its distinctive "Tetra" tower design that exhibit substantial skylining due to the low horizon line and availability of close proximity viewpoints.

Viewer Concern: high. Although the existing transmission infrastructure features prominently in the landscape visible from surrounding residences and local roads, residential viewers would consider any increase in industrial character, structure prominence, or view blockage of higher value landscape features (background sky and mountain ridges) an adverse visual change.

Viewer Exposure: high. The proposed route would be highly visible in the foreground, of residential views. While the number of viewers would be moderate, the duration of views would be extended.

Overall Visual Sensitivity: moderate-to-high. For rural residents and travelers on local roads, the moderate visual quality, high viewer concern, and high viewer exposure lead to a moderate-to-high overall visual sensitivity of the visual setting and viewing characteristics.

Policy Consistency Analysis

Table D.3-10 identifies the various plans and policies that pertain to Visual Resources. For each relevant policy or directive identified in the table, the Devers-Valley Alternative's consistency is identified and discussed.

Table D.3-10. Consistency with Applicable Land Use Plans and Policies

Agency Regulating Visual Resources	Regulation or Policy	Alternative Consistent?	Method of Consistency
U.S. Bureau of Land Management California Desert District	California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA) Plan-1980 as amended. Record of Decision for California Desert Conservation Area Plan Amendment for the Coachella Valley, Page 1, Plan Amendment Decision 2: Designate Visual Resource Management Classes on public lands.		
	VRM Classifications in the Plan Amendment (Table 2-2 on Page 2-4) are specified Class II for BLM-managed lands within the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument (except for designated wilderness which is Class I). The VRM Class II Management Objective requires that a project or action retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the landscape should be low. Activities may be seen but should not attract attention of the casual observer. Changes must repeat the basic elements of form, line, color, and texture found in the predominant natural features of the characteristic landscape.	No	Just west of Snow Creek Road, the D-V2 Alternative would pass through portions of the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument subject to VRM Class II management objectives. The moderate level of visual change that would be caused by the Alternative in this area would not meet the VRM Class II objective of a low degree of visual change. While the new line would repeat the characteristics of the existing lattice tower transmission line, it would not repeat the basic elements of the existing natural features in the landscape. Also, the additional skylining industrial character that would result would attract attention of the casual observer on the Pacific Crest Trail and Snow Creek Road, and within Snow Creek Village.
	California Desert District South Coast Resource Management Plan and Record of Decision. June 1994. Land Use Allocations, No. 21, Page 30.		
	The South Coast Resource Management Plan specifies that management actions (projects) on BLM-administered lands within the Potrero ACEC are to conform to VRM Class II management objectives (see above for VRM Class II management requirements).	No	The D-V2 Alternative would introduce additional energy infrastructure into the Potrero ACEC landscape. Project structures would exhibit substantial structural complexity, industrial character, and increased structure prominence. View blockage of higher value landscape features would also occur. The resulting visual contrast for structural form and line would be moderate to moderate-to-high because of the close proximity of viewers (within the ACEC) to the line. The overall level of change would also be moderate to moderate-to-high. The new line would not achieve any of the VRM Class II objectives. Therefore, the moderate to moderate-to-high level of visual change that would be caused by this portion of the D-V2 Alternative would be inconsistent with the applicable VRM Class II management objectives

Table D.3-10. Consistency with Applicable Land Use Plans and Policies

Agency Regulating Visual Resources	Regulation or Policy	Alternative Consistent?	Method of Consistency
U.S. Forest Service San Bernardino National Forest	San Bernardino National Forest South Final Land Management Plan Scenic Integrity Objectives Map and Design Criteria for Southern California National Forests, Page 6		
	The D-V2 Alternative would cross lands administered by San Bernardino National Forest that are subject to the *VERY HIGH* Scenic Integrity Objective. *VERY HIGH scenic integrity refers to landscapes where the valued landscape character "is" intact with only minute if any deviations. The existing landscape character and sense of place is expressed at the highest possible level.* *NOTE: The San Bernardino National Forest's comment letter on the Draft EIR/EIS (see Volume 3, Comment Set A15) states that the SIO will be modified from VERY HIGH to HIGH. If this is done and SCE meets Forest criteria for visibility of the new transmission line, the alternative could be found to be consistent with the Forest Plan.*	No	Aesthetic Management Standard S9 of the Design Criteria for Southern California National Forests stipulates that management activities (or projects) are to meet the Scenic Integrity Objectives (SIOs) shown on the Scenic Integrity Objectives Map, which in this case is *VERY HIGH*. The D-V2 Alternative would result in the introduction of additional energy infrastructure, which would exhibit substantial industrial character and structural complexity and prominence imparted by the towers and conductors. These characteristics would result in levels of visual contrast that would be inconsistent with the *VERY HIGH* Scenic Integrity Objective assigned to the lands through which the Alternative would pass. Aesthetic Management Standard S10 does allow the following exceptions to the SIO requirement: • Minor adjustments not to exceed a drop of one SIO level is allowable with the Forest Supervisor's approval. • Temporary drops of more than one SIO level may be made during and immediately following project implementation providing they do not exceed three years in duration. However, in this case, it appears that the drop in scenic integrity would be at least two levels to MODERATE or possibly three levels to LOW. The increased visual contrast associated with the additional transmission line would cause the landscape character to appear at least slightly altered which is a characteristic of MODERATE scenic integrity. Since the project-induced changes would be essentially permanent or at least long-term (greater than three years), the impact would exceed the exception allowed under Aesthetic Management Standard S10.
Riverside County	Riverside County Comprehensive General Plan. Land Use Element: Project Design, Pages LU-22 and LU-23.		
	Policy LU 4.1 – Require that new developments be located and designed to visually enhance, not degrade the character of the surrounding area through consideration of the following concepts: a. Compliance with the design standards of the appropriate area plan land use category. l. Mitigate noise, odor, lighting, and other impacts on surrounding properties.	No (for Item a.) Yes (with mitigation for Item l)	There are no aesthetic design standards pertaining to high-voltage transmission lines in the Land Use Element. However, it has been determined that the D-V2 Alternative would result in Significant (Class I) visual impacts, which is considered a degradation of the character of the surrounding area. Also, the D-V2 Alternative would include facilities that would require night lighting with the potential to impact surrounding areas. However, with implementation of Mitigation Measure V-6c, night lighting impacts would be mitigated to a level that would be less than significant (Class III).

Table D.3-10. Consistency with Applicable Land Use Plans and Policies

Agency Regulating Visual Resources	Regulation or Policy	Alternative Consistent?	Method of Consistency
	Riverside County Comprehensive General Plan. Land Use Element: Land Use Compatibility, Page LU-25.		
	Policy LU 6.1 – Require land uses to develop in accordance with the General Plan and area plans to ensure compatibility and minimize impacts.	Yes	The D-V2 Alternative would be located within an established utility corridor, which would avoid the proliferation of additional utility facilities across the landscape with the potential for land use compatibility impacts. Furthermore, implementation of the APMs identified in this document and the Mitigation Measures presented in following sections would help to lessen the visual impacts of this alternative. However, even though the visual impacts of the D-V2 Alternative would likely be less than a different route located outside of an existing transmission line corridor, implementation of this alternative would still result in significant Class I visual Impacts.
	Policy LU 6.4 – Retain and enhance the integrity of existing residential, employment, agricultural, and open space areas by protecting them from encroachment of land uses that would result in impacts from noise, noxious fumes, glare, shadowing, and traffic.	Yes	The D-V2 Alternative would include facilities that might cause daytime glare and night lighting impacts on surrounding areas. However, with implementation of Mitigation Measures V-40a, V-6a and V-6c, glare and night lighting impacts would be kept to levels that would be less than significant (Class III).
	Riverside County Comprehensive General Plan. Land Use Element: Hillside Development & Slope, Page LU-30.		
	Policy LU 11.1 – Apply the following policies to areas where development is allowed and that contain natural slopes, canyons, or other significant elevation changes, regardless of land use designation: a. Restrict development on visually significant ridgelines, canyon edges and hilltops through sensitive siting and appropriate landscaping to ensure development is visually unobtrusive.	No	The D-V2 Alternative would cross several hilltops and ridgelines in Riverside County. As a result, the transmission structures would cause additional skylining (extending above the horizon line) and appear more prominent and obtrusive. There is no mitigation available that would bring the project into consistency with this policy following the D-V2 alignment.
	Riverside County Comprehensive General Plan. Land Use Element: Scenic Corridors, Page LU-31.		
	Policy LU 13.1 – Preserve and protect outstanding scenic vistas and visual features for the enjoyment of the traveling public.	No	Although the D-V2 Alternative would be located within an existing utility corridor, several views from roads within Riverside County would be adversely affected, including views from SR 62 and SR 243 (State-designated scenic highways), I-10, SR 111, SR 74, and SR 79 (State-eligible scenic highways) and Gilman Springs Road, Ramona Expressway, and Menifee Road (County-eligible scenic highways). A number of these visual impacts would be significant (Class I). Although Mitigation Measure V-40a is proposed to lessen the visual impacts of the D-V2 Alternative, the impacts would not be reduced to levels that would not be significant.

Table D.3-10. Consistency with Applicable Land Use Plans and Policies

Agency Regulating Visual Resources	Regulation or Policy	Alternative Consistent?	Method of Consistency
	Policy LU 13.3 – Ensure that the design and appearance of new landscaping, structures, equipment, signs, or grading within Designated and Eligible State and County scenic highway corridors are compatible with the surrounding scenic setting or environment.	Yes	Portions of the D-V2 Alternative would cross designated and eligible scenic roads within Riverside County. However, the project would be located within an existing utility corridor and the proposed structures would match the design of existing structures within the corridor.
	Policy LU 13.4 – Maintain at least a 50-foot setback from the edge of the right-of-way for new development adjacent to Designated and Eligible State and County Scenic Highways.	Yes	Although the D-V2 Alternative would affect views from designated and eligible scenic highways in Riverside County, structures would be located within an existing utility corridor and it is expected that structures would be situated more than 50 feet from the edge of the scenic highway right-of-way (though precise tower placements have not been identified).
	Riverside County Comprehensive General Plan. Land Use Element: Open Space Area Plan Land Use Designations: Recreation Page LU-52.		
	Policy LU 20.1 – Require that structures be designed to maintain the environmental character in which they are located.	No	The D-V2 Alternative would be located within an established utility corridor, which would avoid the proliferation of additional utility corridors. The proposed transmission line structures would also match the same design as existing structures within the corridor. However, as a result of the scale of the structures, the extent of visual change that would occur (increased visual contrast, structural prominence, and view blockage), and the close proximity of sensitive viewers, this Alternative would still result in significant (Class I) visual impacts.
	Policy LU 20.2 – Require that development be designed to blend with undeveloped natural contours of the site and avoid an unvaried, unnatural, or manufactured appearance.	No	Although the D-V2 Alternative would (a) be located within an established utility corridor, (b) have the same design as existing transmission line structures, and (c) have a lattice design that would help the structures blend with a background where one exists, the project would still exhibit an industrial, manufactured appearance. There is no mitigation available that would bring the project into consistency with this policy following the Alternative alignment.
	Policy LU 20.4 – Ensure that development does not adversely impact the open space and rural character of the surrounding area.	No	Although the D-V2 Alternative would (a) be located within an established utility corridor, (b) have the same design as existing transmission line structures, and (c) have a lattice design that would help the structures blend with a background where one exists, the project would still exhibit an industrial, manufactured appearance and cause adverse visual impacts. There is no mitigation available that would bring the project into consistency with this policy following the Alternative alignment.
	Riverside County Comprehensive General Plan. Circulation Element: Scenic Corridors, Page C-46.		
	Policy C 19.1 – Preserve scenic routes that have exceptional or unique visual features in accordance with Caltrans' Scenic Highways Plan.	No	Although the D-V2 Alternative would: (a) be located within an established utility corridor and (b) have the same design as existing transmission line structures, this alternative would still adversely affect views from designated (SR 62 and SR 243) and eligible (I-10, SR 111, SR 74, SR 79, Gilman Springs Road, Ramona Expressway, and Menifee Road) scenic highways.

Table D.3-10. Consistency with Applicable Land Use Plans and Policies

Agency Regulating Visual Resources	Regulation or Policy	Alternative Consistent?	Method of Consistency
	Riverside County Comprehensive General Plan. Circulation Element: Major Utility Corridors, Page C-55.		
	Policy C 25.2 – Locate new and relocated utilities underground when possible. All remaining utilities shall be located or screened in a manner that minimizes their visibility by the public.	No	The D-V2 Alternative would be an aboveground facility. Although the project would be located within an existing corridor and have the same design as other facilities within the corridor, its location within an existing corridor would not minimize the project's visibility given the relatively close proximity of the utility corridor to major travel corridors, local roads, and residential development. There is no mitigation available that would bring the project into consistency with this policy following the alternative alignment.
	Riverside County Comprehensive General Plan. Open Space Element: Scenic Resources, Page OS-45.		
	Policy OS 21.1 – Identify and conserve the skylines, view corridors, and outstanding scenic vistas within Riverside County.	No	The D-V2 Alternative would be located along a number of ridgelines and slopes that would result in additional skylining. There is no mitigation available that would bring the project into consistency with this policy following the alternative alignment.
	Policy OS 22.1 – Design developments within designated scenic highway corridors to balance the objectives of maintaining scenic resources with accommodating compatible land uses.	No	Although the D-V2 Alternative would: (a) be located within an established utility corridor and (b) have the same design as existing transmission line structures, this alternative would still adversely affect views from designated (SR 62 and SR 243) and eligible (I-10, SR 111, SR 74, SR 79, Gilman Springs Road, and Ramona Expressway) scenic highways.
	Riverside County The Pass Area Plan. Circulation: Scenic Highways, Page 41.		
	Policy PAP 12.1 – Protect the scenic highways in the Pass from change that would diminish the aesthetic value of adjacent properties in accordance with the Scenic Corridors sections of the General Plan Land Use, Multipurpose Open Space, and Circulation Elements.	No	The D-V2 Alternative would cause significant (Class I) visual impacts on views from SR 243, a State-designated scenic highway within The Pass Planning Area. There is no mitigation available that would bring the project into consistency with this policy following the alternative alignment.
	Riverside County Western Coachella Valley Area Plan. Land Use: Industrial Uses, Page 38.		
	Policy WCVAP 12.4 – Require the screening and/or landscaping of outdoor storage areas, such as contractor storage yards and similar uses.	Yes (with mitigation)	The D-V2 Alternative would require the establishment of the Palm Springs Construction yard within the Western Coachella Valley Plan Area. However, implementation of Mitigation Measure V-1a would help to minimize the temporary visual impacts from construction and storage yards.
	Riverside County Western Coachella Valley Area Plan. Land Use: Light Pollution, Page 43.		
	Policy WCVAP 15.1 – Where outdoor lighting is proposed, require the inclusion of outdoor lighting features that would minimize the effects on the nighttime sky and wildlife habitat areas.	Yes (with mitigation)	Some project facilities (substations and construction yards) would include night lighting with the potential to impact the nighttime sky and adjacent wildlife habitat areas. However, implementation of Mitigation Measures V-1b and V-6c would ensure that night lighting impacts do not occur.

Table D.3-10. Consistency with Applicable Land Use Plans and Policies

Agency Regulating Visual Resources	Regulation or Policy	Alternative Consistent?	Method of Consistency
	Policy WCVAP 15.2 – Adhere to the lighting requirements of the County Ordinance Regulating Light Pollution for standards that are intended to limit light leakage and spillage that may interfere with the operations of the Palomar Observatory.	Yes (with mitigation)	Some project facilities (substations and construction yards) would include night lighting with the potential to impact the nighttime sky. However, implementation of Mitigation Measures V-1b and V-6c would ensure that night lighting impacts do not occur.
	Riverside County Western Coachella Valley Area Plan. Land Use: Scenic Highways, Page 48.		
	Policy WCVAP 18.1 – Protect the scenic highways in the Western Coachella Valley from change that would diminish the aesthetic value of adjacent properties in accordance with the Scenic Corridors sections of the General Plan Land Use, Multipurpose Open Space, and Circulation Elements.	No	The D-V2 Alternative would result in an adverse visual impact on views from State-designated scenic highway SR 62 and State-eligible scenic highways I-10 and SR 111). There is no mitigation available that would bring the project into consistency with this policy following the alternative alignment.
	Riverside County Western Coachella Valley Area Plan. Land Use: Multipurpose Open Space, Page 55.		
	Policy WCVAP 19.1 – Protect visual and biological resources in the Western Coachella Valley through adherence to General Plan policies found in the Fish and Wildlife Habitat section of the Multipurpose Open Space Element.	No	The D-V2 Alternative would adversely affect visual resources within the Western Coachella Valley Planning Area. There is no mitigation available that would bring the project into consistency with this policy following the alternative alignment.
	Riverside County Lakeview/Nuevo Area Plan. Circulation: Scenic Highways, Page 41.		
	Policy LNAP 10.1 – Protect the scenic highways in the Lakeview/ Nuevo planning area from change that would diminish the aesthetic value of views of the Bernasconi Hills, the San Jacinto River, the Mystic Lake Corridor, and the San Jacinto Wildlife Area in accordance with the Scenic Highways section of the General Plan Land Use, Multipurpose Open Space, and Circulation Elements.	No	Although the D-V2 Alternative would: (a) be located within an established utility corridor and (b) have the same design as existing transmission line structures, this alternative would still adversely affect views from Ramona Expressway, a county-eligible scenic highway within the Lakeview/ Nuevo Planning Area. There is no mitigation available that would bring the project into consistency with this policy following the alternative alignment.
	Riverside County San Jacinto Valley Area Plan. San Jacinto River, Page 23.		
	Policy SJVAPP 3.8 – Discourage utility lines within the River corridor. If approved, lines shall be placed underground where feasible and shall be located in a manner to harmonize with the natural environment and amenity of the River.	No	Although the D-V2 Alternative would: (a) be located within an established utility corridor and (b) have the same design as existing transmission line structures, this alternative would still adversely affect within the San Jacinto River corridor. There is no mitigation available that would bring the project into consistency with this policy following the alternative alignment.

Table D.3-10. Consistency with Applicable Land Use Plans and Policies

Agency Regulating Visual Resources	Regulation or Policy	Alternative Consistent?	Method of Consistency
	Riverside County San Jacinto Valley Area Plan. Circulation: Scenic Highways, Page 37.		
	Policy SJVAP 12.1 – Protect the scenic highways in the San Jacinto Valley Area Plan from change that would diminish the aesthetic value of adjacent properties in accordance with the Scenic Corridors sections of the General Plan Land Use, Multipurpose Open Space, and Circulation Elements.	No	Although the D-V2 Alternative would: (a) be located within an established utility corridor and (b) have the same design as existing transmission line structures, this alternative would still adversely affect views from Ramona Expressway, Gilman Springs Road, and SR 79, all county-eligible scenic highways within the San Jacinto Valley Planning Area. There is no mitigation available that would bring the project into consistency with this policy following the alternative alignment.
	Riverside County Harvest Valley/Winchester Area Plan. Land Use: Mount Palomar Nighttime Lighting, Page 42.		
	Policy HVWAP 9.1 – Adhere to the lighting requirements specified in County Ordinance No. 655 that are intended to limit light leakage and spillage that may interfere with the operations of the Palomar Observatory.	Yes (with mitigation)	Some project facilities (substations and construction yards) would include night lighting with the potential to impact the nighttime sky. However, implementation of Mitigation Measures V-1b and V-6c would ensure that night lighting impacts do not occur.
	Riverside County Harvest Valley/Winchester Area Plan. Circulation: Scenic Highways, Page 49.		
	Policy HVWAP 14.1 – Protect the scenic highways in the Harvest Valley/Winchester planning area from change that would diminish the aesthetic value of adjacent properties in accordance with the Scenic Corridors sections of the General Plan Land Use, Multipurpose Open Space, and Circulation Elements.	No	Although the D-V2 Alternative would: (a) be located within an established utility corridor and (b) have the same design as existing transmission line structures, this alternative would still adversely affect views from SR 74, a State-eligible scenic highway and Menifee Road, a county-eligible scenic highway within the Harvest Valley/Winchester Planning Area. There is no mitigation available that would bring the project into consistency with this policy following the alternative alignment.
City of Palm Springs	City of Palm Springs General Plan. Land Use, Page I-19.		
	3.1.7 Ensure that development does not overwhelm natural features, especially the washes and the views of mountains.	No	Although the D-V2 Alternative would: (a) be located within an established utility corridor and (b) have the same design as existing transmission line structures, this alternative would still cause significant (Class I) visual impacts on views of mountain ridgelines.

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Construction Impacts

Construction impacts along the D-V2 Alternative would be as described above for the Proposed Project in Section D.3.6.1 and would include the visual intrusion of construction activities and equipment (Impact V-1) and visibility of land scarring (Impact V-2). Construction yards associated with the D-V2 Alternative would likely be located at existing facilities such as Devers Substation and Valley Substation. However, if space at existing facilities is either unavailable or insufficient, up to two additional construction yards may be necessary for this alternative though their location has not been specified.

Viewing opportunities of concern along this alternative would include residential subdivisions, rural residential communities, designated scenic highways (SR 62 and SR 243), eligible scenic highways (I-10, SR 111, SR 79, Gilman Springs Road, Ramona Expressway, Menifee Road, and SR 74) local roads, and the Pacific Crest Trail.

In addition to the APMs identified under Impact V-1 (B-5, B-14, and L-9) and Impact V-2 (B-14, B-23-25, B-30, W-9, W-17, G-10, G-11, V-4, and L-3) above, Mitigation Measures V-1 through V-2c shall be implemented for construction Impact V-1 and Impact V-2 along this alternative between Devers Substation and Valley Substation.

Impact V-1: Short-term visibility of construction activities, equipment and night lighting (Class III)

While Impact V-1 in this alternative would be less than significant, mitigation is recommended in compliance with NEPA requirements (please see the explanation of mitigation for less than significant impacts in Section D.1.2).

Mitigation Measures for Impact V-1: Visibility of Construction Activities and Equipment

V-1a Reduce visibility of construction activities and equipment.

V-1b Reduce construction night lighting impacts.

Impact V-2: Long-term visibility of land scars in arid and semi-arid landscapes (Class II)

This impact, described in Section D.3.6.1 above, would also occur in the Devers-Valley Alternative. Mitigation Measures V-2a, V-2b, and V-2c are required in order to reduce the potentially significant impact (Class II) to less than significant levels.

Mitigation Measures for Impact V-2: Visibility of land scarring in arid and semi-arid landscapes (Class II)

V-2a Reduce in-line views of land scars.

V-2b Reduce visual contrast from unnatural vegetation lines.

V-2c Reduce color contrast of land scars.

Operational Impacts

Impact V-40: Increased structure contrast and skylining when viewing the San Jacinto Mountains from Key Viewpoint 33 on the Pacific Crest Trail in the vicinity of the Snow Creek Village residential community (VS-VC) (Class I)

Figure D.3-34A (see enclosed CD) presents the existing view to the west from Key Viewpoint 33 on the Pacific Crest Trail, just west of Snow Creek Road and just north of the Snow Creek Village residential community. Figure D.3-34B (see enclosed CD) presents a visual simulation that depicts the addition of the D-V2 transmission line adjacent and to the east of the existing D-V1 transmission line. The new and existing towers would appear similar in design and height and would be paired up. The new structures would cause a noticeable increase in structure prominence and industrial character within the corridor. Additional skylining and view blockage of background sky and mountain ridges would also occur. Additional visual contrast would be caused by the highlighting of the conductors by the afternoon sun as illustrated in the existing view presented in Figure D.3-35 (see enclosed CD).

Although the additional towers would appear similar in design and height to that of the existing towers, the additional skylining, view blockage, and increased structural prominence would result in a moderate degree of visual contrast. The D-V2 Alternative would appear co-dominant with the existing transmission lines and subordinate to the northern ridges of the San Jacinto Mountains. View blockage of background sky and mountains would be moderate.

The overall visual change would be moderate and in the context of the existing landscape's overall moderate-to-high visual sensitivity, the resulting visual impact would be significant (Class I). This conclusion is substantially influenced by the high sensitivity of the Pacific Crest Trail (that is in close proximity to both the lower and upper elevations of route) and the adjacent residential community. Mitigation Measure V-40a is recommended to lessen the visual impact along this portion of the alternative though the impact would not be reduced to a level that would be less than significant. This viewpoint analysis is considered representative of project views from Snow Creek Village, the Pacific Crest Trail, and Snow Creek Road in the vicinity of alternative route.

In addition, Mitigation Measure V-40b is added in compliance with requirements of the San Bernardino National Forest (SBNF). This measure applies to towers on SBNF land.

The Devers-Valley No. 2 Alternative would cross the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail south of the I-10 in the Desert Flats zone. Views and sounds of I-10 are part of the setting in this area. The SBNF Land Management Plan (Part II, page 100) reads:

> *SBNFFS7 – Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail – Protect scenic value in accordance with adopted scenic integrity values. Protect foreground view from the footpath, as well as the designated viewpoints. Where practicable, avoid establishing unconforming land uses with the viewshed of the trail.*

The SBNF states that direction is to manage the trail as a Sensitivity Level 1 and with the Visual Quality Objective of Retention (comparable to the SIO of High). As a result, Mitigation Measure V-40c is also added in compliance with SBNF requirements; it applies to the area near the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail south of the I-10 (Towers numbered DV-38 to DV-46 on Figure Ap.1-8b, provided in the Draft EIR/EIS only and not included on the CD due to SCE security reasons. Paper copies are available upon request).

Mitigation Measures for Impact V-40

V-40a **Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors.** The following design measures are to be applied to all new structures and conductors in order to reduce the degree of visual contrast caused by the new facilities: **(a)** all new structures are to as closely as possible match the design of the existing structures with which they will be seen; **(b)** all new structures are to be paired as closely as possible with the existing structure(s) in the corridor in order to avoid or reduce the number of off-setting (from existing structures) tower placements; **(c)** all new structures are to match the heights of the existing D-V1 structures to the extent possible as dictated by variation in terrain; **(d)** all new spans are to match existing conductor spans as closely as possible in order to avoid or reduce the occurrence of unnecessary visual complexity associated with asynchronous conductor spans, particularly at sensitive crossings such as SR 62, I-10, SR 111, SR 243, SR 79, Gilman Springs Road, Ramona Expressway, Menifee Road, and SR 74; **(e)** all new conductors are to be non-specular in design in order to reduce conductor visibility and visual contrast, and **(f)** no new access roads are to be constructed downhill from existing or proposed towers to reduce the potential for skylining. SCE

shall provide to the CPUC, BLM, and Forest Service a Project Design Plan demonstrating implementation of this measure at least 90 days prior to the start of construction, and shall not commence construction until the Project Design Plan has been approved by the CPUC, BLM, and Forest Service.

V-40b **Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors on San Bernardino National Forest land**. The following design measures are to be applied to all new structures and conductors on SBNF land based on SCE's consultation with SBNF staff prior to completion of final design. The details of these measures shall be developed:

In all areas:

- Transmission lines should have a permanent coloring of dark gray.
- All towers not back-dropped on mid-slope should have permanent coloring of cool mid-gray (battleship gray).

In mid-slope areas (as defined by SBNF):

- All towers and concrete bases on slopes which could serve as backdrops (mid-slope) should be painted olive drab.
- Tower pads should be left uneven without leveling.
- No construction roads shall be built.
- Towers shall be constructed by air support.

At ridge crossing and mid-slope (as defined by SBNF):

- Towers should be constructed of lower profile to closer "hug" the top of the ridge to avoid tower silhouetting.
- Graphic studies from dominant view sites should be used to best place towers where they would be best back-dropped from expected viewing points.
- All towers and concrete bases on slopes which could serve as backdrops (mid-slope) should be painted olive drab.
- Tower pads should be left uneven without leveling.
- No construction roads shall be built.
- Towers should be constructed by air support.

V-40c **Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors near the Pacific Crest Trail**. For towers located south of I-10 and outside of the SBNF, the following provisions apply:

- Where towers could be practicably back-dropped, utilize mitigation suggested for mid-slope and Ridge Crossing on SBNF lands (as defined in Mitigation Measure V-40b).
- The PCT shall not be crossed with construction roads.
- Locate towers so that the PCT is in the middle of the span (if this does not involve placement of extra or taller span towers to accomplish such action).

Impact V-41: Inconsistency with BLM VRM Class II management objective due to introduction of structure contrast and industrial character when viewing the San Jacinto Mountains from BLM-managed lands within the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument (in the vicinity of KVP 33) (VRM) (Class I)

Just west of Snow Creek Road, the Devers-Valley 2 Alternative would cross BLM-administered lands within the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument. These lands are subject to the Class II Visual Resource Management (VRM) objective as specified in Table 2-2 on page 2-4 of the California Desert Conservation Area Plan Amendment for the Coachella Valley and Final Environmental Impact Statement. The VRM Class II management objective requires that a project or action retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the landscape should be low. Activities may be seen but should not attract attention of the casual observer. Changes must repeat the basic elements of form, line, color, and texture found in the predominant natural features of the characteristic landscape.

The D-V2 Alternative would introduce a new 500 kV transmission line adjacent to the existing D-V1 transmission line. The visual change associated with this route segment would be similar to that described in the previous section though the visual impacts would be somewhat more pronounced because of the closer proximity of the route to the BLM-managed lands. Although the new structures would be of similar design and height as the existing D-V1 structures, the new structures would cause additional skylining and view blockage of the San Jacinto Mountains. The new line would also increase the structural complexity and industrial character visible from Monument lands. These visual effects would become more pronounced the closer the viewer is to the transmission line. The resulting visual contrast for structural form and line would be moderate, while color and texture contrast would be weak. The new line would not repeat the basic elements of the existing natural features in the landscape and would cause view blockage of sky and the San Jacinto Mountains. The new line would also appear co-dominant to the casual observer on the Monument lands.

The overall level of visual change would be moderate, which would not meet the VRM Class II objective of a low degree of visual change. The resulting visual impact would be adverse and significant (Class I). There is no mitigation available to reduce the significant visual impact to a level that would be less than significant. However, Mitigation Measure V-40a is recommended to lessen the visual impact along this portion of the alternative. This viewpoint analysis is considered representative of views of this Alternative from the low-elevation Monument lands in the vicinity of KVP 33.

Impact V-42: Inconsistency with U.S. Forest Service Scenic Integrity Objective (SIO) due to introduction of structure contrast and industrial character (Class I)

The D-V2 Alternative would result in the introduction of additional energy infrastructure onto public lands administered by the U.S. Forest Service. Specifically, this alternative would enter San Bernardino National Forest at Tower DV 32 and exit the National Forest approximately 1.4 miles further west at Tower DV 49. The increased industrial character and structural complexity and prominence imparted by the towers and conductors would result in levels of visual contrast that would be inconsistent with the *VERY HIGH* Scenic Integrity Objective assigned to the lands through which the alternative would pass. Aesthetic Management Standard S9 of the Design Criteria for Southern California National Forests stipulates that management activities (or projects) are to meet the Scenic Integrity Objectives (SIOs) shown on the Scenic Integrity Objectives Map, which in this case is *VERY HIGH*. Below is a list of the four highest Scenic Integrity Objectives:

VERY HIGH scenic integrity refers to landscapes where the valued landscape character "is" intact with only minute if any deviations. The existing landscape character and sense of place is expressed at the highest possible level.

HIGH scenic integrity refers to landscapes where the valued landscape character "appears" intact. Deviations may be present but must repeat the form, line, color, texture, and pattern common to the landscape character so completely and at such scale that they are not evident.

MODERATE scenic integrity refers to landscapes where the valued landscape character "appears slightly altered." Noticeable deviations must remain visually subordinate to the landscape character being viewed.

LOW scenic integrity refers to landscapes where the valued landscape character "appears moderately altered." Deviations begin to dominate the valued landscape character being viewed but they borrow valued attributes such as size, shape, edge effect and pattern of natural openings, vegetative type changes or architectural styles outside the landscape being viewed but compatible or complimentary to the character within.

Aesthetic Management Standard S10 does allow the following exceptions to the SIO requirement:

- Minor adjustments not to exceed a drop of one SIO level are allowable with the Forest Supervisor's approval.
- Temporary drops of more than one SIO level may be made during and immediately following project implementation providing they do not exceed three years in duration.

However, in this case, it appears that the drop in scenic integrity would be at least two levels to *MODERATE* or possibly three levels to *LOW*. The increased visual contrast associated with the additional transmission line would cause the landscape character to appear at least slightly altered which is a characteristic of *MODERATE* scenic integrity. Since the project-induced changes would be essentially permanent or at least long-term (greater than three years), the impact would exceed the exception allowed under Aesthetic Management Standard S10. As a result, this inconsistency with the established Scenic Integrity Objective is considered a significant (Class I) visual impact. Mitigation Measure V-40a is recommended to reduce the visual impact along this portion of the alternative though the impact would not be reduced to a level that would be less than significant.

Impact V-43: Increased structure contrast, skylining, and view blockage when viewed from Key Viewpoint 34 in the residential community in Cabazon (VS-VC) (Class I)

Figure D.3-36A (see enclosed CD) presents the existing view to the northeast from Key Viewpoint 34 on Riza Avenue, approximately 0.2 miles west of Elm Street in Cabazon. Figure D.3-36B (see enclosed CD) presents a visual simulation that depicts the addition of the D-V2 transmission line adjacent and to the south (to the right in the simulation) of the existing D-V1 transmission line. The new and existing towers would appear similar in design and height and would be paired up. The new structures would cause a substantial increase in structure prominence and industrial character within the corridor, which is located within the immediate foreground, of views from nearby residences. Additional skylining and view blockage of background sky and mountain ridges would also occur.

Although the additional towers would appear similar in design and height to that of the existing towers, the additional skylining, view blockage, and increased structural prominence would result in a moderate-

to-high degree of visual contrast due to their close proximity to residential views. The D-V2 alternative would appear co-dominant with the existing transmission line and landforms of the San Jacinto Mountains. View blockage of background sky and mountains would be moderate-to-high.

The overall visual change would be moderate-to-high and in the context of the existing landscape's overall moderate-to-high visual sensitivity, the resulting visual impact would be significant (Class I). This conclusion is substantially influenced by the high sensitivity of the adjacent residential community and the close proximity of the structures to those residences. Mitigation Measure V-40a is recommended to lessen the visual impact along this portion of the alternative though the impact would not be reduced to a level that would be less than significant. This viewpoint analysis is considered representative of project views from rural residential communities along the north side of the San Jacinto Mountains.

Impact V-44: Increased structure contrast and skylining when viewing the San Jacinto Mountains and San Gorgonio Pass from Key Viewpoint 35 on southbound State Route 243 (VS-VC) (Class I)

Figure D.3-37A (see enclosed CD) presents the existing view to the east from Key Viewpoint 35 from southbound SR 243 (a State-designated scenic highway), just north of the crossing of SR 243. Figure D.3-37B (see enclosed CD) presents a visual simulation that depicts the addition of the D-V2 transmission line adjacent and to the south of the existing D-V1 line. The new and existing structures would be paired and would appear similar in design and height but would be offset in elevation due to the slope and variation in terrain. The new structures would cause a substantial increase in structure prominence and industrial character within the corridor as viewed from SR 243. Additional skylining and view blockage of background sky, mountain ridges, and San Gorgonio Pass would also occur. The resulting visual contrast would be moderate-to-high. The new transmission line would appear co-dominant compared to the existing line and the northern ridges of the San Jacinto Mountains and view blockage of higher value landscape features (sky, ridges, and the Pass) would be moderate.

The overall visual change would be moderate and in the context of the existing landscape's moderate-to-high visual sensitivity, the resulting visual impact would be significant (Class I). This conclusion is substantially influenced by the high sensitivity imparted to a State-designated scenic highway. Mitigation Measure V-40a is recommended to lessen the visual impact along this portion of the route although the impact would not be reduced to a level that would be less than significant.

Impact V-45: Increased structure contrast, skylining, and view blockage when viewed from residential areas in southern Banning and Beaumont (VS-VC) (Class I)

Figures D.3-38 and D.3-39 (see enclosed CD) present the existing views from residential areas adjacent to the D-V2 Alternative in the Cities of Banning and Beaumont (respectively). The new and existing towers would appear similar in design and height and would be paired up. The new structures would cause a substantial increase in structure prominence and industrial character within the corridor, which is located within the foreground, of views from nearby residences. Additional skylining and view blockage of background sky and mountain ridges would also occur.

Although the additional towers would appear similar in design and height to that of the existing towers, the additional skylining, view blockage, and increased structural prominence would result in a moderate-to-high degree of visual contrast due to their close proximity to residential views. The D-V2 Alternative would appear co-dominant with the existing transmission line and background landforms. View blockage of background sky and mountains would range from moderate to moderate-to-high depending on the viewpoint.

The overall visual change would be moderate-to-high and in the context of the existing landscape's overall moderate-to-high visual sensitivity, the resulting visual impact would be significant (Class I). This conclusion is substantially influenced by the high sensitivity of the adjacent residences and the relatively close proximity of the structures to those residences. Mitigation Measure V-40 is recommended to lessen the visual impact along this portion of the route though the impact would not be reduced to a level that would be less than significant. This viewpoint analysis is considered representative of project views from residential areas along the north side of the San Jacinto Mountains.

Impact V-46: Inconsistency with BLM VRM Class II management objective due to introduction of structure contrast and industrial character when viewing from BLM-managed lands within the Potrero ACEC (VRM) (Class I)

Although the new structures would be of similar design and height as the existing D-V1 structures, the new structures would cause additional skylining and view blockage of sky and mountains. The new line would also increase the structural complexity and industrial character visible from within the ACEC. These visual effects would become more pronounced the closer the viewer is to the transmission line. The resulting visual contrast for structural form and line would be moderate to moderate-to-high because of the close proximity of viewers to the line. The overall level of change would also be moderate to moderate-to-high.

Lands administered by the BLM within the Potrero ACEC would be subject to Visual Resource Management (VRM) Class II management objective. The VRM Class II objective requires that the existing character of the landscape be retained and that the level of change to the characteristic landscape be low and not attract the attention of the casual observer. Also, any changes to the landscape must repeat the basic elements of form, line, color, and texture found in the predominant natural features of the landscape. The new line would not achieve any of the Class II objectives. Therefore, the moderate to moderate-to-high level of visual change that would be caused by this portion of the D-V2 Alternative would be inconsistent with the applicable VRM Class II management objective and the resulting visual impact would be significant (Class I). There is no mitigation available to reduce the significant visual impact to a level that would be less than significant. However, Mitigation Measure V-40a is recommended to lessen the visual impact along this portion of the route. This viewpoint analysis is considered representative of project views within the Potrero ACEC.

Impact V-47: Increased structure contrast, skylining, and view blockage when viewed from Key Viewpoint 36 on Mapes Road (VS-VC) (Class I)

Figure D.3-40A (see enclosed CD) presents the existing view to the south from Key Viewpoint 36 on Mapes Road, just west of Menifee Road north of Romoland. Figure D.3-40B (see enclosed CD) presents a visual simulation that depicts the addition of the D-V2 transmission line adjacent and to the east (to the left in the simulation) of the existing D-V1 transmission line. The new and existing towers would appear similar in design and height and would be paired up. The new structures would cause a substantial increase in structure prominence and industrial character within the corridor, which is located within the immediate foreground, of views from numerous nearby residences. Additional skylining and view blockage of background sky, hills, and mountain ridges would also occur.

Although the additional towers would appear similar in design and height to that of the existing towers, the additional skylining, view blockage, and increased structural prominence would result in a moderate-to-high degree of visual contrast due to their close proximity to residential views and views from local roads. The D-V2 Alternative would appear co-dominant with the existing transmission line. View blockage of background sky and mountains would be moderate-to-high.

The overall visual change would be moderate-to-high and in the context of the existing landscape's overall moderate-to-high visual sensitivity, the resulting visual impact would be significant (Class I). This conclusion is substantially influenced by the high sensitivity of the adjacent residences and the close proximity of the structures to those residences. Mitigation Measure V-40a is recommended to lessen the visual impact along this portion of the route though the impact would not be reduced to a level that would be less than significant. This viewpoint analysis is considered representative of project views from rural residential communities and local roads along that portion of the route south of the Lakeview Mountains.

D.3.10 Environmental Impacts of the No Project Alternative

The No Project Alternative is defined in Section C.6. The No Project Alternative includes the assumption that existing transmission lines and power plants would continue to operate. The effects that these facilities cause on the existing environment would not change, so no new impacts would occur from continuing operation of the existing transmission lines and power plants. Also, under the No Project Alternative, the proposed DPV2 project would not be constructed and the visual impacts (increased industrial character; increased structure contrast, skylining, and prominence; and increased view blockage) associated with construction and operation of the project would not occur. Between Harquahala Switchyard and Devers Substation the significant, Class I visual impacts within Kofa National Wildlife Refuge and Alligator Rock ACEC would not occur if the Proposed Project is not constructed and the numerous adverse but less than significant (Class III) visual impacts that would occur along most of the remaining route segment would also not occur. West of Devers, the numerous Class III visual impacts would be avoided if the Proposed Project is not constructed, but the beneficial (Class IV) visual impacts (resulting from reduced structural complexity, industrial character, and view blockage) in Beaumont and San Timoteo Canyon would not be achieved.

The first component of the No Project Alternative is the continuation of ongoing demand-side actions, including energy conservation and distributed generation (DG). These actions would be under the jurisdiction of local jurisdictions, such as cities and counties, to conduct environmental reviews. DG units would have their own attendant visual impacts, which could include increased or new visual contrast and view blockage associated with the height, structural complexity, structural prominence, and industrial character of DG facilities. Increased conservation would not cause any visual resources impacts.

The second component of the No Project Alternative is the continuation of supply-side actions, resulting in potentially increased generation within California or increased transmission into California to serve anticipated growth in electricity consumption. Therefore, the No Project Alternative may also result in the construction of other transmission lines and/or generation facilities that would have their own attendant visual impacts. Visual impacts could include: (1) increased or new visual contrast and view blockage associated with the height, structural complexity, structural prominence, and industrial character of lattice or tubular steel tower transmission lines; (2) increased cumulative visual impacts associated with the proliferation of transmission facilities across the landscape if different transmission routes or corridors are utilized; and (3) increased or new visual contrast and view blockage associated with the height, structural complexity, structural prominence, and industrial character of power generation facilities. The visual impacts of any of these potential outcomes may be less severe or more severe than those of the Proposed Project.

D.3.11 Mitigation Monitoring, Compliance, and Reporting Table

Table D.3-11 presents the mitigation monitoring table for Visual Resources.

Table D.3-11. Mitigation Monitoring Program – Visual Resources

IMPACT V-1	Short-term visibility of construction activities, equipment, and night lighting. (Class III)
MITIGATION MEASURE	V-1a: Reduce visibility of construction activities and equipment. Substation construction sites and all staging and material and equipment storage areas, including storage sites for excavated materials shall be appropriately located away from areas of high public visibility. If visible from nearby roads, residences, public gathering areas, or recreational areas, facilities, or trails, construction sites and staging and storage areas shall be visually screened using temporary screening fencing. Fencing will be of an appropriate design and color for each specific location. Additionally, avoid construction in areas visible from recreation facilities and areas during holidays and periods of heavy recreational use. This measure encompasses BLM permit requirements BLM B-7.1 and B-7.2. SCE shall submit final construction plans demonstrating compliance with this measure to the BLM and CPUC for review and approval at least 60 days prior to the start of construction.
Location	Mitigation Measure V-1a applies to all sites and all routes.
Monitoring / Reporting Action	CPUC and BLM to verify in the field during construction and following construction
Effectiveness Criteria	Project construction sites (static), construction yards, and staging areas will be screened during construction and all construction areas will appear in their original or improved condition following construction.
Responsible Agency	CPUC, BLM on BLM-administered lands
Timing	Confirm implementation during and following construction.
MITIGATION MEASURE	V-1b: Reduce construction night lighting impacts. SCE shall design and install all lighting at construction and storage yards and staging areas such that light bulbs and reflectors are not visible from public viewing areas; lighting does not cause reflected glare; and illumination of the project facilities, vicinity, and nighttime sky is minimized. SCE shall submit a Construction Lighting Mitigation Plan to the BLM and CPUC for review and approval at least 90 days prior to the start of construction or the ordering of any exterior lighting fixtures or components, whichever comes first. SCE shall not order any exterior lighting fixtures or components until the Construction Lighting Mitigation Plan is approved by the BLM and CPUC. The Plan shall include but is not necessarily limited to the following: • Lighting shall be designed so exterior light fixtures are hooded, with lights directed downward or toward the area to be illuminated and so that backscatter to the nighttime sky is minimized. The design of the lighting shall be such that the luminescence or light sources is shielded to prevent light trespass outside the project boundary • All lighting shall be of minimum necessary brightness consistent with worker safety • High illumination areas not occupied on a continuous basis shall have switches or motion detectors to light the area only when occupied
Location	Mitigation Measure V-1b applies to all static sites.
Monitoring / Reporting Action	CPUC and BLM to review and approve the Construction Lighting Mitigation Plan prior to construction and to monitor implementation in the field during construction.
Effectiveness Criteria	Light bulbs and reflectors at Construction yards and staging areas would not be visible from public viewing areas and night lighting would not cause reflected glare and illumination beyond the construction site and into the nighttime sky.
Responsible Agency	CPUC, BLM on BLM-administered lands
Timing	Review and approve plan prior to start of construction and confirm implementation of plan during construction.

Table D.3-11. Mitigation Monitoring Program – Visual Resources

IMPACT V-2	Long-term visibility of land scars in arid and semi-arid landscapes. (Class II)
MITIGATION MEASURE	V-2a: Reduce in-line views of land scars. Construct access or spur roads at appropriate angles from the originating, primary travel facilities to minimize extended, in-line views of newly graded terrain. Contour grading should be used where possible to better blend graded surfaces with existing terrain. SCE shall submit final construction plans demonstrating compliance with this measure to the BLM and CPUC for review and approval at least 60 days prior to the start of construction.
Location	All grading sites for access roads, spur roads, and ancillary faculties.
Monitoring / Reporting Action	CPUC and BLM to review construction plans prior to start of construction and verify compliance during construction.
Effectiveness Criteria	In-line views of land scars from grading will be minimized.
Responsible Agency	CPUC, BLM on BLM-administered lands
Timing	CPUC and BLM to review construction plans prior to start of construction and verify compliance during construction.
MITIGATION MEASURE	V-2b: Reduce visual contrast from unnatural vegetation lines. In those areas where views of land scars are unavoidable, the boundaries of disturbed areas should be aggressively revegetated to create a less distinct and more natural-appearing line to reduce visual contrast. Furthermore, all graded roads and areas not required for on-going operation, maintenance, or access shall be returned to pre-construction conditions. This measure partially encompasses BLM permit requirement BLM B-7.9. SCE shall submit final construction and restoration plans demonstrating compliance with this measure to the BLM and CPUC for review and approval at least 60 days prior to the start of construction.
Location	All grading sites for access roads, spur roads, and ancillary faculties.
Monitoring / Reporting Action	CPUC and BLM to review construction and restoration plans prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
Effectiveness Criteria	The occurrence of unnatural vegetation lines will be minimized and the resulting visual contrast will be minimal.
Responsible Agency	CPUC, BLM on BLM-administered lands
Timing	CPUC and BLM to review construction and restoration plans prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
MITIGATION MEASURE	V-2c: Reduce color contrast of land scars. In those areas where views of land scars from sensitive public viewing locations are unavoidable, disturbed soils shall be treated with Eonite or similar treatments to reduce the visual contrast created by the lighter-colored disturbed soils with the darker vegetated surroundings. SCE will consult with the Authorized Officer on a site-by-site basis for the use of Eonite. This measure partially encompasses BLM permit requirement BLM B-6.4. SCE shall submit final construction and restoration plans demonstrating compliance with this measure to the BLM and CPUC for review and approval at least 60 days prior to the start of construction.
Location	Locations of all land scars that would be visible to the public.
Monitoring / Reporting Action	CPUC and BLM to review construction and restoration plans prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
Effectiveness Criteria	The occurrence of high-contras colors from exposed soils will be minimized and the resulting visual contrast will be minimal.
Responsible Agency	CPUC, BLM on BLM-administered lands
Timing	CPUC and BLM to review construction and restoration plans prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.

Table D.3-11. Mitigation Monitoring Program – Visual Resources

IMPACT V-3	Increased structure contrast when viewed from Key Viewpoint 1 south of the Big Horn Mountains. (Class III)
MITIGATION MEASURE	V-3a: Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors. The following design measures are to be applied to all new structures and conductors in order to reduce the degree of visual contrast caused by the new facilities: • all new and replacement structures are to as closely as possible match the design of the existing structures with which they will be seen • all new and replacement structures are to be paired as closely as possible with the existing structure(s) in the corridor in order to avoid or reduce the number of off-setting (from existing structures) tower placements • all new and replacement structures are to match the heights of the existing DPV1 structures to the extent possible as dictated by variation in terrain • all new and reconductored spans are to match existing conductor spans as closely as possible in order to avoid or reduce the occurrence of unnecessary visual complexity associated with asynchronous conductor spans, particularly at sensitive crossings such as Salome Highway, I-10, U.S. 95, Colorado River, SR 78, Dillon Road, SR 62, Whitewater Canyon Road, and San Timoteo Canyon Road • all new conductors are to be non-specular in design in order to reduce conductor visibility and visual contrast • no new access roads are to be constructed downhill from existing or proposed towers to reduce the potential for skylining. SCE shall provide to the CPUC and BLM a Project Design Plan demonstrating implementation of this measure at least 90 days prior to the start of construction, and shall not commence construction until the Project Design Plan has been approved CPUC and BLM.
Location	Applies to all tower locations and route segments.
Monitoring / Reporting Action	CPUC and BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
Effectiveness Criteria	The occurrence of visual contrast from towers and conductor spans will be minimized. Asynchronous tower spans will be minimized.
Responsible Agency	CPUC, BLM on BLM-administered lands
Timing	CPUC and BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
IMPACT V-4	Increased structure contrast, view blockage, and skylining when viewed from Key Viewpoint 2 on Interstate 10 crossing the Harquahala Plain. (Class III)
MITIGATION MEASURE	V-3a: (see above)
Location	Applies to all tower locations and route segments.
Monitoring / Reporting Action	CPUC and BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
Effectiveness Criteria	The occurrence of visual contrast from towers and conductor spans will be minimized. Asynchronous tower spans will be minimized.
Responsible Agency	CPUC, BLM on BLM-administered lands
Timing	CPUC and BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.

Table D.3-11. Mitigation Monitoring Program – Visual Resources

IMPACT V-5	Increased structure contrast, view blockage, and skylining when viewed from Key Viewpoint 3 at the north end of the Eagletail Mountains. (Class III)
MITIGATION MEASURE	V-3a: (see above)
Location	Applies to all tower locations and route segments.
Monitoring / Reporting Action	CPUC and BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
Effectiveness Criteria	The occurrence of visual contrast from towers and conductor spans will be minimized. Asynchronous tower spans will be minimized.
Responsible Agency	CPUC, BLM on BLM-administered lands
Timing	CPUC and BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
IMPACT V-6	Increased structure contrast, industrial character, and skylining when viewing the Arizona Series Capacitor Bank from Pipeline Road. (Class III)
MITIGATION MEASURE	V-6a: Reduce Visual Contrast Associated with Ancillary Facilities. SCE shall submit to BLM and CPUC a Surface Treatment Plan describing the application of colors and textures to all facility structures, buildings, walls, fences, and components comprising all ancillary facilities including substations/switchyards, series capacitor banks, and optical repeater stations. The Surface Treatment Plan must reduce glare and minimize visual intrusion and contrast by blending the facilities with the landscape. The Treatment Plan shall be submitted to BLM and CPUC for approval at least 90 days prior to (a) ordering the first structures that are to be color treated during manufacture, or (b) construction of any of the ancillary facility component, whichever comes first. If the BLM or CPUC notifies SCE that revisions to the Plan are needed before the Plan can be approved, within 30 days of receiving that notification, SCE shall prepare and submit for review and approval a revised Plan. The Surface Treatment Plan shall include: • specification, and 11"x17" color simulations at life size scale, of the treatment proposed for use on project structures, including structures treated during manufacture • a list of each major project structure, building, tower and/or pole, and fencing specifying the color(s) and finish proposed for each (colors must be identified by name and by vendor brand or a universal designation) • two sets of brochures and/or color chips for each proposed color • a detailed schedule for completion of the treatment • a procedure to ensure proper treatment maintenance for the life of the project. • SCE shall not specify to the vendors the treatment of any buildings or structures treated during manufacture, or perform the final treatment on any buildings or structures treated on site, until SCE receives notification of approval of the Treatment Plan by the BLM and CPUC. Within 30 days following the start of commercial operation, SCE shall notify the BLM and CPUC that all buildings and structures are ready for inspection.
Location	Applies to all permanent ancillary facilities including substations, switchyards, series capacitor banks, and optical repeater stations.
Monitoring / Reporting Action	CPUC and BLM to review Surface Treatment Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
Effectiveness Criteria	The occurrence of visual contrast from ancillary facilities will be minimized and facilities will blend with the landscape to the extent feasible.
Responsible Agency	CPUC, BLM on BLM-administered lands
Timing	CPUC and BLM to review Surface Treatment Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.

Table D.3-11. Mitigation Monitoring Program – Visual Resources

~~MITIGATION MEASURE~~	~~V-6b: Screen ancillary facilities. SCE shall provide a Screening Plan for screening vegetation, walls, and fences that reduces visibility of ancillary facilities (except Devers Substation) and helps the facility blend in with the landscape. The use of berms to facilitate project screening may also be incorporated into the Plan. SCE shall submit the Plan to the BLM and CPUC for review and approval at least 90 days prior to installing the landscape screening. If the BLM or CPUC notifies SCE that revisions to the Plan are needed before the Plan can be approved, within 30 days of receiving that notification, SCE shall prepare and submit for review and approval a revised Plan. The plan shall include but not necessarily be limited to:~~ ~~• an 11"x17" color simulation of the proposed landscaping at 5 years~~ ~~• a plan view to scale depicting the project and the location of screening elements~~ ~~• a detailed list of any plants to be used; their size and age at planting; the expected time to maturity, and the expected height at five years and at maturity.~~ ~~SCE shall complete installation of the screening prior to the start of project operation. SCE shall notify the BLM and CPUC within seven days after completing installation of the screening, that the screening components are ready for inspection~~
~~Location~~	~~Applies to all permanent ancillary facilities including substations, switchyards, series capacitor banks, and optical repeater stations.~~
~~Monitoring / Reporting Action~~	~~CPUC and BLM to review Screening Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.~~
~~Effectiveness Criteria~~	~~Visibility of ancillary facilities will be reduced such that unnecessary visual contrast and industrial character will not occur.~~
~~Responsible Agency~~	~~CPUC, BLM on BLM-administered lands~~
~~Timing~~	~~CPUC and BLM to review Screening Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.~~
MITIGATION MEASURE	V-6c: Reduce night lighting impacts. SCE shall design and install all permanent lighting such that light bulbs and reflectors are not visible from public viewing areas; lighting does not cause reflected glare; and illumination of the project facilities, vicinity, and nighttime sky is minimized. SCE shall submit a Lighting Mitigation Plan to the BLM and CPUC for review and approval at least 90 days prior to ordering any permanent exterior lighting fixtures or components. SCE shall not order any exterior lighting fixtures or components until the Lighting Mitigation Plan is approved by the BLM and CPUC. The Plan shall include but is not necessarily limited to the following: • lighting shall be designed so exterior light fixtures are hooded, with lights directed downward or toward the area to be illuminated and so that backscatter to the nighttime sky is minimized. The design of the lighting shall be such that the luminescence or light sources is shielded to prevent light trespass outside the project boundary • all lighting shall be of minimum necessary brightness consistent with worker safety • high illumination areas not occupied on a continuous basis shall have switches or motion detectors to light the area only when occupied.
Location	Applies to all permanent ancillary facilities including substations, switchyards, series capacitor banks, and optical repeater stations.
Monitoring / Reporting Action	CPUC and BLM to review Lighting Mitigation Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
Effectiveness Criteria	Light bulbs and reflectors at Construction yards and staging areas would not be visible from public viewing areas and night lighting would not cause reflected glare and illumination beyond the construction site and into the nighttime sky.
Responsible Agency	CPUC, BLM on BLM-administered lands
Timing	CPUC and BLM to review Lighting Mitigation Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.

Table D.3-11. Mitigation Monitoring Program – Visual Resources

IMPACT V-7	Increased visual contrast, view blockage, and skylining when viewed from Key Viewpoint 4 on Crystal Hill Road in Kofa National Wildlife Refuge (NWR). (Class I)
MITIGATION MEASURE	V-3a (see above)
Location	Applies to all tower locations and route segments.
Monitoring / Reporting Action	CPUC and BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
Effectiveness Criteria	The occurrence of visual contrast from towers and conductor spans will be minimized. Asynchronous tower spans will be minimized.
Responsible Agency	CPUC, BLM on BLM-administered lands
Timing	CPUC and BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
IMPACT V-8	Increased structure contrast, view blockage, and skylining when viewed from Key Viewpoint 5 on U.S. 95 near the Crystal Hill Road entrance to Kofa NWR. (Class III)
MITIGATION MEASURE	V-3a (see above)
Location	Applies to all tower locations and route segments.
Monitoring / Reporting Action	CPUC and BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
Effectiveness Criteria	The occurrence of visual contrast from towers and conductor spans will be minimized. Asynchronous tower spans will be minimized.
Responsible Agency	CPUC, BLM on BLM-administered lands
Timing	CPUC and BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
IMPACT V-9	Increased structure contrast, industrial character, and view blockage when viewed from Key Viewpoint 6 on Pipeline Road near Copper Bottom Pass. (Class III)
MITIGATION MEASURE	V-3a (see above)
Location	Applies to all tower locations and route segments.
Monitoring / Reporting Action	CPUC and BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
Effectiveness Criteria	The occurrence of visual contrast from towers and conductor spans will be minimized. Asynchronous tower spans will be minimized.
Responsible Agency	CPUC, BLM on BLM-administered lands
Timing	CPUC and BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
IMPACT V-10	Increased structure contrast, view blockage, and skylining when viewed from Key Viewpoint 7 on the Colorado River. (Class III)
MITIGATION MEASURE	V-3a (see above)
Location	Applies to all tower locations and route segments.
Monitoring / Reporting Action	CPUC and BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.

Table D.3-11. Mitigation Monitoring Program – Visual Resources

Effectiveness Criteria	The occurrence of visual contrast from towers and conductor spans will be minimized. Asynchronous tower spans will be minimized.
Responsible Agency	CPUC, BLM on BLM-administered lands
Timing	CPUC and BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
IMPACT V-11	Increased structure contrast, view blockage, and skylining when viewed from Key Viewpoint 8 on SR 78 near Ripley. (Class III)
MITIGATION MEASURE	V-3a (see above)
Location	Applies to all tower locations and route segments.
Monitoring / Reporting Action	CPUC and BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
Effectiveness Criteria	The occurrence of visual contrast from towers and conductor spans will be minimized. Asynchronous tower spans will be minimized.
Responsible Agency	CPUC, BLM on BLM-administered lands
Timing	CPUC and BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
IMPACT V-12	Introduction of new structure contrast and industrial character when viewing the proposed Blythe Optical Repeater Station from nearby local roads. (Class III)
MITIGATION MEASURE	V-6a through V-6c (see above)
Location	Applies to all permanent ancillary facilities including substations, switchyards, series capacitor banks, and optical repeater stations.
Monitoring / Reporting Action	CPUC and BLM to review Surface Treatment Plan, Screening Plan and Lighting Mitigation Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
Effectiveness Criteria	For the Surface Treatment Plan, the occurrence of visual contrast from ancillary facilities will be minimized and facilities will blend with the landscape to the extent feasible. For the Screening Plan, visibility of ancillary facilities will be reduced such that unnecessary visual contrast and industrial character will not occur. For the Lighting Mitigation Plan, light bulbs and reflectors at Construction yards and staging areas would not be visible from public viewing areas and night lighting would not cause reflected glare and illumination beyond the construction site and into the nighttime sky.
Responsible Agency	CPUC, BLM on BLM-administered lands
Timing	CPUC and BLM to review Surface Treatment Plan, Screening Plan and Lighting Mitigation Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
IMPACT V-13	Increased structure contrast, industrial character, view blockage, and skylining when viewing the proposed Midpoint Substation site from the nearby BLM access road. (Class III)
MITIGATION MEASURE	V-6a through V-6c (see above)
Location	Applies to all permanent ancillary facilities including substations, switchyards, series capacitor banks, and optical repeater stations.
Monitoring / Reporting Action	CPUC and BLM to review Surface Treatment Plan, Screening Plan and Lighting Mitigation Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.

Table D.3-11. Mitigation Monitoring Program – Visual Resources

Effectiveness Criteria	For the Surface Treatment Plan, the occurrence of visual contrast from ancillary facilities will be minimized and facilities will blend with the landscape to the extent feasible. For the Screening Plan, visibility of ancillary facilities will be reduced such that unnecessary visual contrast and industrial character will not occur. For the Lighting Mitigation Plan, light bulbs and reflectors at Construction yards and staging areas would not be visible from public viewing areas and night lighting would not cause reflected glare and illumination beyond the construction site and into the nighttime sky.
Responsible Agency	CPUC, BLM on BLM-administered lands
Timing	CPUC and BLM to review Surface Treatment Plan, Screening Plan and Lighting Mitigation Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
IMPACT V-14	Increased structure contrast, view blockage, and skylining when viewed from Key Viewpoint 9 on Interstate 10 in the eastern Chuckwalla Valley. (Class III)
MITIGATION MEASURE	V-3a (see above)
Location	Applies to all tower locations and route segments.
Monitoring / Reporting Action	CPUC and BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
Effectiveness Criteria	The occurrence of visual contrast from towers and conductor spans will be minimized. Asynchronous tower spans will be minimized.
Responsible Agency	CPUC, BLM on BLM-administered lands
Timing	CPUC and BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
IMPACT V-15	Inconsistency with Interim BLM VRM Class II management objective due to increased structure contrast, industrial character, view blockage, and skylining when viewed from Key Viewpoint 10 in the Alligator Rock ACEC. (Class I)
MITIGATION MEASURE	V-3a (see above)
Location	Applies to all tower locations and route segments.
Monitoring / Reporting Action	BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
Effectiveness Criteria	The occurrence of visual contrast from towers and conductor spans will be minimized. Asynchronous tower spans will be minimized.
Responsible Agency	BLM
Timing	BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
IMPACT V-16	Increased structure contrast, view blockage, and skylining when viewing the Orocopia Mountains from Key Viewpoint 11 on Interstate 10. (Class III)
MITIGATION MEASURE	V-3a (see above)
Location	Applies to all tower locations and route segments.
Monitoring / Reporting Action	CPUC and BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
Effectiveness Criteria	The occurrence of visual contrast from towers and conductor spans will be minimized. Asynchronous tower spans will be minimized.
Responsible Agency	CPUC, BLM on BLM-administered lands
Timing	CPUC and BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.

Table D.3-11. Mitigation Monitoring Program – Visual Resources

IMPACT V-17	Increased structure contrast, industrial character, and skylining when viewing the proposed California Series Capacitor Bank from Interstate 10 or Red Cloud Road. (Class III)
MITIGATION MEASURE	V-6a ~~through~~ and V-6c (see above)
Location	Applies to all permanent ancillary facilities including substations, switchyards, series capacitor banks, and optical repeater stations.
Monitoring / Reporting Action	CPUC and BLM to review Surface Treatment Plan, Screening Plan and Lighting Mitigation Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
Effectiveness Criteria	For the Surface Treatment Plan, the occurrence of visual contrast from ancillary facilities will be minimized and facilities will blend with the landscape to the extent feasible. For the Screening Plan, visibility of ancillary facilities will be reduced such that unnecessary visual contrast and industrial character will not occur. For the Lighting Mitigation Plan, light bulbs and reflectors at Construction yards and staging areas would not be visible from public viewing areas and night lighting would not cause reflected glare and illumination beyond the construction site and into the nighttime sky.
Responsible Agency	CPUC, BLM on BLM-administered lands
Timing	CPUC and BLM to review Surface Treatment Plan, Screening Plan and Lighting Mitigation Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
IMPACT V-18	Increased structure contrast and view blockage when viewing the Orocopia Mountains from Key Viewpoint 12 on Cottonwood Springs Road, when exiting Joshua Tree National Park. (Class III)
MITIGATION MEASURE	V-3a (see above)
Location	Applies to all tower locations and route segments.
Monitoring / Reporting Action	CPUC and BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
Effectiveness Criteria	The occurrence of visual contrast from towers and conductor spans will be minimized. Asynchronous tower spans will be minimized.
Responsible Agency	CPUC, BLM on BLM-administered lands
Timing	CPUC and BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
IMPACT V-19	Increased structure contrast, industrial character, and view blockage when viewed from Key Viewpoint 13 in the Terra Lago golf and residential development in Indio. (Class III)
MITIGATION MEASURE	V-3a (see above)
Location	Applies to all tower locations and route segments.
Monitoring / Reporting Action	CPUC and BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
Effectiveness Criteria	The occurrence of visual contrast from towers and conductor spans will be minimized. Asynchronous tower spans will be minimized.
Responsible Agency	CPUC, BLM on BLM-administered lands
Timing	CPUC and BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.

Table D.3-11. Mitigation Monitoring Program – Visual Resources

~~MITIGATION MEASURE~~	~~V-19a: Reduce Visual Contrast by Painting Towers with Appropriate Colors. Existing and proposed transmission towers within the DPV1/DPV2 corridor from proposed tower location 2209 to 2239 in the vicinity of the Indio Hills shall be painted an appropriate color to more effectively blend the structures with the light tan color of the background vegetation and soils of the Indio Hills. This measure is limited to only the above 31 referenced towers because the Indio Hills provide an immediate light-tan backdrop to sensitive views from residences and recreational facilities to the immediate south of the corridor. It is recommended that a light-tan color be used to match the background soils. SCE shall submit a Tower Painting Plan demonstrating compliance with this measure to the BLM and CPUC for review and approval at least 60 days prior to: (a) the start of construction or (b) ordering the first structures that are to be color treated during manufacture, whichever comes first. If the BLM or CPUC notifies SCE that revisions to the Plan are needed before the Plan can be approved, within 30 days of receiving that notification, SCE shall prepare and submit for review and approval a revised Plan. The Tower Painting Plan shall include: • specification, and 11"x17" color simulations at life size scale, of the treatment proposed for use on project structures, including structures treated during manufacture • a map showing the towers to be painted • two sets of brochures and/or color chips for each alternative color • a detailed schedule for completion of the treatment • a procedure to ensure proper treatment maintenance for the life of the project. SCE shall not specify to the vendors the treatment of towers or tower components treated during manufacture, or perform the final treatment on any towers until SCE receives notification of approval of the Tower Painting Plan by the BLM and CPUC. Within 30 days following the start of commercial operation, SCE shall notify the BLM and CPUC that the towers are ready for inspection.~~
~~Location~~	~~Applies to new permanent Towers 2209 to 2239 in the vicinity of the Indio Hills.~~
~~Monitoring / Reporting Action~~	~~CPUC and BLM to review Tower Painting Plan, Screening Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.~~
~~Effectiveness Criteria~~	~~Visual contrast from new towers will be minimized and structures will blend effectively with the tan background of the Indio Hills.~~
~~Responsible Agency~~	~~CPUC, BLM on BLM-administered lands~~
~~Timing~~	~~CPUC and BLM to review Tower Painting Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.~~
IMPACT V-20	Increased structure contrast, industrial character, and view blockage when viewing toward the Santa Rosa Mountains from Key Viewpoint 14 in the Coachella Valley Preserve, just west of Thousand Palms Canyon Road. (Class III)
MITIGATION MEASURE	V-3a (see above)
Location	Applies to all tower locations and route segments.
Monitoring / Reporting Action	CPUC and BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
Effectiveness Criteria	The occurrence of visual contrast from towers and conductor spans will be minimized. Asynchronous tower spans will be minimized.
Responsible Agency	CPUC, BLM on BLM-administered lands
Timing	CPUC and BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
IMPACT V-21	Increased structure contrast and skylining when viewing the San Jacinto Mountains from Key Viewpoint 15 on southbound SR 62. (Class III)
MITIGATION MEASURE	V-3a (see above)
Location	Applies to all tower locations and route segments.

Table D.3-11. Mitigation Monitoring Program – Visual Resources

Monitoring / Reporting Action	CPUC and BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
Effectiveness Criteria	The occurrence of visual contrast from towers and conductor spans will be minimized. Asynchronous tower spans will be minimized.
Responsible Agency	CPUC, BLM on BLM-administered lands
Timing	CPUC and BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
IMPACT V-22	Increased structure contrast and skylining when viewed from Key Viewpoint 16 on Painted Hills Road in the Painted Hills rural residential community. (Class III)
MITIGATION MEASURE	V-3a (see above)
Location	Applies to all tower locations and route segments.
Monitoring / Reporting Action	CPUC and BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
Effectiveness Criteria	The occurrence of visual contrast from towers and conductor spans will be minimized. Asynchronous tower spans will be minimized.
Responsible Agency	CPUC, BLM on BLM-administered lands
Timing	CPUC and BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
IMPACT V-23	Increased structure contrast when viewing the east rim of Whitewater Canyon and Mount San Jacinto from Key Viewpoint 17 on southbound Whitewater Canyon Road. (Class III)
MITIGATION MEASURE	V-3a (see above)
Location	Applies to all tower locations and route segments.
Monitoring / Reporting Action	CPUC and BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
Effectiveness Criteria	The occurrence of visual contrast from towers and conductor spans will be minimized. Asynchronous tower spans will be minimized.
Responsible Agency	CPUC, BLM on BLM-administered lands
Timing	CPUC and BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
IMPACT V-24	Increased structure contrast, industrial character, view blockage, and skylining when viewed from Key Viewpoint 18 on Haugen-Lehmann Way in the West Palm Springs Village residential community. (Class III)
MITIGATION MEASURE	V-3a (see above)
Location	Applies to all tower locations and route segments.
Monitoring / Reporting Action	CPUC and BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
Effectiveness Criteria	The occurrence of visual contrast from towers and conductor spans will be minimized. Asynchronous tower spans will be minimized.
Responsible Agency	CPUC, BLM on BLM-administered lands
Timing	CPUC and BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.

Table D.3-11. Mitigation Monitoring Program – Visual Resources

IMPACT V-25	Increased structure contrast, structure prominence, and skylining when viewed from Key Viewpoint 19 at the Morongo Community Center. (Class III)
MITIGATION MEASURE	V-3a (see above)
Location	Applies to all tower locations and route segments.
Monitoring / Reporting Action	CPUC and BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
Effectiveness Criteria	The occurrence of visual contrast from towers and conductor spans will be minimized. Asynchronous tower spans will be minimized.
Responsible Agency	CPUC, BLM on BLM-administered lands
Timing	CPUC and BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
IMPACT V-26	Increased structure contrast, view blockage, and skylining when viewed from Key Viewpoint 20 on Murray Street in the City of Banning. (Class III)
MITIGATION MEASURE	V-3a (see above)
Location	Applies to all tower locations and route segments.
Monitoring / Reporting Action	CPUC and BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
Effectiveness Criteria	The occurrence of visual contrast from towers and conductor spans will be minimized. Asynchronous tower spans will be minimized.
Responsible Agency	CPUC, BLM on BLM-administered lands
Timing	CPUC and BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
IMPACT V-30	Increased view blockage when viewed from Key Viewpoint 24 on Pilgrim Road in San Timoteo Canyon. (Class III)
MITIGATION MEASURE	V-3a (see above)
Location	Applies to all tower locations and route segments.
Monitoring / Reporting Action	CPUC and BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
Effectiveness Criteria	The occurrence of visual contrast from towers and conductor spans will be minimized. Asynchronous tower spans will be minimized.
Responsible Agency	CPUC, BLM on BLM-administered lands
Timing	CPUC and BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
IMPACT V-31	Increased view blockage when viewed from Key Viewpoint 25 at the intersection of Canyon Vista Drive and Chase Canyon Lane in the City of Colton. (Class III)
MITIGATION MEASURE	V-3a (see above)
Location	Applies to all tower locations and route segments.
Monitoring / Reporting Action	CPUC and BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
Effectiveness Criteria	The occurrence of visual contrast from towers and conductor spans will be minimized. Asynchronous tower spans will be minimized.
Responsible Agency	CPUC, BLM on BLM-administered lands
Timing	CPUC and BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.

Table D.3-11. Mitigation Monitoring Program – Visual Resources

IMPACT V-32	Increased view blockage when viewed from Key Viewpoint 26 in the right-of-way park, just off Beaumont Avenue. (Class III)
MITIGATION MEASURE	V-3a (see above)
Location	Applies to all tower locations and route segments.
Monitoring / Reporting Action	CPUC and BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
Effectiveness Criteria	The occurrence of visual contrast from towers and conductor spans will be minimized. Asynchronous tower spans will be minimized.
Responsible Agency	CPUC, BLM on BLM-administered lands
Timing	CPUC and BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
IMPACT V-33	Inconsistency with BLM VRM Class III management objective due to introduction of structure contrast, industrial character, view blockage, and skylining when viewed from Key Viewpoint 27 on a BLM access road to Courthouse Rock and the Eagletail Mountains. (Class I)
MITIGATION MEASURE	V-3a (see above)
Location	Applies to all tower locations and route segments.
Monitoring / Reporting Action	BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
Effectiveness Criteria	The occurrence of visual contrast from towers and conductor spans will be minimized. Asynchronous tower spans will be minimized.
Responsible Agency	BLM
Timing	BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
IMPACT V-34	Increased structure contrast and view blockage when viewing Saddle Mountain from Key Viewpoint 28 on Salome Highway. (Class III)
MITIGATION MEASURE	V-3a (see above)
Location	Applies to all tower locations and route segments.
Monitoring / Reporting Action	CPUC and BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
Effectiveness Criteria	The occurrence of visual contrast from towers and conductor spans will be minimized. Asynchronous tower spans will be minimized.
Responsible Agency	CPUC, BLM on BLM-administered lands
Timing	CPUC and BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
IMPACT V-35	Increased structure contrast, industrial character, view blockage, and skylining when viewing the alternative Harquahala Junction Switchyard site from Viewpoint 29 on Salome Highway. (Class II)
MITIGATION MEASURE	V-6a ~~through~~ and V-6c (see above)
Location	Applies to all permanent ancillary facilities including substations, switchyards, series capacitor banks, and optical repeater stations.
Monitoring / Reporting Action	CPUC to review Surface Treatment Plan, Screening Plan and Lighting Mitigation Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.

Table D.3-11. Mitigation Monitoring Program – Visual Resources

Effectiveness Criteria	For the Surface Treatment Plan, the occurrence of visual contrast from ancillary facilities will be minimized and facilities will blend with the landscape to the extent feasible. For the Screening Plan, visibility of ancillary facilities will be reduced such that unnecessary visual contrast and industrial character will not occur. For the Lighting Mitigation Plan, light bulbs and reflectors at Construction yards and staging areas would not be visible from public viewing areas and night lighting would not cause reflected glare and illumination beyond the construction site and into the nighttime sky.
Responsible Agency	CPUC
Timing	CPUC to review Surface Treatment Plan, Screening Plan and Lighting Mitigation Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
MITIGATION MEASURE	V-6b: Screen ancillary facilities. For the Harquahala Junction Switchyard Alternative, SCE shall provide a Screening Plan for screening vegetation, walls, and fences that reduces visibility of ancillary facilities and helps the facility blend in with the landscape. The use of berms to facilitate project screening may also be incorporated into the Plan. SCE shall submit the Plan to the BLM for review and approval at least 90 days prior to installing the landscape screening. If the BLM notifies SCE that revisions to the Plan are needed before the Plan can be approved, within 30 days of receiving that notification, SCE shall prepare and submit for review and approval a revised Plan. The plan shall include but not necessarily be limited to: • an 11"x17" color simulation of the proposed landscaping at 5 years • a plan view to scale depicting the project and the location of screening elements • a detailed list of any plants to be used; their size and age at planting; the expected time to maturity, and the expected height at five years and at maturity. SCE shall complete installation of the screening prior to the start of project operation. SCE shall notify the BLM within seven days after completing installation of the screening, that the screening components are ready for inspection
Location	Applies to the Harquahala Junction Switchyard Alternative.
Monitoring / Reporting Action	BLM to review Screening Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
Effectiveness Criteria	Visibility of ancillary facilities will be reduced such that unnecessary visual contrast and industrial character will not occur.
Responsible Agency	BLM
Timing	BLM to review Screening Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
MITIGATION MEASURE	V-35a Screen Alternative Switchyard Site from Salome Highway Views. This measure is required to augment and not replace Mitigation Measure V-6b in order to provide more detailed direction pertaining to the planting of roadside screening vegetation along Salome Highway. Screening vegetation shall be planted along the east side of Salome Highway between mile markers 39 and 40. Vegetation shall be comprised of native species and shall be selected to achieve heights and screen effectiveness comparable to that shown in Figure D.3-30B (see enclosed CD). SCE shall submit a Screening Plan demonstrating compliance with this measure to the CPUC for review and approval at least 90 days prior to installing the landscape screening. If the CPUC notifies SCE that revisions to the Plan are needed before the Plan can be approved, within 30 days of receiving that notification, SCE shall prepare and submit for review and approval a revised Plan. The Screening Plan shall include but not necessarily be limited to: • An 11"x17" color simulation of the proposed landscaping at 5 years • A plan view to scale depicting the project and the location of screening elements • A detailed list of any plants to be used; their size and age at planting; the expected time to maturity, and the expected height at five years and at maturity. SCE shall complete installation of the screening prior to the start of project operation. SCE shall notify the CPUC within seven days after completing installation of the screening, that the screening components are ready for inspection.

Table D.3-11. Mitigation Monitoring Program – Visual Resources

Location	Applies to east side of Salome Highway between mile markers 39 and 40.
Monitoring / Reporting Action	CPUC to review Screening Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
Effectiveness Criteria	Visibility of the switchyard site will be reduced in a manner that is comparable to the screening illustrated in Figure D.3-30B (see enclosed CD).
Responsible Agency	CPUC
Timing	CPUC and BLM to review Surface Treatment Plan, Screening Plan and Lighting Mitigation Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
IMPACT V-36	Inconsistency with Interim BLM VRM Class II management objective due to introduction of structure contrast, industrial character, view blockage, and skylining when viewing Alligator Rock from Key Viewpoint 30 on eastbound Interstate 10. (Class I)
MITIGATION MEASURE	V-3a (see above)
Location	Applies to all tower locations and route segments.
Monitoring / Reporting Action	BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
Effectiveness Criteria	The occurrence of visual contrast from towers and conductor spans will be minimized. Asynchronous tower spans will be minimized.
Responsible Agency	BLM
Timing	BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
IMPACT V-37	Inconsistency with Interim BLM VRM Class III management objective due to introduction of structure contrast, industrial character, view blockage, and skylining when viewing the Chuckwalla Mountains from Key Viewpoint 31 on southbound Kaiser Road, north of Desert Center. (Class I)
MITIGATION MEASURE	V-3 (see above)
Location	Applies to all tower locations and route segments.
Monitoring / Reporting Action	BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
Effectiveness Criteria	The occurrence of visual contrast from towers and conductor spans will be minimized. Asynchronous tower spans will be minimized.
Responsible Agency	BLM
Timing	BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
IMPACT V-38	Inconsistency with Interim BLM VRM Class II management objective due to introduction of structure contrast, industrial character, view blockage, and skylining when viewing Alligator Rock from Key Viewpoint 32 on westbound Interstate 10 east of Desert Center. (Class I)
MITIGATION MEASURE	V-3a (see above)
Location	Applies to all tower locations and route segments.
Monitoring / Reporting Action	BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
Effectiveness Criteria	The occurrence of visual contrast from towers and conductor spans will be minimized. Asynchronous tower spans will be minimized.
Responsible Agency	BLM
Timing	BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.

Table D.3-11. Mitigation Monitoring Program – Visual Resources

IMPACT V-39	Inconsistency with Interim BLM VRM Class II management objective due to introduction of structure contrast, industrial character, view blockage, and skylining when viewing Alligator Rock from Key Viewpoint 30 on eastbound Interstate 10. (Class I)
MITIGATION MEASURE	V-3a (see above)
Location	Applies to all tower locations and route segments.
Monitoring / Reporting Action	BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
Effectiveness Criteria	The occurrence of visual contrast from towers and conductor spans will be minimized. Asynchronous tower spans will be minimized.
Responsible Agency	BLM
Timing	BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
IMPACT V-40	Increased structure contrast and skylining when viewing the San Jacinto Mountains from Key Viewpoint 33 on the Pacific Crest Trail in the vicinity of the Snow Creek Village residential community (Class I)
MITIGATION MEASURE	V-40a: Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors. The following design measures are to be applied to all new structures and conductors in order to reduce the degree of visual contrast caused by the new facilities: (a) all new structures are to as closely as possible match the design of the existing structures with which they will be seen; (b) all new structures are to be paired as closely as possible with the existing structure(s) in the corridor in order to avoid or reduce the number of off-setting (from existing structures) tower placements; (c) all new structures are to match the heights of the existing D-V1 structures to the extent possible as dictated by variation in terrain; (d) all new spans are to match existing conductor spans as closely as possible in order to avoid or reduce the occurrence of unnecessary visual complexity associated with asynchronous conductor spans, particularly at sensitive crossings such as SR 62, I-10, SR 111, SR 243, SR 79, Gilman Springs Road, Ramona Expressway, Menifee Road, and SR 74; (e) all new conductors are to be non-specular in design in order to reduce conductor visibility and visual contrast, and (f) no new access roads are to be constructed downhill from existing or proposed towers to reduce the potential for skylining. SCE shall provide to the CPUC, BLM, and Forest Service a Project Design Plan demonstrating implementation of this measure at least 90 days prior to the start of construction, and shall not commence construction until the Project Design Plan has been approved by the CPUC, BLM, and Forest Service.
Location	Applies to all tower locations and route segments.
Monitoring / Reporting Action	CPUC, BLM, and Forest Service to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
Effectiveness Criteria	The occurrence of visual contrast from towers and conductor spans will be minimized. Asynchronous tower spans will be minimized.
Responsible Agency	CPUC, BLM on BLM-administered lands, Forest Service on National Forest Lands
Timing	CPUC, BLM, and Forest Service to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.

Table D.3-11. Mitigation Monitoring Program – Visual Resources

MITIGATION MEASURE	V-40b: Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors on San Bernardino National Forest land. The following design measures are to be applied to all new structures and conductors on SBNF land based on SCE's consultation with SBNF staff prior to completion of final design. The details of these measures shall be developed: In all areas: • Transmission lines should have a permanent coloring of dark gray. • All towers not back-dropped on mid-slope should have permanent coloring of cool mid-gray (battleship gray). In mid-slope areas (as defined by SBNF): • All towers and concrete bases on slopes which could serve as backdrops (mid-slope) should be painted olive drab. • Tower pads should be left uneven without leveling. • No construction roads shall be built. • Towers shall be constructed by air support. At ridge crossing and mid-slope (as defined by SBNF): • Towers should be constructed of lower profile to closer "hug" the top of the ridge to avoid tower silhouetting. • Graphic studies from dominant view sites should be used to best place towers where they would be best back-dropped from expected viewing points. • All towers and concrete bases on slopes which could serve as backdrops (mid-slope) should be painted olive drab. • Tower pads should be left uneven without leveling. • No construction roads shall be built. • Towers should be constructed by air support.
Location	All new structures and conductors on SBNF land
Monitoring / Reporting Action	CPUC, BLM, and Forest Service to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
Effectiveness Criteria	The occurrence of visual contrast from towers and conductor spans will be minimized. Asynchronous tower spans will be minimized in SBNF.
Responsible Agency	CPUC, BLM on BLM-administered lands, Forest Service on National Forest Lands
Timing	CPUC, BLM, and Forest Service to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
MITIGATION MEASURE	V-40c: Reduce visual contrast of towers and conductors near the Pacific Crest Trail. For towers located south of I-10 and outside of the SBNF, the following provisions apply: • Where towers could be practicably back-dropped, utilize mitigation suggested for mid-slope and Ridge Crossing on SBNF lands (as defined in Mitigation Measure V-40b). • The PCT shall not be crossed with construction roads. • Locate towers so that the PCT is in the middle of the span (if this does not involve placement of extra or taller span towers to accomplish such action).
Location	Towers located south of I-10 and outside of the SBNF
Monitoring / Reporting Action	CPUC, BLM, and Forest Service to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
Effectiveness Criteria	The occurrence of visual contrast from towers and conductor spans will be minimized. Asynchronous tower spans will be minimized near PCT.
Responsible Agency	CPUC, BLM on BLM-administered lands, Forest Service on National Forest Lands
Timing	CPUC, BLM, and Forest Service to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.

Table D.3-11. Mitigation Monitoring Program – Visual Resources

IMPACT V-41	Inconsistency with BLM VRM Class II management objective due to introduction of structure contrast and industrial character when viewing the San Jacinto Mountains from BLM-managed lands within the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument (in the vicinity of KVP 33) (Class I)
MITIGATION MEASURE	V-40a (see above)
Location	Applies to all BLM-administered lands within the National Monument
Monitoring / Reporting Action	BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
Effectiveness Criteria	The occurrence of visual contrast from towers and conductor spans will be minimized. Asynchronous tower spans will be minimized.
Responsible Agency	BLM
Timing	BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
IMPACT V-42	Inconsistency with U.S. Forest Service Scenic Integrity Objective (SIO) due to introduction of structure contrast and industrial character. (Class I)
MITIGATION MEASURE	V-40a (see above)
Location	Applies to all Forest Service-administered lands crossed by the route
Monitoring / Reporting Action	Forest Service to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
Effectiveness Criteria	The occurrence of visual contrast from towers and conductor spans will be minimized. Asynchronous tower spans will be minimized.
Responsible Agency	Forest Service
Timing	Forest Service to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
IMPACT V-43	Increased structure contrast, skylining, and view blockage when viewed from Key Viewpoint 34 in the residential community in Cabazon (Class I)
MITIGATION MEASURE	V-40a (see above)
Location	Applies to all tower locations along the Alternative route.
Monitoring / Reporting Action	CPUC to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
Effectiveness Criteria	The occurrence of visual contrast from towers and conductor spans will be minimized. Asynchronous tower spans will be minimized.
Responsible Agency	CPUC
Timing	CPUC to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
IMPACT V-44	Impact V-44: Increased structure contrast and skylining when viewing the San Jacinto Mountains and San Gorgonio Pass from Key Viewpoint 35 on southbound State Route 243 (Class I)
MITIGATION MEASURE	V-40a (see above)
Location	Applies to all tower locations along the Alternative route.
Monitoring / Reporting Action	CPUC to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
Effectiveness Criteria	The occurrence of visual contrast from towers and conductor spans will be minimized. Asynchronous tower spans will be minimized.

Table D.3-11. Mitigation Monitoring Program – Visual Resources

Responsible Agency	CPUC
Timing	CPUC to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
IMPACT V-45	Impact V-45: Increased structure contrast, skylining, and view blockage when viewed from residential areas in southern Banning and Beaumont (Class I)
MITIGATION MEASURE	V-40a (see above)
Location	Applies to all tower locations along the Alternative route.
Monitoring / Reporting Action	CPUC to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
Effectiveness Criteria	The occurrence of visual contrast from towers and conductor spans will be minimized. Asynchronous tower spans will be minimized.
Responsible Agency	CPUC
Timing	CPUC to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
IMPACT V-46	Inconsistency with BLM VRM Class II management objective due to introduction of structure contrast and industrial character when viewing from BLM-managed lands within the Potrero ACEC (Class I)
MITIGATION MEASURE	V-40a (see above)
Location	Applies to all BLM-administered lands within the Potrero ACEC
Monitoring / Reporting Action	BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
Effectiveness Criteria	The occurrence of visual contrast from towers and conductor spans will be minimized. Asynchronous tower spans will be minimized.
Responsible Agency	BLM
Timing	BLM to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
IMPACT V-47	Increased structure contrast, skylining, and view blockage when viewed from Key Viewpoint 36 on Mapes Road (Class I)
MITIGATION MEASURE	V-40a (see above)
Location	Applies to all tower locations along the Alternative route.
Monitoring / Reporting Action	CPUC to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.
Effectiveness Criteria	The occurrence of visual contrast from towers and conductor spans will be minimized. Asynchronous tower spans will be minimized.
Responsible Agency	CPUC
Timing	CPUC to review Project Design Plan prior to start of construction and verify implementation following construction.

D.3.12 References

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