

5. Environmental Analysis

Introduction

This chapter describes the existing environmental setting relevant to each resource topic and provides an analysis of the environmental impacts that could occur from implementation of the Proposed Project. Discussions and explanations of the findings are provided for the following environmental resource topics:

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|---------------------------------------|---|
| 1. Aesthetics | 12. Mineral Resources |
| 2. Agriculture and Forestry Resources | 13. Noise |
| 3. Air Quality | 14. Population and Housing |
| 4. Biological Resources | 15. Public Services |
| 5. Cultural Resources | 16. Recreation |
| 6. Energy | 17. Transportation |
| 7. Geology and Soils | 18. Tribal Cultural Resources |
| 8. Greenhouse gas Emissions | 19. Utilities and Service Systems |
| 9. Hazards and Hazardous Materials | 20. Wildfire |
| 10. Hydrology and Water Quality | 21. Mandatory Findings of Significance. |
| 11. Land Use and Planning | |

Format of Environmental Resource Sections

The analysis of each environmental resource is organized as follows:

1. Environmental Setting
2. Regulatory Background
3. Applicant Proposed Measures (APMs)
4. CEQA Significance Criteria
5. Methodology
6. Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures
7. References

Environmental Setting

The analysis of each environmental resource area begins with a description of the existing physical setting that may be affected by the Proposed Project. The existing physical setting is based on the environmental conditions that existed in the study area in May 2018, the time that the application was submitted by SCE to the CPUC, pursuant to Section 15125(a) of the CEQA Guidelines.

Regulatory Background

This subsection describes the relevant regulations and guidelines that pertain to the environmental topic under consideration.

In California, the CPUC has exclusive jurisdiction over the design, siting, installation, operation, maintenance, and repair of electric transmission facilities. Therefore, the project is not subject to local discretionary regulations. Guidelines, plans, and policies for local jurisdictions in California are identified in Appendix C, by resource topic.

Applicant-Proposed Measures (APM)

SCE has proposed several measures to avoid or reduce Proposed Project impacts. The APMs are considered to be part of the Proposed Project. During construction, SCE's compliance with the APMs will be tracked through the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan (MMRP), similar to how compliance with mitigation measures will be tracked. The APMs proposed as part of the Proposed Project are provided in Chapter 4: Project Description, Table 4-18, as well as in each resource analysis section in Chapter 5, as applicable. If, during the analysis of project impacts, it is determined that the APMs are not sufficient to reduce an identified significant impact to a less than significant level, they are superseded by a mitigation measure, and an explanation of the rationale for superseding the APM is presented.

CEQA Significance Criteria

Significance criteria are identified for each environmental resource topic and used as a benchmark for determining if a project would result in a significant environmental impact when evaluated against baseline conditions. The significance criteria were developed using Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines as a foundation and were modified as appropriate.

Methodology

For each environmental resource, the methodology used to analyze potential environmental impacts is presented prior to discussion of the results of the impact analysis.

Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

The discussion of impacts to a resource is organized to:

- Describe and quantify each potential impact to the resources according to the identified significance criteria;
- Identify which APMs, if any, would serve to mitigate the impact and if they would reduce the impact to less than significant;
- If needed, identify additional mitigation measures that would further reduce the impact; and
- Provide a conclusion stating whether each potential impact would be less than significant without need for mitigation, mitigated to less than significant through measures identified in the IS; or potentially significant even with available mitigation.

References

Reference cited in the text are listed at the end of each resource section.

Cumulative Projects Impacts Analysis

Cumulative impacts of the Proposed Project are discussed in Section 5.21, Mandatory Findings of Significance, under question (b) "Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable?" The focus of the cumulative impact analysis is to identify those project impacts that might not be significant when considered alone but which may contribute to a significant impact when viewed in conjunction with past, current, and reasonably foreseeable future projects. The analysis of cumulative impacts identifies whether a particular cumulative impact is significant, and then identifies whether the Proposed Project's contribution would be cumulatively considerable.

5.1 Aesthetics

AESTHETICS

Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a State scenic highway?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Significance criteria established by CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G.

5.1.1 Environmental Setting

Visual resources are generally defined as the sum of natural and built features in the visible landscape. Landforms, water, and vegetation are among the natural elements that define an area's visual character. Buildings, roads, and other structures reflect human modifications to the natural landscape. Natural and built features are visual resources that contribute to the public's experience and appreciation of a landscape. This section evaluates visual conditions at and near the Eldorado-Lugo-Mohave Series Capacitor Project to determine how the project would affect the visual character of the existing landscape through the introduction of Proposed Project elements into the landscape.

Under CEQA, the aesthetics analysis considers how visible elements or conditions introduced by a project in the physical environment may affect the seen landscape and how these changes are experienced by viewers.

Visual resource analysis uses a systematic approach to logically assess visible change in the physical environment and the anticipated response of a viewer to that change. Different people viewing the same landscape may have different responses to that landscape and any visual changes that occur. These differences are based upon their personal experiences, values, familiarity, concern, or expectations for the landscape, as well as the landscape's scenic quality. Each person's attachment to and valuation of a landscape are unique. However, useful generalizations can be made about viewer sensitivity to scenic quality and visual change in order to assess impacts. For example, recreationists, hikers, equestrians, tourists, and people driving for pleasure are expected to have high concern for scenery, visual quality, and character of a landscape they are viewing. People who commute regularly through the same landscape generally have a moderate concern for scenery which they see often and at high speeds. People working at agricultural or industrial sites within the same landscape may have a lower concern for scenic quality or changes to existing landscape character. The visual sensitivity of a landscape is affected by the viewing distances over which it is seen, such as close-up or far away. The visual sensitivity of a landscape also is affected by the travel speed of a person viewing the landscape (such as high speeds on a highway, low speeds on a hiking trail, or being stationary at a residence).

View parameters are greatly affected by the distance between a viewer and the landscape elements observed in the landscape. Typical distance zones considered are foreground (including a subcategory of immediate foreground), middle ground, and background. When a viewer is close to a viewed object or feature, details can be seen clearly and there is greater potential for the object to influence visual quality because of its form or scale relative to the other elements in the immediate view. At middle ground distances some detail is evident and new landscape features are seen more broadly in context with existing elements including landforms, vegetation patterns, and existing structures. When the same features are viewed at background distances, details may be imperceptible with overall forms and hues of existing terrain and vegetation that are more prominent, and the horizon and skyline may dominate.

The project area is in the Mojave Desert of California and Nevada. This is an arid environment with flat desert to rolling expanses separated by mountain ranges. With little rainfall, vegetation is relatively sparse and compact. Land and vegetation coloration is relatively muted. Much of the land traversed by the project is under the jurisdiction of the BLM, National Park Service (NPS), Bureau of Reclamation (BOR), and Department of Defense (DoD).

The Proposed Project would modify some components of three existing transmission lines and add new facilities under the lines at five locations. Two transmission lines extend between Lugo Substation to Eldorado Substation and Mohave Substation, respectively, and the third line extends between Mohave Substation to Eldorado Substation. The project would construct two series capacitor facilities and three optic fiber repeater facilities within existing rights of way (ROWs), replace an existing overhead ground wire with an optical ground wire, and address conductor clearance issues at 14 locations by raising selected towers or modifying circuits or grounding the transmission lines below. Modifications would also occur within each of the substations.

The existing 500 kilovolt (kV) transmission line ROWs cross flat desert, agricultural lands, and mountainous areas. Most of the land is undeveloped, with vegetation cover being principally low-growing desert grasses and scrubs. Land uses near the Proposed Project include undeveloped open space, protected wildernesses and preserves, national parks, BLM-managed lands, recreation, agricultural uses, roads, and energy infrastructure. Developed areas include low-density residential areas near Lugo Substation in Hesperia, California, residential development near Mohave Substation in Clark County, and electrical substations and renewable energy facilities near Eldorado Substation. With much of the Proposed Project area being undeveloped, the existing electrical transmission lines and access roads constitute dominant features in the landscape, along with two railroad lines and major highways — including Interstate 40 (I-40) and U.S. Highway 95 — that are spanned by the existing transmission lines. Mountain ranges provide a visual background in much of the Proposed Project vicinity. Sources of nighttime lighting are limited and include light from vehicles on roadways, dispersed residences, and lighting associated with existing substations and other utility facilities.

Viewshed

The project viewshed is defined as the general area from which the Proposed Project would be visible. As noted above, for purposes of describing a project's visual setting and assessing potential visual impacts, the viewshed can be divided into distance zones of foreground, middle ground, and background views. For purposes of assessment, "foreground" is defined as the distance between the viewer and about 0.5 mile. Landscape detail is most noticeable and objects generally appear most prominent when seen in the foreground. The "middle ground" is 0.5 to 5 miles from the viewer, and the "background" extends beyond 5 miles from the viewer.

In the analysis of visual effects for the Proposed Project, an emphasis is placed on the potential effects on foreground views, with consideration also given to the potential effects on more distant views. The greatest number of viewers would be from locations along nearby roads and highways, mostly from moving vehicles. From some locations, views of the Proposed Project may be partially or fully screened by intervening topography, structures, and vegetation. The proposed new facilities would be constructed adjacent to existing tall transmission towers and be situated largely within the existing ROWs. The two series capacitor facilities are similar to typical electric substations in appearance. Figure 5.1-1, Devers–Red Bluff 500 kV Mid-Line Capacitor, provides a photograph of an existing SCE mid-line capacitor facility located in the eastern Riverside County desert. The landscape is similar to that found in the vicinity of the Proposed Project. While the Devers–Red Bluff capacitor site supports more equipment and lines than would be present in the Newberry Springs and Ludlow capacitor facilities, the new facilities would be similar with regard to the core features shown in the figure. These include LSTs on either side of the capacitor site and A-frame or H-frame transition structures looping the transmission line conductor into and out from the elevated capacitor equipment. The inset in Figure 5.1-1 provides a view of the Devers–Red Bluff capacitor facility as seen from I-10, approximately 0.4 miles distant. For comparison, the Newberry Springs and Ludlow capacitor facilities would be approximately 0.6 miles from I-40.

The three optic fiber repeater facilities are substantially smaller than the two capacitor facilities and do not require dead-end structures to loop conductors in and out of the facilities, as the only transmission line feature entering the repeater facility would be the fiber optic line. The predominant feature at the repeater sites would be the one-story repeater equipment building. Each repeater facility would be located under the existing 500 kV transmission lines adjacent to existing LSTs.

Existing Landscape Setting and Viewer Characteristics

The visual character of the Proposed Project area is illustrated by a set of 21 photographs taken at various locations along the project alignment. These images document representative views from locations near the existing transmission lines. The locations of the photograph viewpoints are shown in Figure 5.1-2, Viewpoint Locations Map. Attachment 5.1-A, Characterization Photographs (at the end of this section), includes the 21 photographs, which are generally presented from west to east (i.e., Lugo Substation to Mohave Substation), and then south to north (i.e., Mohave Substation to Eldorado Substation). Six of the viewpoints were identified as Key Observation Points (KOPs). Simulations of project features as they would appear from these six KOPs allow a comparison of existing visual conditions from the KOPs and how the landscape would look at these locations after the project is implemented.

Photograph 1: Lugo Substation

Photograph 1 shows the existing view looking west from Fuente Avenue toward Lugo Substation. Two of the three existing transmission lines in the Proposed Project originate at Lugo Substation — the Eldorado-Lugo and Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Lines. Viewed from the eastern side of the substation, this photograph shows one of the existing double-circuit lattice steel towers (LSTs), as well as the switch-racks and other components within the perimeter fencing surrounding the substation. The San Bernardino and San Gabriel Mountain Ranges are visible in the background.

Photograph 2: Arrowhead Lake Road Crossing

Photograph 2 shows the existing view looking north along Arrowhead Lake Road. Two existing LSTs appear along the Eldorado-Lugo and Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Lines where they span Arrowhead Lake Road, which runs north-south from the San Bernardino Mountains to the City of Hesperia. This photograph captures the existing transmission lines in a rural residential area south of the

city limits. As shown, existing homes are located on each side of the roadway and an existing distribution line parallels the roadway.

Photograph 3: Bowen Ranch Road (KOP 1)

Photograph 3 shows the existing view looking northeast from Bowen Ranch Road. Existing LSTs along the Eldorado-Lugo and Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Lines are visible from Bowen Range Road, which provides access to a few residential properties in the area. The photograph shows the hilly topography in this portion of the Proposed Project area, as well as the dominance of the existing LSTs of the Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line.

Photograph 4: State Route 18 Crossing

Photograph 4 shows the existing view looking west along State Route (SR-) 18. The Eldorado-Lugo and Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Lines span SR-18 in the unincorporated community of Lucerne Valley. This photograph includes features that are typical in the Proposed Project area, including existing transmission lines and a roadway, desert vegetation, and mountains in the background, with little development.

Photograph 5: Proposed Barstow Fiber Optic Repeater Site (KOP 2)

Photograph 5 shows the existing view looking northeast from SR-247 (Barstow Road) toward the site of the proposed Barstow Fiber Optic Repeater. The Eldorado-Lugo and Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Lines, as well as an existing 220 kV transmission line, are visible from SR-247, a County of San Bernardino–designated scenic route.¹ Sparse, rural residential development characterizes this area. The existing lines are shown against a backdrop of the Goat Ord, East Ord, and West Ord Mountains.

Photograph 6: Proposed Newberry Springs Series Capacitor Site (KOP 3)

Photograph 6 shows the existing view looking east-northeast from the National Trails Highway (historic U.S. Route 66) toward the site of the proposed Newberry Springs Series Capacitor along the Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line. In this area, the National Trails Highway (Route 66), a County of San Bernardino–designated scenic route,² runs parallel to I-40 and is in the foreground, and the view in this area would be similar from I-40. The view shows existing LSTs along the existing Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line and Pisgah Substation (shown at the far left of the photograph). Two separate 220 kV transmission lines (Lugo-Pisgah #1 and #2) terminate into the existing Pisgah Substation and not part of the Proposed Project. A cell tower appears in the photograph and is adjacent to the existing 500 kV LST. Flat topography and desert vegetation typical of the Mojave Desert is visible in the middle ground of the photograph, as well as the mountainous terrain in the background.

Photograph 7: Pisgah Road

Photograph 7 shows the existing view looking south-southwest from Pisgah Crater Road. The visual character of the area is dominated by existing LSTs near Pisgah Substation. Several transmission lines, including the Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line, are in adjacent ROWs. The San Bernardino Mountains form the background.

¹ Although designated by the County of San Bernardino as a scenic route, SR-247 is not a State scenic highway.

² Although designated by the County of San Bernardino as a scenic route, the National Trails Highway (Route 66) is not a State scenic highway.

Photograph 8: Pisgah Substation

Photograph 8 shows the existing view looking northeast from Pisgah Crater Road toward Pisgah Substation. This provides a closer view of the existing Pisgah Substation as viewed from the intersection of Pisgah Road and Pisgah Crater Road. As in Photograph 7, this view highlights the dominance of existing transmission lines in the area. The black lava rocks and sand that are a dominant natural feature in this area are visible, and mountainous terrain forms the background.

Photograph 9: Interstate 40 Crossing

Photograph 9 shows the existing view looking east along the National Trails Highway (Route 66). In this photograph, the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line spans the National Trails Highway and I-40 southwest of the proposed Ludlow Series Capacitor site. The existing transmission line, distribution lines, and the roadways as major features in this area.

Photograph 10: Proposed Ludlow Series Capacitor Site (KOP 4)

Photograph 10 shows the existing view looking north from I-40 toward the site of the proposed Ludlow Series Capacitor along the Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line. The existing LSTs in this area extend across the foreground. The flat topography and desert vegetation typical of the Mojave Desert are central features of the foreground and middle ground of the photograph, with the mountainous terrain in the background.

Photograph 11: Kelbaker Road (KOP 5)

Photograph 11 shows the existing view looking north-northwest from Kelbaker Road, a County of San Bernardino-designated scenic route.³ The photograph shows the conductor of the Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line and an existing Sempra Energy gas plant to the north of the transmission line, within the Mojave National Preserve. To the left of the plant, the white sands of the Kelso Dunes are visible in the middle ground and background.

Photograph 12: Proposed Kelbaker Fiber Optic Repeater Site

Photograph 12 shows the existing view looking northeast from Kelbaker Road toward the site of the proposed Kelbaker Fiber Optic Repeater. The foreground is dominated by rock from past road construction and maintenance. The existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line is featured in this photograph, and mountainous terrain is visible in the background.

Photograph 13: Essex Road

Photograph 13 shows the existing view of the Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line looking west from Essex Road, a County of San Bernardino-designated scenic route.⁴ The photograph shows the disturbed condition of the ROW along the transmission line in the foreground, as well as the prominent mountains in the background.

³ Although designated by the County of San Bernardino as a scenic route, Kelbaker Road is not a State scenic highway.

⁴ Although designated by the County of San Bernardino as a scenic route, Essex Road is not a State scenic highway.

Photograph 14: Black Canyon Road

Photograph 14 shows the existing view of the Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line looking east from Black Canyon Road, a County of San Bernardino-designated scenic route.⁵ The photograph features typical desert vegetation in the foreground and limited views of the Kelso Dunes in the background.

Photograph 15: Lanfair Road Crossing

Photograph 15 shows the existing view of the Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line looking southeast along Lanfair Road, a County of San Bernardino-designated scenic route.⁶ Existing distribution poles are also shown along the roadway, which is in the Mojave National Preserve. Goffs Butte is visible in the background.

Photograph 16: Proposed Lanfair Fiber Optic Repeater Site (KOP 6)

This photograph shows the LSTs and conductor of the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line looking northeast from Lanfair Road toward the proposed location of the Lanfair Fiber Optic Repeater site. Typical desert vegetation is visible in the foreground of the photograph, and Signal Hill can be seen in the background.

Photograph 17: Needles Highway – West

Photograph 17 shows the existing view of the LSTs along the Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line looking west-southwest from Needles Highway in southern Clark County. As the transmission line crosses the mountains west of Mohave Substation, the LSTs that rise from the peaks of the mountains are prominent features in the viewshed, while the LSTs on the valley floor visually integrate with the surrounding vegetation in the middle ground. An existing water tank serving the local community is also visible in the middle ground.

Photograph 18: Needles Highway Crossing

This photograph shows the existing LSTs and conductors of the Eldorado-Mohave and Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Lines looking south-southeast across Needles Highway. Bullhead City, Arizona is visible in the background.

Photograph 19: Mohave Substation

Photograph 19 shows the existing Mohave Substation looking south-southwest from the substation's access road off of Bruce Woodbury Drive. The existing Eldorado-Mohave and Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Lines are shown looping into the substation.

Photograph 20: Eldorado Valley Drive

Photograph 20 shows the existing view looking south from Eldorado Valley Drive. The existing ROW outside of Eldorado Substation features three transmission lines, including the Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line as it departs to the south. The Eldorado-Lugo and the Eldorado-Moenkopi 500 kV Lines are also visible but are not a part of the Proposed Project in this location. Desert vegetation is prominent in the foreground and the Highland Range in the background.

⁵ Although designated by the County of San Bernardino as a scenic route, Black Canyon Road is not a State scenic highway.

⁶ Although designated by the County of San Bernardino as a scenic route, Lanfair Road is not a State scenic highway.

Photograph 21: Eldorado Substation

Photograph 21 shows the existing view of Eldorado Substation looking north-northwest from Eldorado Valley Drive. Typical desert vegetation — characterized by the dominance of creosote (*Larrea tridentata*) shrubs, with other shrubs and emergent trees — is visible in the foreground. The McCullough Range is visible in the background.

5.1.2 Regulatory Background

State and Local

California

California Department of Transportation State Scenic Highway Program. The State Scenic Highway Program — a provision of Sections 260 through 263 of the Streets and Highways Code — was established by the Legislature in 1963 to preserve and enhance the natural beauty of California. The State Scenic Highway System includes highways that are either eligible for designation as scenic highways or have been designated as such. The status of a State Scenic Highway changes from “eligible” to “officially designated” when the local jurisdiction adopts a scenic corridor protection program, applies to Caltrans for scenic highway approval, and receives the designation from Caltrans. A city or county may propose adding routes with outstanding scenic elements to the list of eligible highways. However, State legislation is required. There are no State scenic highways in the Proposed Project area; the nearest officially designated scenic highway is SR-38, which is approximately 18 miles to the south of the Proposed Project.

Nevada

Nevada Revised Statutes Section 704.865 provides that “A person, other than a local government, shall not commence to construct a utility facility in the State without first having obtained a permit therefor from the Commission. The replacement of an existing facility with a like facility, as determined by the Commission, does not constitute construction of a utility facility.” The Public Utilities Commission of Nevada is the Lead Agency for compliance with the Nevada Utility Environmental Protection Act.

Nevada Department of Transportation Scenic Byways Program. In 1983, the Nevada State Legislature established the Scenic Byways Program in Nevada. The Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT) is the Lead Agency for the program, and the Director of NDOT has signature authority to establish a road as a Nevada Scenic Byway. Some Nevada Scenic Byways have historic significance, whereas others have natural attractions or access to outdoor recreation. Currently, there are 20 scenic byways in Nevada comprising approximately 420 miles. There are no Nevada Scenic Byways in the vicinity of the Proposed Project; the nearest Nevada Scenic Byway is Nevada Way, which is approximately 15 miles northeast of the Proposed Project.

Local

The CPUC has sole and exclusive jurisdiction over the siting and design of the Proposed Project components located in the State of California. Pursuant to CPUC G.O. 131-D, Section XIV.B, “Local jurisdictions acting pursuant to local authority are preempted from regulating electric power line projects, distribution lines, substations, or electric facilities constructed by public utilities subject to the CPUC’s jurisdiction. However, in locating such projects, the public utilities shall consult with local agencies regarding land use matters.” Consequently, public utilities are directed to consider local regulations and consult with local agencies, but the county and cities’ regulations are not applicable as the county and cities do

not have jurisdiction over the Proposed Project. For informational purposes, local regulations in California jurisdictions are provided in Appendix C. The Proposed Project is subject to local regulations in the State of Nevada.

Clark County Comprehensive Plan. The Public Facilities and Services Element of the Clark County Comprehensive Plan contains goals and policies for utilities. The following policy is relevant to the Proposed Project:

- **Utilities Policy 8:** *Support the reduction of visual impacts by newly constructed utility poles, towers, substations, and equipment buildings. Use methods for reducing the effect through actions such as:*
 - *Disguising and co-locating antennas for cell towers;*
 - *Hiding equipment buildings with screening and solid fencing;*
 - *Use architecture design on major utility projects to complement the character of a community; and*
 - *Place high capacity electrical transmission lines underground, to lessen visual impacts in large multi-use projects.*

The Clark County Environmentally Sensitive Lands Advisory Committee Report, which provides background information for the Conservation Element, identifies one aesthetic resource — Oro Hanna Spring — within the Proposed Project vicinity.

South Clark County Land Use Plan. The following policy from the South Clark County Land Use Plan is relevant to the Proposed Project:

- **Policy 54.8:** *Since Highway 95 is a gateway to Clark County and the Las Vegas Valley, aesthetics and visual impacts caused by any type of proposed or expanded development, should be controlled.*

Laughlin Land Use Plan. The following goal and policies from the Public and Quasi-Public Infrastructure component of the Laughlin Land Use Plan are relevant to the Proposed Project:

- **Goal 34:** *Provide public and quasi-public infrastructure that emphasizes aesthetic considerations in its planning and development.*
- **Policy 34.1:** *Encourage the installation of public and quasi-public infrastructure (e.g., electrical substations, water pumping stations, etc.) with enhanced designs which utilize low profile equipment, decorative block walls, drought-tolerant landscaping and features which integrate with adjacent development.*
- **Policy 34.2:** *Discourage the use of low voltage overhead electric distribution lines. The Unified Development Code (Title 30) mandates that electric distribution lines be installed underground.*

City of Boulder City Master Plan. The following policy from the Special Planning Area Policies Chapter of the City of Boulder City Master Plan is relevant to the Proposed Project:

- **Policy EV 3:** *The visual impacts of future development in the Eldorado Valley should be a strong consideration when reviewing future proposals for energy production facilities or other uses. Future development should be designed so as to minimize negative impacts to views of the Eldorado Valley from the urbanized areas of the city.*

Federal

Bureau of Land Management

National Environmental Policy Act. The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) was enacted in 1969 to establish a national policy for public review of federal actions. Codified under Title 42, Sections 4321

to 4347 of the U.S. Code (USC), federal agencies are required to consider the environmental impact of their actions, including the issuance of discretionary permits. Because the Proposed Project would require several federal permits for work within federal lands and for potential impacts on federal jurisdictional resources, the federal agencies issuing the permits must comply with NEPA by conducting the appropriate environmental review of the Proposed Project.

Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976. Under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976 (43 USC § 1701), land management agencies are required to manage federally owned public lands in a manner that protects the quality of resources, including scenic resources. The FLPMA provided a framework for the BLM to manage resources in perpetuity which led to the development of the California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA) Plan, which acts as the BLM's land use guide for the management of public lands and resources. The Las Vegas Resource Management Plan (VRM), also established under the FLPMA, acts as the BLM's VRM guide relative to visual and aesthetic impacts on BLM lands.

California Desert Conservation Area Plan. The CDCA Plan establishes goals for the protection and use of the CDCA and a framework for managing its various resources. The CDCA Plan contains an Energy Production and Utility Corridors Element, in which the BLM encourages applicants for utility ROWs to use designated corridors. The CDCA recognizes the BLM's VRM program as the tool that the BLM uses to inform its land use decisions. As part of Phase I of the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP), the BLM adopted an amendment to the CDCA Plan in September 2016 — the Land Use Plan Amendment (LUPA) to the CDCA Plan and Bishop and Bakersfield Resource Management Plan, which is discussed further below.

Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan. The DRECP is a collaborative effort between the California Energy Commission, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, BLM, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to advance federal and state natural resource conservation goals and other federal land management goals; meet the requirements of the federal Endangered Species Act, California Endangered Species Act, Natural Community Conservation Planning Act, and FLPMA; and facilitate the timely and streamlined permitting of renewable energy projects in the Mojave and Colorado/Sonoran desert regions of Southern California. The DRECP covers approximately 22.5 million acres in the desert regions of Imperial, Inyo, Kern, Los Angeles, Riverside, San Bernardino, and San Diego Counties. The DRECP is being prepared in two phases. Phase I consists of the BLM LUPA to the CDCA Plan and Bishop and Bakersfield Resource Management Plan. Phase II will consist of a General Conservation Plan for approximately 5.5 million acres of non-federal land and a Conceptual Plan-Wide Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP) that encompasses the entire DRECP plan area. The DRECP designates National Scenic and Historic Trail management corridors on federal lands within the Plan area.

Bureau of Land Management Land Use Plan Amendment. The BLM LUPA establishes management direction for the permitting of renewable energy and transmission development on approximately 10 million acres of BLM-managed lands in the DRECP plan area. The BLM LUPA amends the CDCA Plan and the Bakersfield and Bishop Resource Management Plans. The purpose of the LUPA is to conserve biological, environmental, cultural, recreation, scenic, and visual resources; respond to federal renewable energy goals and policies, including state-level renewable energy targets; and comply with the FLPMA. The BLM LUPA designates land use allocations, prescribes conservation management actions, and establishes VRM classes.

California Historic Route 66: Needles to Barstow Corridor Management Plan (Proposed). The California Historic Route 66: Needles to Barstow Corridor Management Plan (CMP) is in the process of being developed to secure a nomination for the route as a National Scenic Byway. A final draft was released in 2015

and, once approved, it will focus on new development; the CMP will not propose changes to the regulation of Operation and Maintenance (O&M) activities for existing utility facilities. While there is guidance for new transmission lines and LSTs, the CMP does not contain policies that are relevant to the Proposed Project.

National Park Service

National Environmental Policy Act. NEPA is described above under Bureau of Land Management and applies to the NPS as well.

Organic Act of 1916. Act creating the NPS identifies the purpose of the NPS is to “...conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.” 54 USC Sect. 100101(a).

Mojave National Preserve General Management Plan. The 2002 MNP-GMP addresses visual impact at pages 31 and 32, noting that “Visibility is probably the most important air quality resource in the desert region, and it is the most easily affected by activities that generate dust (especially fine particulates) and sulfur dioxide. “ The GMP further identifies nearby pollution sources as vehicle traffic on I-40 and I-15, as well as other sources. “Local pollution sources in the desert consist primarily of particulate matter from off-road vehicles, windblown soil, mining operations, livestock grazing, and agricultural activities. These sources have left certain areas denuded or sparsely vegetated, allowing wind erosion to occur and air quality to suffer...” Under its Plan Actions, the “Mojave National Preserve will prepare guidelines for the built environment to establish visual consistency and themes in facility development. Guidelines will also be created for reaching visual compatibility with surrounding landscapes, significant architectural features, and site details. The primary objective of these guidelines will be to create harmony between the built environment and the natural environment.” The Preserve’s dark skies offer visitors and researchers opportunities for natural quiet, solitude, and star gazing. “However, the northern and southern boundaries are interstate highways. Traffic on these highways and the lights from Baker, California, Primm, Nevada, and Laughlin, Nevada are beginning to have a noticeable adverse effect on the night sky.” “...preservation of this resource is critical to the future visitor experience.” As part of its actions, the NPS “... will partner with communities and local government agencies to minimize reflected light and artificial light intrusion on the dark night sky ...”

NPS Management Policies 2006 – The Guide to Managing the National Park System. Guidance to managing the National Park System relevant to visual resources addresses construction sites (Section 9.1.3.1) and utility lines (Section 9.1.5.3). These management policies apply to NPS practices but guidance to others working on NPS property as well. Construction sites are to be limited to the smallest feasible area and ground disturbance is to be carefully controlled to prevent undue damage and to minimize pollution. Visual intrusions are to be kept to a minimum. With regard to above ground utility lines and appurtenant structures, these are to be located and designed to minimize impacts on park resources and values. Where possible, they should share a common corridor and be combined with transportation corridors.

Foundation Document – Mojave National Preserve. A park’s foundation document helps managers, staff, and stakeholders develop or affirm an understanding of what is most important about the preserve and identify the additional information needed to plan for the future. The 2013 Foundation Document for the Preserve identifies the fundamental value of desert scenery in the Preserve, stating that “Diverse scenic landscapes and visual qualities foster a sense of discovery and contribute to an

emotional connection for visitors. The enabling legislation highlights the importance of protecting this fundamental scenic value.”

Federal Aviation Administration

Code of Federal Regulations. All airports and navigable airspace not administered by the DoD are under the jurisdiction of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). This applies to both federal and non-federal lands. Title 14, Part 77 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) establishes the standards and required notification for objects affecting navigable airspace. This includes standards for marking and lighting structures to promote aviation safety, which can also affect existing viewsheds. Such standards are applicable to any temporary or permanent structures exceeding an overall height of 200 feet above ground level or exceeding any obstruction standard in Title 14, Part 77 of the CFR. SCE would file a Notice of Proposed Construction or Alteration (Form 7460-1) with the FAA for Proposed Project structures, as required. With respect to Proposed Project structures, the FAA would conduct its own analysis and may recommend no changes to the design of the proposed structures; or the FAA may recommend marking the structures, including the addition of aviation lighting or the placement of marker balls on wire spans. SCE would evaluate the FAA recommendations for reasonableness and feasibility; and in accordance with Title 14, Part 77 of the CFR, SCE may petition the FAA for a discretionary review of its determination to address any concerns. FAA determinations for permanent structures are typically valid for 18 months; therefore, such notifications would be filed upon completion of final engineering and before construction commences.

5.1.3 Applicant Proposed Measures

The Proposed Project does not include any APMs related to Aesthetics.

5.1.4 CEQA Significance Criteria

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR 15000 et seq.) provides guidance on assessing whether a project would have significant impacts on the environment. Consistent with Appendix G, the Proposed Project would have significant aesthetic impacts if it would:

- a. Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista*
- b. Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway*
- c. In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings and in an urbanized area, would conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality*
- d. Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.*

5.1.5 Methodology

The Proposed Project would be located on land under various jurisdictions, including state and local governments as well as federal agencies, most notably the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the National Park Service (NPS). Table 5.1-1, Jurisdictions Crossed by the ELM Project, identifies the amount of land crossed by the project that is administered by various jurisdictions. BLM manages 58.4 percent of the land crossed by the project and NPS manages 15.9 percent. Overall, federal agencies manage nearly 75 percent of the land crossed by the project. The major new elements that would be introduced into

the visual environment as a result of the project are primarily on federal land. Notably, the Newberry Springs capacitor facility and most of the distribution power and telecommunication link between the Newberry Springs capacitor facility and the Ludlow capacitor facility, and two of the three optic fiber repeaters are on federal land. The Barstow repeater and the Ludlow capacitor facility are on private land.

Table 5.1-1. Jurisdictions Crossed by the ELM Project

Line	BLM	NPS	DoD	Bureau of Reclamation	California State Lands Commission	Private	Total (miles)
Lugo-Mohave 500 kV	88.3	48	1.1	0.6	4.7	33.1	175.8
Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV	49.5	0	0	0	0	9.9	59.4
Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV*	40.4	0.6	1	0	1	27.1	70.1
Ludlow & Newberry Springs capacitor link	0.9	0	0	0	0	0.4	1.3
Total line miles	179.1	48.6	2.1	0.6	5.7	70.5	306.6

*Includes only the portion of line included in the ELM project

The BLM develops and uses its Visual Resource Inventory/Visual Resource Management (VRI/VRM) methodology to inventory and classify lands with respect to visual quality and to assign management classes. The NPS uses its VRI methodology to establish a Scenic Quality Rating and View Importance Rating, which are used to establish a Scenic Inventory Value. However, the NPS methodology is under development. The CPUC has not adopted a specific method for assessing visual character and quality under CEQA. Therefore, the BLM methodology was used on BLM and NPS lands, as well as on private land.

NPS Visual Resource Program

The NPS Visual Resource Program (VRP) is under development. In conversations with the NPS, it was determined that the BLM VRI/VRM approach would be appropriate for assessing the visual impacts of the Proposed Project as the planned project activities on NPS land are associated with existing 500 kV transmission lines (NPS, 2018).

BLM Visual Resource Management

Based on the outcome of the Visual Resource Inventory (VRI), the VRM system identifies four 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 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 5.1-2 presents the VRM scenic quality rating components that are evaluated to arrive at one of three scenic quality ratings (A, B, or C) for a given landscape. Each landscape component is scored, and a score of 19 or higher results in a Class A scenic quality rating. A score of 12 to 18 results in a Class B scenic quality rating, while a score of 11 or less results in a Class C scenic quality rating. The three scenic quality classes are 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.

Table 5.1-2. 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.	Steep canyons, mesas, buttes, cinder cones, and drumlins; interesting erosional patterns or variety in size and shape of landforms; or detail features, which are interesting though not dominant or exceptional.	Low rolling hills, foothills, or flat valley bottoms or few or no interesting landscape features.	
	5	3	1	
Vegetation	A variety of vegetative types as expressed in interesting forms, textures, and patterns.	Some variety of vegetation but only one or two major types.	Little or no variety or contrast in vegetation.	
	5	3	1	
Water	Clear and clean appearing, still, or cascading white water, any of which are a dominant factor in the landscape.	Flowing, or still, but not dominant in the landscape.	Absent or present but not noticeable.	
	5	3	0	
Color	Rich color combinations; variety or vivid color; or pleasing contrasts in the soil, rock, vegetation, water, or snowfields.	Some intensity or variety in colors and contrast of the soil, rock, and vegetation but not a dominant scenic element.	Subtle color variations, contrast, or interest; generally muted tones.	
	5	3	1	
Influence of Adjacent Scenery	Adjacent scenery greatly enhances visual quality.	Adjacent scenery moderately enhances overall visual quality.	Adjacent scenery has little or no influence on overall visual quality.	
	5	3	0	
Scarcity	One of a kind, unusually memorable, or very rare within region. Consistent chance for exceptional wildlife or wildflower viewing, etc.	Distinctive, though somewhat similar to others within the region.	Interesting within its setting but fairly common within the region.	
	5+*	3	1	
Cultural Modifications	Modifications add favorably to visual variety while promoting visual harmony.	Modifications add little or no visual variety to the area and introduce no discordant elements.	Modifications add variety but are very discordant and promote strong disharmony.	
	2	0	-4	
Scenic Quality Rating: A = 19 or more B = 12 to 18 C = 11 or less				

*A rating of greater than 5 can be given but must be supported by written justification

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 5.1-3), public interest, adjacent land uses, and whether the landscape is part of a special area (e.g., California Desert Conservation Area [CDCA]).

Table 5.1-3. Amount of Use Classifications

Type Area	High	Moderate	Low
Roads & highways	More than 45,000 visits/year	5,000 to 45,000 visits/year	Less than 5,000 visits/year
Rivers & trails	More than 20,000 visits/year	2,000-20,000 visits/year	Less than 2,000 visits/year
Recreation sites	More than 10,000 visitor-days/year	2,000-10,000 visitor-days/year	Less than 2,000 visitor-days/year

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/middle ground (f/m) viewing distance (see Table 5.1-4).
- **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 (b) viewing distance (see Table 5.1-4).
- **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.

Viewing Distance Zones. Landscapes are generally subdivided into three distance zones based on relative visibility from travel routes or observation points (see Table 5.1-4). The foreground/middle ground zone includes areas that are up to 5 miles from the viewing location. This zone defines the area in which landscape details transition from readily perceived to outlines and patterns. The background zone is generally greater than five but less than 15 miles from the viewing location. This zone includes areas where landforms are the most dominant element in the landscape, and color and texture become subordinate. Within this distance zone, vegetation would be visible at least as patterns of light and dark. The seldom-seen zone 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 zone.

Table 5.1-4. Distance Zones

f/m – foreground/middle ground	0 to 5 miles
b – background	5–15 miles
s/s – seldom seen	seldom seen areas

The Visual Resource Management class for a given area is typically arrived at through the use of a classification matrix similar to that presented in Table 5.1-5. By comparing the scenic quality, visual sensitivity, and distance zone, 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 5.1-5. 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	III*	III	IV	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

*If adjacent areas are Class III or lower, assign Class III; if higher, assign Class IV.

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 in the predominant natural features of the characteristic landscape.

Project Visual Depiction

On non-federal lands, project components were evaluated using similar criteria as on federal lands, namely, form line, color, texture, and degree of contrast. On federal lands, Proposed Project components were assessed for their compatibility with the VRM objectives for its respective VRM class. Attachment 5.1-B, BLM Visual Contrast Rating Worksheets, contains the worksheets prepared for each KOP.

To aid in the evaluation of key project components, visual simulations were prepared from each of the six KOPs for the Proposed Project. These are provided in Attachment 5.1-C, Visual Simulations. The six KOPs are a selected subset of the viewpoints portrayed in the 21 representative photographs of the project vicinity. The simulations for these locations allow a comparison of the existing view with and without the project in place. The simulation images portray the location, scale, and appearance of the Proposed Project as seen from the six publicly accessible KOPs. These locations were selected to represent views of major project elements as seen by the largest number of viewers, primarily along public roadways. Taken together, the simulations illustrate the representative visual change associated with the Proposed Project.

The computer-generated visual simulations were developed using engineering design data for the Proposed Project. This data was supplied by SCE and includes a range of possible heights for proposed structures. These proposed structures are simulated at the tallest end of the height ranges in order to portray the Proposed Project's greatest potential visibility.

As described for KOP 1 below, some project activities to address clearance issues would require minor work at the ground level or involve lowering of some electric lines passing under the 500 kV transmission lines. In all, there are 16 actions at 14 widely scattered locations. In the context of surrounding visual elements (e.g., existing conductors, LSTs, distribution poles, and roads), most were considered to represent minor changes in the visible landscape having a nominal and highly localized visual impact. One exception would be locations where towers would be raised. In Section 4, Project Description, Figure 4.19 (Use of a Body Extension to Raise a Tower) illustrates how a lattice steel tower would appear before and after being raised. It would elevate the top of the tower, but not substantially alter its overall appearance.

A major aspect of the Proposed Project would be replacement of an existing overhead ground wire (OHGW) between Lugo and Mohave Substations and Mohave and Eldorado Substations with an optical ground wire (OPGW) at the same position on the LSTs. The visual impact of exchanging one ground wire for another would have little visual impact outside of the short-term visual impact associated with the presence of personnel and equipment required to remove and replace the ground wire. The somewhat heavier OPGW and the need for minor tower repairs at some locations would require the installation of additional steel members on selected towers. For OPGW support and tower strengthening, this would include the installation of small steel X-shaped pieces at the peak of some towers and larger steel X-shaped cross pieces in the body of the towers. This additional steel would be similar in form to the existing steel and to a viewer would not result in a noticeably different structure. As explained in the Impact Analysis section that follows, requirements addressing the potential reflectance of the new steel ensure that impacts would be less than significant.

KOP 1 – Discrepancy⁷ Work Area at Towers M14-T3 to M14-T4

The visual simulation for KOP 1 shows the view of the Proposed Project from Bowen Ranch Road, approximately 0.4 miles from where Tower M14-T4 would be raised to address two clearance discrepancies on the Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line. As shown in the simulation, Tower M14-T4 would be modified and raised approximately 20 feet. From this viewpoint, several LSTs on the Eldorado-Lugo and Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Lines would be visible. Motorists using this roadway, which is used mainly for local access to residential properties in the area, would have occasional and temporary views of the existing and modified LSTs. As shown in the simulation, the modified LSTs would be taller, but would not change substantially in form from other existing LSTs, and would continue the pattern of LSTs within the area.

Tower M14-T4 is not located on BLM-managed land; however, a Visual Contrast Rating Worksheet for this KOP was prepared and is in Attachment 5.1-B, BLM Visual Contrast Rating Worksheets. If on federal land, the location would be considered VRM Class III. The contrast rating of this Proposed Project com-

⁷ SCE has defined "discrepancies" as potential clearance problems between an energized conductor and its surroundings, such as the structure, another energized conductor on the same structure, a different line, or the ground. SCE has identified approximately 16 discrepancies at 14 locations along the Eldorado-Lugo, Eldorado-Mohave, and Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Lines, where minor grading, or relocation, replacement, or modification of transmission, subtransmission, or distribution facilities is needed to address CPUC G.O. 95 and National Electrical Safety Code overhead clearance requirements.

ponent is relatively weak, due to the presence of existing transmission lines in the viewshed. While the modified tower would be taller, it would continue the form, color, and pattern of the existing transmission lines and, therefore, would result in low contrast with existing conditions.

Similar conclusions apply to the other nine LSTs that would be raised as part of the project. Tower raisings would be in largely undeveloped areas and would adjust the height of an existing visual element in the viewshed, which is a line with similar LSTs supporting the transmission line. This is consistent with the VRM Class III objective, which is to partially maintain the character of the landscape and allow management changes that repeat the basic element found in the existing environment.

Other actions to address clearance discrepancies at discrete locations include removing 3.5 feet of concrete below the conductors at one location, grading a berm by 3 feet at another location, modifying conductor sags in two locations, and reframing and lowering power lines beneath the 500 kV Transmission Lines at two locations. These were considered minor changes in the landscape that would create minimal to no visual change in existing views at these locations, which are dominated by existing LSTs, conductors, and access roads in the ROW.

KOP 2 – Barstow Fiber Optic Repeater Site

The visual simulation for KOP 2 shows the location of the proposed Barstow Fiber Optic Repeater site along the Eldorado-Lugo and Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Lines, approximately 0.4 miles east of SR-247. As shown, the proposed facility, including the equipment building and perimeter fencing, would be visible from this County of San Bernardino-designated scenic route. Motorists on Barstow Road would be the main viewer group, along with the residents living in the neighboring scattered residential properties, the nearest of which is approximately 1,000 feet to the north. Though the residential viewers would have a relatively sustained view of the new Barstow Fiber Optic Repeater facility, motorists traveling along the roadway would have temporary views of the new facility and the view duration would be short. The proposed Barstow Fiber Optic Repeater facility would be relatively small and adjacent to two LSTs that dominate the immediate view. The surrounding mountains are distant, and views of the mountains would not be affected.

The proposed Barstow Fiber Optic Repeater site is not on BLM-managed land. However, a Visual Contrast Rating Worksheet for this KOP was prepared to assess the visual contrast of the proposed repeater facility. The overall contrast rating of this project component is weak. Due to the distance of the fiber optic repeater facility from the KOP location, the building enclosing the mechanical equipment would be the single visible component. The building would appear as a solid, light brown form and would continue the existing pattern in the area that is created by the scattered residential buildings and equipment storage nearby. The repeater facility is of a similar height as other structures in the general area. With an appropriate colored exterior for the building, the facility integrates well into the existing surroundings and would not contrast with the visual character of the surrounding landscape. The facility is consistent with the VRM Class III objective, which is to partially maintain the character of the landscape and allow management changes that repeat the basic element found in the existing environment.

KOP 3 – Newberry Springs Series Capacitor Site

The visual simulation for KOP 3 shows the proposed Newberry Springs Series Capacitor along the Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line. This site is northeast of the existing Pisgah Substation (visible in the right center of the photograph), and would be visible from several roadways, including I-40, the National Trails Highway (Route 66), Pisgah Road, and Pisgah Crater Road. The proposed mid-line series capacitor facility would be located approximately 0.6 miles from I-40 and would be visible from these

roadways, but primarily to passing motorists on the two highways. The proposed facility includes a capacitor bank located on a platform in the center of the site. As an example, see Figure 5.1-1, Devers–Red Bluff 500 kV Mid-Line Capacitor, which shows A-frame or H-frame dead-end structures located on either side of the capacitor bank to transition the conductor into and out of the capacitor. The conductor would extend from existing LSTs through the new the dead-end structures to loop in and out of the facility. The overhead ground wire above the conductor would span over the capacitor facility, between the existing LSTs on either side. The entire facility would be surrounded by an 8-foot-tall chain-link fence. The facility would be visible within the transmission line ROW. In this vicinity, existing 500 and 220 kV LSTs and Pisgah Substation are also visible. The capacitor site is near the BNSF rail line and a train is visible behind the proposed capacitor facility.

Motorists would have short duration and partial views of the proposed facility, particularly along I-40, where travel speeds are typically 70+ miles per hour. As seen in the visual simulation, views of the mountains would not be blocked by the facility due to the distance between the proposed Newberry Springs Series Capacitor and the mountains, the distance between the highways and the facility, and the facility's relatively low profile. The facility would not be a source of glare as long as the equipment and structures installed are grey or another neutral color and steel surfaces are nonspecular (reflecting light diffusely and evenly from surfaces).

The Newberry Springs facility is on BLM land in a VRM Class III area. To assess the visual contrast of the Proposed Project, the visual simulation for KOP 3 was analyzed using the Visual Contrast Rating Worksheet in Attachment 5.1-B, BLM Visual Contrast Rating Worksheets. The overall visual contrast rating of this Proposed Project component is weak to moderate. Due to the location of the proposed facility within a ROW near an existing substation and multiple LSTs, the proposed facility repeats elements that are already visible in the viewshed. Therefore, the proposed mid-line series capacitor integrates into the existing surroundings and would not contrast with the visual character of the surrounding landscape. The facility is consistent with the VRM Class III objective, which is to partially maintain the character of the landscape and allow management changes that repeat the basic element found in the existing environment.

KOP 4 – Ludlow Series Capacitor Site

The visual simulation for KOP 4 shows the location of the proposed Ludlow Series Capacitor along the Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line. The site is approximately 1.3 miles east of the Newberry Springs capacitor site. The Ludlow capacitor facility would be visible to the public, and primarily to motorists traveling on I-40, which is approximately 0.6 miles distant. As shown in the simulation, the proposed mid-line series capacitor would be visible primarily to passing motorists. There are no residences or roads in close proximity to the site. The proposed facility includes the relatively solid-looking capacitor bank, similar to the Newberry Springs facility, which is located on a platform in the center of the site. A transmission dead-end structure would be located on either side of the capacitor bank, connecting the capacitor to the transmission line and the overhead ground wire will span the site between the existing LSTs on the other side. Also visible in the visual simulation is the tan-colored Mechanical Electrical Equipment Room (MEER) building associated with the mid-line series capacitor. The entire facility is surrounded by an approximately 8-foot-tall chain-link fence. The new facility would be visible within the transmission line ROW where existing LSTs of the Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line are also visible.

Due to travel speeds of 70+ mph, motorists would have temporary, and in some locations, partial views of the facility, and their views would be short in duration. As shown in the simulation, views of the surrounding mountains would not be affected due to their distance from the proposed Ludlow Series Capacitor and its relatively low profile against the mountainous backdrop.

A line of wooden 12 kV distribution poles would be installed between the two capacitor facilities. At a distance of over a half mile the pole would be only nominally distinguishable against the ground that rises behind the site toward the distant mountains. Their color would be similar to the natural tones of the landscape.

Although surrounded by BLM-administered land, the Ludlow capacitor site is on a section of private land. As shown in Figure 5.1-3, BLM Visual Resource Management Classes, the proposed Ludlow Series Capacitor site would be considered a VRM Class III area. To assess the visual contrast of the Ludlow facility, the visual simulation for KOP 4 was analyzed using the Visual Contrast Rating Worksheet in Attachment 5.1-B, BLM Visual Contrast Rating Worksheets. Similar to the Newberry Springs facility, the contrast rating of the Ludlow facility is weak to moderate. Due to the location of the proposed facility within a ROW with existing LSTs, the proposed facility integrates into the existing surroundings and would not contrast with the visual character of the surrounding landscape. The Proposed Project is consistent with the VRM Class III objective, which is to partially maintain the character of the landscape and allow management changes that repeat the basic element found in the existing environment.

KOP 5 – Kelbaker Fiber Optic Repeater Site

The visual simulation for KOP 5 shows the location of the proposed Kelbaker Fiber Optic Repeater site along the Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line. The site is within the Mojave National Preserve approximately 0.2 miles east of Kelbaker Road, which is a County of San Bernardino-designated scenic route. As shown in the simulation, the proposed facility, including the equipment building and perimeter fencing, would be visible adjacent to the existing LST visible in the center of the photograph. Motorists traveling on Kelbaker Road would be the main viewer group, but they would have short-duration views of the proposed Kelbaker Fiber Optic Repeater facility. As shown in the background of the simulation, views of the mountains would not be affected due to the relatively small size and low profile of the facility and its distance from the mountains.

Not visible in this view is a natural gas pipeline facility to the west of Kelbaker Road, just north of the transmission line (visible in characterization Photograph 11 in Attachment 5-1A). The existing natural gas facility, distribution line along the road, and the Lugo-Mohave Transmission Line are all visible to passing motorists. Similar to the existing wooden pole supported distribution line along Kelbaker Road, 6 new wooden distribution poles would be installed at the edge of the 500 kV ROW between the road and the repeater facility to provide power. These are not shown in the simulation but are similar to the wooden distribution poles between Kelbaker Road and the natural gas facility, as seen in Photograph 11 in Attachment 5-1A.

The proposed Kelbaker Fiber Optic Repeater site is located on a site with VRM Class III characteristics. To assess the visual contrast of the Proposed Project, the visual simulation for KOP 5 was analyzed using the Visual Contrast Rating Worksheet in Attachment 5.1-B, BLM Visual Contrast Rating Worksheets. The overall contrast rating of this Proposed Project component is weak. Due to the distance of the fiber optic repeater facility from the KOP location, the building enclosing the mechanical equipment would be the single visible component. The building would appear as a solid form, which is a new element in the viewshed, but it is partially hidden by intervening vegetation in the view. If a neutral color, the structure would not stand out. Because the proposed fiber optic repeater would be located adjacent to an existing LST within the existing ROW, the facility is somewhat integrated into the existing surroundings and would not contrast with the visual character of the surrounding landscape. The Proposed Project is consistent with the VRM Class III objective, which is to partially maintain the character of the landscape and allow management changes.

KOP 6 – Lanfair Fiber Optic Repeater Site

The visual simulation for KOP 6 shows the location of the proposed Lanfair Fiber Optic Repeater site along the Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line. The site is within the Mojave National Preserve approximately 0.4 miles east of Lanfair Road, which is a County of San Bernardino-designated scenic route. As shown in the simulation, the proposed facility, including the equipment building and perimeter fencing, would be visible on the far side of an existing LST. Motorists traveling along Lanfair Road would be the main viewer group, and this group would experience views of the proposed Lanfair Fiber Optic Repeater facility that would be temporary and short in duration. As shown in the background of the simulation, views of Signal Hill would not be impacted due to the relatively small size and low profile of the facility and its distance from Signal Hill.

Similar to the existing distribution line supported by a wooden pole along the east side of Lanfair Road, 16 new wooden distribution poles would be installed at the edge of the 500 kV ROW between the road and the repeater facility to provide power. These are not shown in the simulation but are similar to the wooden distribution poles between Kelbaker Road and the natural gas facility, as seen in Photograph 11 in Attachment 5-1A.

The proposed Lanfair Fiber Optic Repeater site is located on a site with VRM Class III characteristics. To assess the visual contrast of the Proposed Project, the visual simulation for KOP 6 was analyzed using the Visual Contrast Rating Worksheet in Attachment 5.1-B, BLM Visual Contrast Rating Worksheets. The overall contrast rating of this Proposed Project component is weak. Due to the distance of the fiber optic repeater facility from the KOP location, the building enclosing the mechanical equipment would be the single visible component. The building would appear as a solid, light brown form, which is a new element in the viewshed. The facility would be located adjacent to an existing LST, and from this KOP, be visible directly behind the LST. Because of its proximity to the existing LST, the facility is integrated into the existing surroundings and would not contrast with the visual character of the surrounding landscape. The Proposed Project is consistent with the VRM Class III objective, which is to partially maintain the character of the landscape and allow management changes.

5.1.6 Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

a. Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION. There are no designated State or local scenic vistas in the Proposed Project area. However, there are scenic views throughout the Proposed Project vicinity, due to the undeveloped desert open spaces and unimpeded views of the surrounding mountains. As shown in Attachment 5.1-C, Visual Simulations, the simulations of KOPs 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 show the proposed permanent facilities in relation to views of the surrounding mountains. The proposed mid-line series capacitors and fiber optic repeater sites would be located mainly within existing ROWs that include existing access roads, substations, transmission lines, and LSTs. The proposed facilities would be relatively small compared to the mountains in the background, and would not impede on the views of the mountains. In addition, the facilities are consistent with applicable VRM classes and objectives. However, the facilities have structures and equipment that have the potential to have reflective surfaces or to be of colors that would contrast with their surrounding visual environment. Therefore, Mitigation Measure AES-1 is required to ensure that facility colors do not contrast with the hues of the surrounding landscape and that steel and other surfaces minimize reflectance.

The FAA may require installation of 36-inch diameter marker balls on spans and lights on towers to make them visible to pilots if it determines that spans and towers pose a hazard to air navigation. These would have an effect on the visual environment. Six transmission line spans (i.e., catenaries) between Lugo Substation and Interstate 40 will exceed 200 feet above ground level. Two spans are in uninhabited hilly terrain between the Mojave River and Highway 18, approximately 1.3 and 6.6 miles east of the Mojave River. Two spans are at Highway 18 west of Joshua Road. The final two spans are approximately 15 miles northeast of Lucerne Valley, 1.3 miles east of Camp Rock Road along Powerline Road. SCE submitted Form 7460-1 to the FAA for these towers and spans, providing location, elevation, and height-about-ground information. FAA conducted an aeronautical study and determined that the catenary wires and towers do not exceed FAA obstruction standards and would not be a hazard to air navigation. As a result, marking and lighting are not necessary (FAA, 2019).

SCE has identified a number of potential construction and material yards, the visibility of these yards from off-site locations and the number of potential viewers varies. Although not a permanent use, the sites may be occupied and used for approximately 18 months during construction. This could create a visual condition that contrasts with existing conditions in the vicinity. To address this potential effect, Mitigation Measure AES-2, Screen construction activities from view, would be required.

Construction of permanent facilities will require site grading and installation of gravel, rock, or other ground surface material. There is a risk of disturbing more area than is required for the facility to be installed. Likewise, structural work on towers and the removal of OHGW and installation of OPGW will require land disturbance to accommodate workers, materials, and equipment around affected towers and at pull-sites required to install the ground wire. This disturbance may include work site grading and/or drive and crush (driving over and crushing existing vegetation). To ensure that vegetation removal and ground disturbance is minimized, Mitigation Measure AES-3, Minimize vegetation removal and ground disturbance, is required.

With implementation of these measures, impacts on scenic vistas are less than significant with mitigation.

Operation and Maintenance

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. O&M activities associated with the Proposed Project would be similar to those currently performed by SCE for existing facilities, and generally include repairing conductors, washing or replacing insulators, repairing or replacing other hardware components, repairing or replacing poles and towers, vegetation and weed management, and access road maintenance, among other things. O&M practices would also include routine inspections and emergency repair within substations and ROWs, which would require the use of vehicles and equipment. Vehicles and crews would be on-site for short periods during these activities. For the fiber optic repeater facilities, additional testing, inspections, and maintenance of the building, site, generator, and fuel tank would also be required every six months to once a year. None of these routine O&M activities would impact scenic vistas.

Mitigation Measures

AES-1 Minimize visual contrast in project design. In the final design of approved project structures, SCE shall use design fundamentals that reduce the visual contrast of new facilities with the characteristic landscape. These include surface treatments; siting and location; reduction of visibility; repetition of form, line, color, and texture of the landscape; and reduction of unnecessary disturbance. New and modified transmission structures shall be of a dulled galvanized steel consistent with that of existing structures. SCE shall treat the surfaces of other structures and new buildings visible to the public such that: (a) their colors minimize visual contrast by blending with the characteristic landscape colors; and (b) their

colors and finishes do not create excessive glare. The steel used to repair or strengthen structures, new steel structures, and conductors, and OPGW shall have surfaces that are non-specular and non-reflective. Project elements with colored surfaces shall be in hues and tones that do not contrast with the surrounding landscape and are consistent with the palette of natural colors that occur in the area.

SCE shall provide for review by the CPUC, BLM, and NPS, a draft Project Design and Surface Treatment Plan describing the siting, placement, and other design considerations to be employed to minimize Proposed Project contrast. The draft plan must explain how the design will minimize visual intrusion and contrast by effectively blending earthwork, vegetation manipulation, and facilities with the landscape. The Project Design and Surface Treatment Plan shall describe the colors and textures to be applied to all new facility structures, buildings, walls, fences, and components to be constructed.

The draft Project Design and Surface Treatment Plan shall be submitted at least 60 days prior to the start of construction. If a reviewing agency 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.

AES-2 Screen construction activities from view. To reduce significant impacts associated with construction yards, staging areas, and material and equipment storage areas shall be visually screened using temporary screening fencing, with the exception of construction yards, staging areas, and material and equipment storage areas on existing substation properties. Fencing will be of an appropriate structure, material, and color for each specific location. This requirement shall not apply if SCE can demonstrate that construction yards are located away from areas of high public visibility including public roads, residential areas, and public recreational facilities or the yards are in areas where high winds pose a risk of the screening detaching and creating a hazard. For any site that SCE proposes to exempt from the screening requirement, SCE shall define the site on a detailed map demonstrating its visibility from nearby roads, residences, or recreational facilities to the agency having jurisdiction over the land (CPUC, BLM, or NPS) for review and approval at least 60 days prior to the start of construction at that site.

AES-3 Minimize vegetation removal and ground disturbance. Only the minimum amount of vegetation necessary for the construction of structures and facilities shall be removed during construction. In particular, vegetation within the ROW and ground clearing at the foot of each tower and between towers shall be limited to the clearing necessary to comply with requirements of CPUC General Order 95 and other regulatory requirements. Scars from temporary work areas and access road may be highly visible when located on hill slopes and along ridges, or when visible from elevated vantage points. In order to reduce visual impacts, the boundaries of all areas to be disturbed shall be delineated consistent with the requirements of Biological Resources Mitigation Measure BR-3. Staking, flagging, or other appropriate means shall define construction work areas, such as capacitor site grading areas, staging yards, and pulling sites. Stakes and flagging shall be installed before construction and in consultation with the Project Biologist and the agency's Environmental Monitor or Visual Specialist. Areas staked or flagged shall be as small as possible in order to minimize the visibility of ground disturbance from sensitive viewing locations such as roads, trails, residences, and recreation facilities and areas. Parking areas and staging and disposal site locations shall be similarly located in areas approved by the Project Biologist and the agency's Environmental Monitor or Visual Specialist prior to the start of construction. All disturbances by Proposed Project vehicles and equipment shall be confined to the staked and flagged areas.

BR-7 **Restore or revegetate temporary disturbance areas.** (The full text of this mitigation measure is provided in Section 5.4, Biological Resources. It would require restoration and revegetation of disturbed areas, which would reduce visual impacts.)

b. Would the project substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a State scenic highway?

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION. There are no designated State Scenic Highways in the Proposed Project area, and therefore there would be no impact to these such highways. However, there are several locally designated scenic roadways, particularly within San Bernardino County, and the National Trails Highway (Route 66) is nominated as a National Scenic Byway. During construction of the Proposed Project, construction crews, trucks, and equipment would be visible from locally designated scenic roadways. The temporary activities and equipment — including cranes and helicopters — would be visible from County of San Bernardino-designated scenic roadways, including Coxey Truck Trail, SR-18, SR-247, Kelbaker Road, Essex Road, Black Canyon Road, and Lanfair Road. These activities would also be visible at the US-95, I-40, and National Trails Highway (Route 66) crossings of the 500 kV transmission lines. Construction activities associated with the Proposed Project would be temporary, lasting weeks or months for the capacitors and repeaters, and a day or two along the linear components before moving onto the next segment.

Construction of the proposed Newberry Springs and Ludlow Series Capacitors would be viewed from I-40. The Newberry Springs Series Capacitor site can also be viewed from the National Trails Highway (Route 66). However, the Newberry Springs Capacitor site, which is approximately 0.6 miles from I-40 and the National Trails Highway (Route 66), would be viewed among the existing LSTs of the Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line, Pisgah Substation, and other poles and LSTs in the surroundings. Viewed in the context of these existing facilities, the impacts would be incremental and do not affect views of the mountains in the background. Similarly, the proposed Ludlow Series Capacitor would be visible from I-40 and partially visible from sections of the National Trails Highway (Route 66). As shown in the visual simulation for KOP 4, this facility would be located approximately 0.6 miles from I-40. The proposed Ludlow Series Capacitor and the proposed MEER building would be viewed in the presence of the existing LSTs, which would result in an incremental change in the viewshed, but would not affect the views of the mountains in the background.

The proposed Barstow, Kelbaker, and Lanfair Fiber Optic Repeater facilities would be visible from County of San Bernardino-designated scenic roadways — SR-247, Kelbaker Road, and Lanfair Road, respectively. Visual simulations of the facilities are shown in KOPs 2, 5, and 6 in Attachment 5.1-C, Visual Simulations. As shown in the simulation for KOP 2, the proposed Barstow Fiber Optic Repeater facility would be located approximately 0.4 miles from SR-247 and would be visible in the middle ground of the simulation. However, the facility would be located near existing LSTs, and the facility would be of a similar size as existing residential and outbuildings in the area. The proposed facility would have a relatively low profile and would not conflict with views of the surrounding mountains.

As shown in the simulation for KOP 5 in Attachment 5.1-C, Visual Simulations, the proposed Kelbaker Fiber Optic Repeater facility would be located approximately 0.2 miles from Kelbaker Road and would be visible in the middle ground of the simulation. The facility would be located near an existing LST within SCE's ROW. While this facility is more visible due to its proximity to the roadway, it would be adjacent to an existing tower structure and in relatively close proximity to an existing natural gas facility. The optic repeater facility would have little effect on the views of the surrounding mountains.

As shown in the simulation for KOP 6 in Attachment 5.1-C, Visual Simulations, the proposed Lanfair Fiber Optic Repeater facility would be located approximately 0.4 miles from Lanfair Road and visible in the foreground to middle ground of viewers from the road. As with the other fiber optic repeaters, this facility would be located near existing LSTs within an existing SCE ROW. In this portion of the project area, views of nearby mountains are limited to a single hill. The repeater facility would appear low-lying in the surrounding viewshed and would have little impact on the views in the area. The change in the viewshed would be minor and incremental, and consistent with existing structures in the landscape.

Additional components of the Proposed Project, including removal of overhead ground wire (OHGW) and installation of optical ground wire (OPGW), would take place on existing LSTs along the Eldorado-Mohave and Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Lines. Minor modifications to the LSTs, including the modification of the ground wire peaks and the strengthening of some tower bodies may be necessary to accommodate the new OPGW. While these modifications would be visible from public roadways, including County of San Bernardino-designated scenic roadways, they would not result in appreciable visual alterations to the viewshed. Because none of these roadways are designated as State Scenic Highways, there would be no impact specifically on State Scenic Highways. However, visual impacts to views from county-designated scenic roadways and to views along roads through the Mojave National Preserve can occur. To reduce these adverse effects, Mitigation Measures AES-1, AES-2, and AES-3, described above, and BR-7 described in 5.4 Biological Resources, would be required. Implementation of these measures would reduce the impacts to less than significant with mitigation.

Operation and Maintenance

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. As previously described, O&M activities associated with the Proposed Project would be similar to those currently performed for the existing facilities, though there would be additional O&M activities associated with the proposed mid-line series capacitors and fiber optic repeater facilities. The mid-line series capacitor and fiber optic repeater facilities would be unmanned, but equipment and trucks may be visible from nearby roadways (e.g., I-40, the National Trails Highway (Route 66), SR-247, Kelbaker Road, and Lanfair Road) during maintenance activities. However, maintenance activities would be temporary and short in duration, and due to the distance of the facilities from the roadways, the trucks and equipment would appear small in the distance and would be hidden from view by the facilities themselves, depending on the access road locations. Views of the surrounding natural environment, including mountains in the background of these viewsheds, would not be altered. In addition, because none of these roadways are State Scenic Highways, there would be no impact. Implementation of Mitigation Measures AES-1 and AES-2 would ensure that impacts from project implementation is less than significant. The presence of personnel and equipment at sites during routine O&M would be of short duration and would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

Mitigation measures described above would apply to this impact. These are:

- **AES-1. Minimize visual contrast in project design.**
- **AES-2. Screen construction activities from view.**
- **AES-3. Minimize vegetation removal and ground disturbance.**
- **BR-7. Restore or revegetate temporary disturbance areas.**

- c. In non-urbanized areas, would the project substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?***

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION. During construction, crews, trucks, and equipment would be visible from public roadways and a few residences located close to the existing ROWs. In some locations, staging yards and pulling and tensioning sites also would be visible to the public. In addition to construction at the capacitor and repeater sites, construction activities involving strengthening of towers, addressing clearance discrepancies, and removal of OHGW and installation of OPGW, would take place on existing LSTs along the 500 kV Transmission Lines. Construction activities for these activities would be temporary, lasting a day or two before moving onto the next LST or work site. The short-duration views of these activities — as well as of the trucks, equipment, cranes, helicopters, staging yards, and pulling and tensioning sites — would not degrade the existing visual quality or quality of public views. As explained in the discussion for question (a) above, the only long-term visible elements of the Proposed Project would be the two new mid-line series capacitor facilities north of I-40 near Pisgah Substation and the three fiber optic repeater facilities in the ROW under the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line. Areas used for staging yards would be screened from public views where they are near public viewpoints. Staging yards and pulling and tensioning sites would be restored to previously existing conditions.

The Proposed Project would modify and add facilities to three existing transmission lines located mainly within existing ROWs. The Proposed Project would result in the construction of five new facilities within the ROWs — the Newberry Springs and Ludlow Series Capacitors and the Barstow, Kelbaker, and Lanfair Fiber Optic Repeater facilities. As previously described, the construction of these permanent facilities would have incremental visual impacts on the existing viewshed of the project. The facilities would be adjacent to existing LSTs and access roads associated with the transmission lines. As described in Attachment 5.1-B, BLM Visual Contrast Rating Worksheets, the VRM rating associated with the proposed facilities would be weak to moderate for the mid-line series capacitors and weak for the fiber optic repeater sites. Because of distance from public viewpoints, as well their locations in viewsheds that already include existing transmission facilities, the Proposed Project facilities would be relatively well-integrated into the visual surroundings. In addition, the weak to moderate visual contrast with the surroundings are consistent with the VRM Class III objective. Given the current array of transmission and transportation infrastructure, the capacitor facilities would not substantially degrade the existing visual character of the location or the quality of public views. However, Mitigation Measures AES-1 through AES-3 and BR-7 would be required to protect the existing visual character in non-urban areas and the quality of public views of the project sites through strategies to minimize contrast created by the introduction of structures and ground disturbance. These measures would ensure impacts are minimized. With these measures implemented, impacts would be less than significant with mitigation.

The Proposed Project also includes modifications to the Eldorado-Lugo, Eldorado-Mohave, and Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line LSTs and conductor or grading at 14 locations to address 16 overhead clearance discrepancies. The visual simulation for KOP 1 depicts the visual change associated with modifying (i.e., jacking) LSTs to raise the conductor between the LSTs, resulting in the elimination of the clearance discrepancy. The visual simulation for KOP 1 shows the modification of Tower M14-T4, which would eliminate the height discrepancy between that tower and Towers M14-T3 and M15-1. This modification would be visible from Bowen Ranch Road, a winding local collector road that is mainly used

by local residents. As shown in the simulation, Tower M14-T4 would be raised by approximately 20 feet to approximately 155 feet in height. Because the tower was previously existing and is part of a pattern of existing towers associated with the two transmission lines in this ROW, the impact of raising both the LST and the conductor is an incremental change from the existing conditions. In terms of the contrast rating, the contrast associated with the tower modification is relatively weak, and is consistent with the VRM Class III objective (like the other proposed permanent facilities). In addition, minor modifications to the LSTs, including the installation of goat peaks (4-by-10-foot lattice structures at the top of some towers), may be necessary to facilitate the new OPGW, but would not result in appreciable visual alterations to the viewshed. As a result, the permanent changes associated with the Proposed Project would be less than significant.

Operation and Maintenance

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. As previously described, O&M activities associated with the Proposed Project would be similar to those currently performed for the existing facilities, with additional O&M activities associated with the proposed mid-line series capacitors and fiber optic repeater facilities. However, O&M activities associated with these facilities would result in the temporary presence of workers and equipment, which would not be appreciably different from current O&M activities. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

Mitigation measures described above would apply to this impact. These are:

- **AES-1. Minimize visual contrast in project design.**
- **AES-2. Screen construction activities from view.**
- **AES-3. Minimize vegetation removal and ground disturbance.**
- **BR-7. Restore or revegetate temporary disturbance areas.**

d. Would the project create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION. As described above, untreated surfaces of new facilities and materials could create glare during daylight hours. However, mitigation measures regarding surface treatments address this potential. Daylight glare and reflectance would be addressed by implementation of Mitigation Measures AES-1 and AES-2. While construction of the Proposed Project would generally occur during daytime hours, some construction activities may be required to occur at night. Construction activities conducted at night would require the use of floodlights, which have the potential to illuminate properties in the vicinity of construction areas and be visible over great distances in flat terrain. To reduce the impact of nighttime lighting on neighboring properties and night skies, Mitigation Measure AES-4, Minimize night lighting at new project facilities, would be required. Therefore, the impact would be less than significant with mitigation.

Operation and Maintenance

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. As previously described, O&M activities associated with the Proposed Project would be similar to those currently performed for the existing facilities, with additional O&M activities associated with the proposed mid-line series capacitors and fiber optic repeater facilities. The proposed mid-line series capacitors and the fiber optic repeaters would utilize occasional outdoor yard lighting in

the event of an emergency, or when required for O&M. As described in Chapter 4, Project Description, the lighting would be controlled by a manual switch, which would normally be in the “off” position, and would be directed downward to avoid glare. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant during O&M.

Mitigation Measures

Mitigation measures described above would apply to this impact. These are:

- **AES-1. Minimize visual contrast in project design.**
- **AES-2. Screen construction activities from view.**

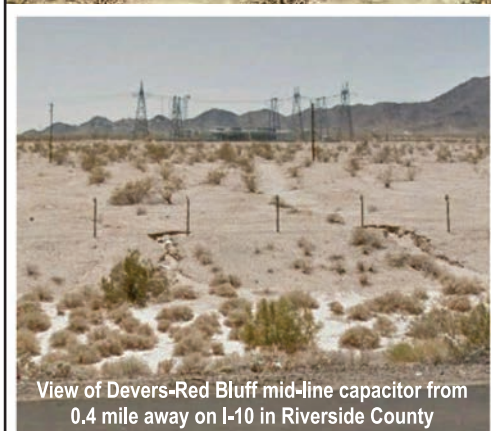
In addition, Mitigation Measure AES-4 would be required.

AES-4 Minimize night lighting at new project facilities. At the project’s new in-line series capacitors and fiber optic repeater facilities, SCE shall avoid night lighting where possible and minimize its use under all circumstances. To ensure this, SCE shall implement the following general principles and specifications:

- When used, portable truck-mounted lighting shall point away from roads and from residences within 1,000 feet.
- White lighting (metal halide & LED) (a) shall be used only when necessitated by specific work tasks; and (b) shall be less than 5000 Kelvin color temperature.
- All lamp locations, orientations, and intensities shall be the minimum needed for safety and security.
- Light fixtures that could be visible from beyond project facility boundaries shall have cutoff angles sufficient to prevent lamps and reflectors from being visible beyond the project facility boundary, including security lighting.
- If security lighting is installed, motion sensors are to be used to activate the security lighting; lights shall operate continuously only when the area is occupied.
- All temporary construction lighting, including at yards, and all permanent exterior lighting shall include: (a) lamps and reflectors that are not visible from beyond the construction site or facility including any off-site security buffer areas; (b) lighting that does not cause excessive reflected glare; and (c) directed lighting that does not illuminate the nighttime sky, except for required FAA aircraft safety lighting, if required.
- Lighted nighttime maintenance is to be minimized or avoided as a routine practice and should occur only during emergencies.

5.1.7 References

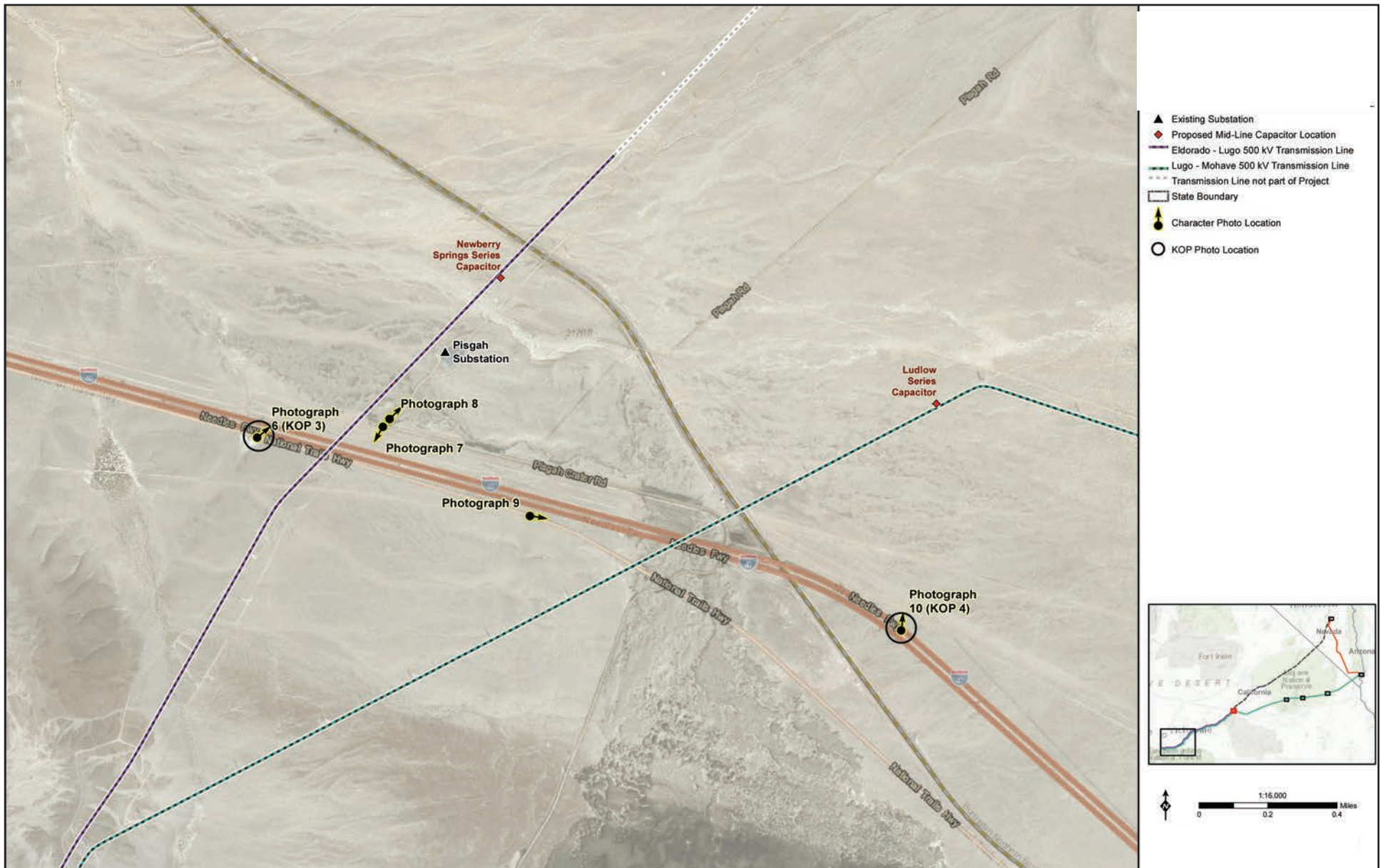
- FAA (Federal Aviation Agency). 2019. Determinations of No Hazard to Air Navigation (letters).
- NPS (National Park Service). 2018. Email communication with Mark Meyer, NPS Visual Resource Specialist.
- SCE (Southern California Edison). 2018. Eldorado-Lugo-Mohave Series Capacitor Project: Proponent’s Environmental Assessment (PEA). Volumes 1 through 8. April.



View of Devers-Red Bluff mid-line capacitor from
0.4 mile away on I-10 in Riverside County

Source: SCE, 2018.

Figure 5.1-1
Devers-Red Bluff
500kV Mid-Line Capacitor



Source: SCE, 2018.

Figure 5.1-2
Viewpoint Locations
Map 2 of 7



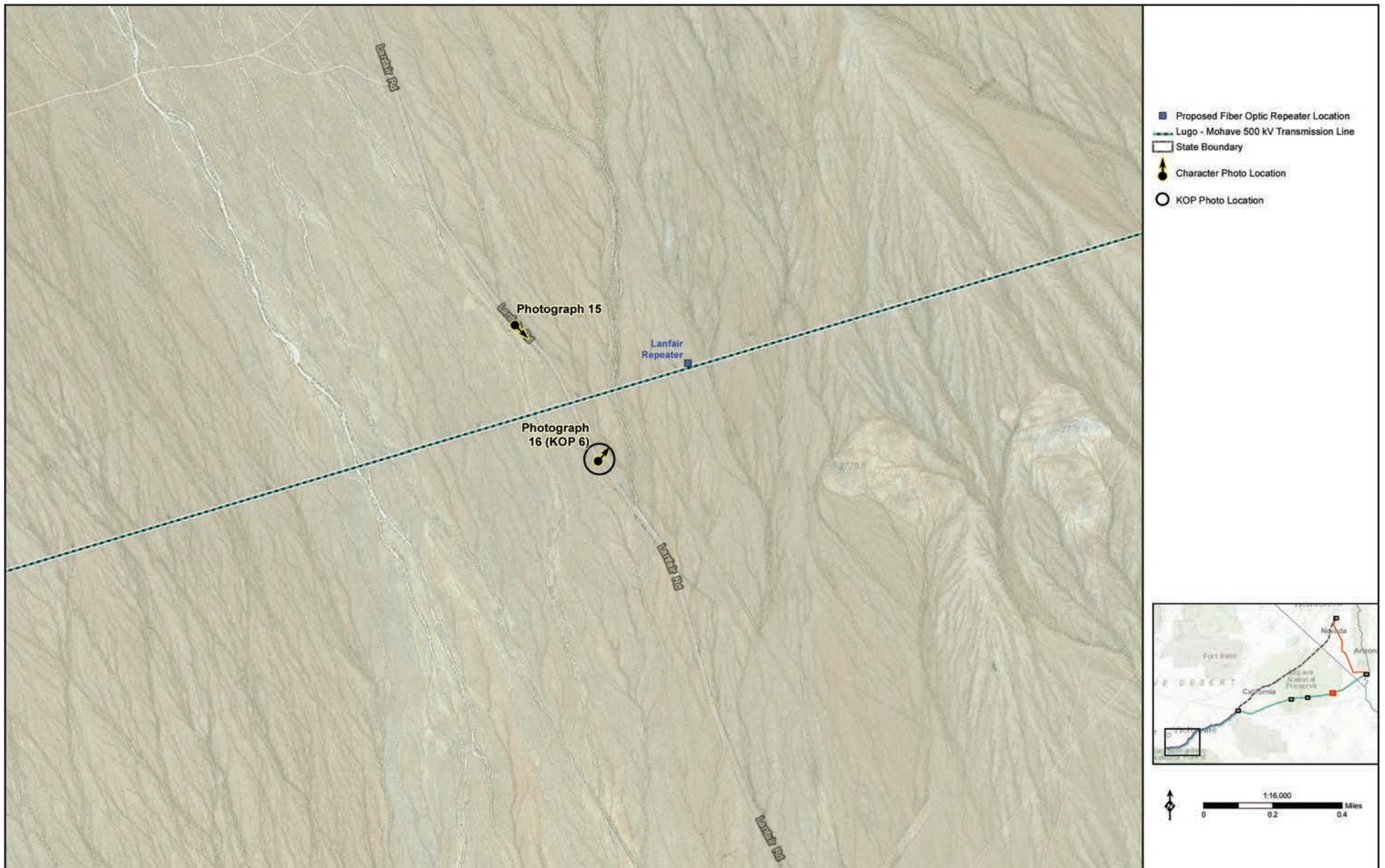
Source: SCE, 2018.

Figure 5.1-2
Viewpoint Locations
Map 3 of 7



Source: SCE, 2018.

Figure 5.1-2
Viewpoint Locations
Map 4 of 7



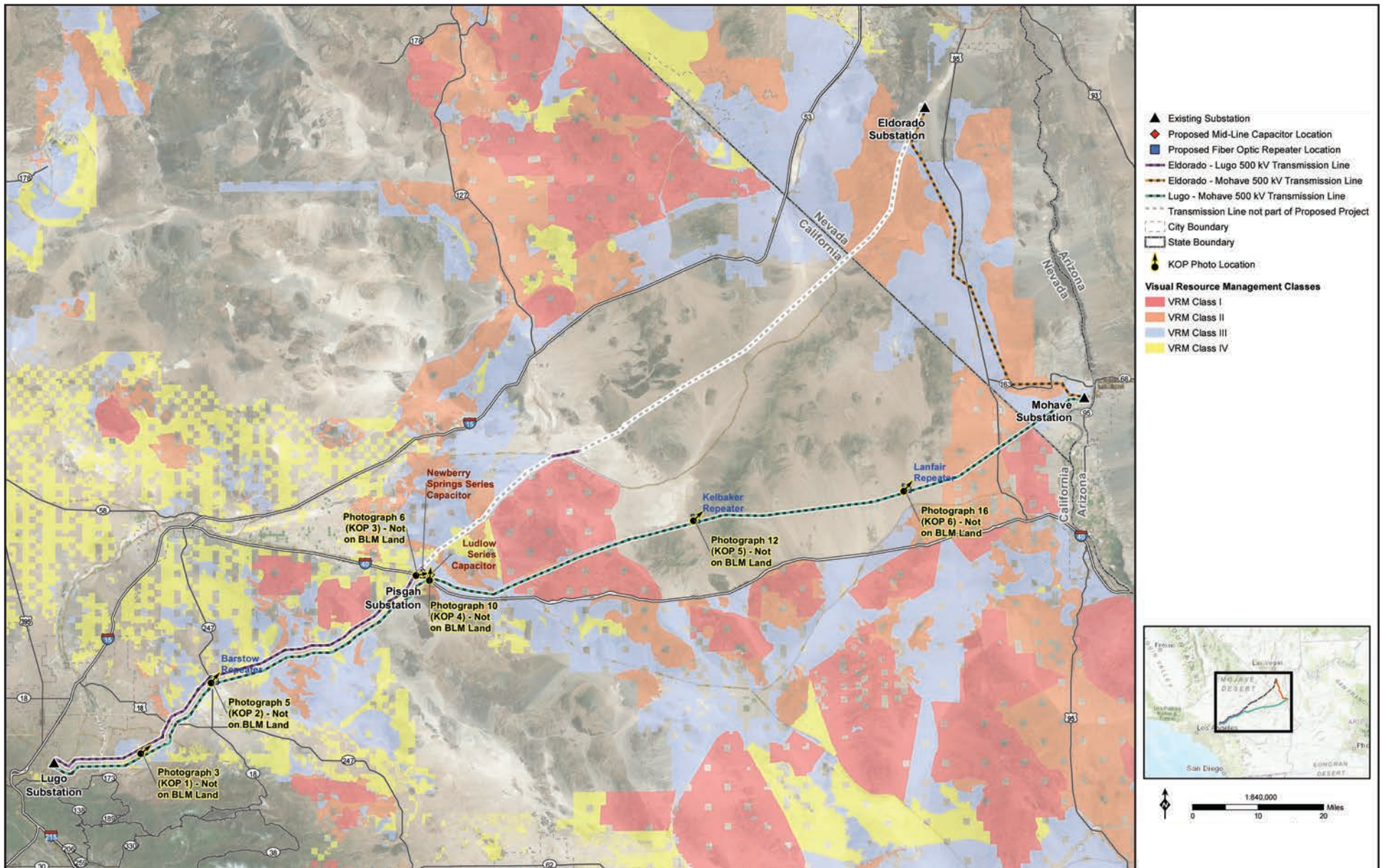
Source: SCE, 2018.

Figure 5.1-2
Viewpoint Locations
Map 5 of 7



Source: SCE, 2018.

Figure 5.1-2
Viewpoint Locations
Map 7 of 7



Source: SCE, 2018.

Figure 5.1-3
BLM Visual Resource
Management Classes Map



Photograph 1: Existing view looking west from Fuente Avenue toward Lugo Substation.



Photograph 2: Existing view looking north along Arrowhead Lake Road.



Photograph 3: Existing view looking northeast from Bowen Ranch Road.*

*Key Observation Point (KOP) Simulation Photograph



Photograph 4: Existing view looking west along State Route (SR-) 18.



Photograph 5: Existing view looking northeast from SR-247 (Barstow Road) toward the site of the proposed Barstow Fiber Optic Repeater.*



* KOP Simulation Photograph



Photograph 6: Existing view looking east northeast from the National Trails Highway toward the site of the proposed Newberry Springs Series Capacitor



* KOP Simulation Photograph



Photograph 7: Existing view looking south-southwest from Pisgah Crater Road.



Photograph 8: Existing view looking northeast from Pisgah Crater Road toward Pisgah Substation.



Photograph 9: Existing view looking east along National Trails Highway.



Photograph 10: Existing view looking north from Interstate 40 toward the site of the proposed Ludlow Series Capacitor.*



* KOP Simulation Photograph



Photograph 11: Existing view looking north-northwest from Kelbaker Road.



Photograph 12: Existing view looking northeast from Kelbaker Road toward the site of the proposed Kelbaker Fiber Optic Repeater.*



* KOP Simulation Photograph



Photograph 13: Existing view looking west from Essex Road.



Photograph 14: Existing view looking east from Black Canyon Road.



Photograph 15: Existing view looking southeast along Lanfair Road.



Photograph 16: Existing view looking northeast from Lanfair Road toward the site of the proposed Lanfair Fiber Optic Repeater.*



* KOP Simulation Photograph



Photograph 17: Existing view looking west-southwest from Needles Highway.



Photograph 18: Existing view looking south-southeast along Needles Highway.



Photograph 19: Existing view looking south-southwest toward Mohave Substation.



Photograph 20: Existing view looking south from Eldorado Valley Drive.



Photograph 21: Existing view looking north-northwest from Eldorado Valley Drive toward Eldorado Substation.

Attachment 5.1-B: BLM Contrast Rating Forms

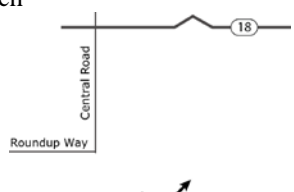
UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
VISUAL CONTRAST RATING WORKSHEET

Date: September 24, 2016

District/ Field Office: Barstow

Resource Area: N/A (Private)

Activity (program): Transmission Line
Modification**SECTION A. PROJECT INFORMATION**

1. Project Name Eldorado-Lugo-Mohave Series Capacitor Project	4. Location Township <u>4N</u>	5. Location Sketch 
2. Key Observation Point KOP 1 on Bowen Ranch Road	Range <u>2W</u>	
3. VRM Class Class III	Section <u>31</u>	

SECTION B. CHARACTERISTIC LANDSCAPE DESCRIPTION

	1. LAND/WATER	2. VEGETATION	3. STRUCTURES
FORM	Steep, rugged terrain	Low, small, asymmetrical	Tall, regular, transparent
LINE	Curved, undulating	Asymmetrical, jagged, semicircular	Vertical, silhouette
COLOR	Tans, browns, and grays	Soft colors of gold, medium olive green, and gray/brown	Dark gray/black
TEXTURE	Coarse	Medium, random, patchy	Uniform, directional

SECTION C. PROPOSED ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION

	1. LAND/WATER	2. VEGETATION	3. STRUCTURES
FORM	Steep, rugged terrain	Low, small, asymmetrical	Tall, regular, transparent
LINE	Curved, undulating, silhouette	Asymmetrical, jagged, semicircular	Vertical, silhouette
COLOR	Tans, browns, and grays	Soft colors of gold, medium olive green, and gray/brown	Dark gray/black
TEXTURE	Coarse	Medium, random, patchy	Uniform, directional

SECTION D. CONTRAST RATING __SHORT TERM X LONG TERM

1. DEGREE OF CONTRAST		FEATURES												2. Does project design meet visual resource management objectives? <u> X </u> Yes __No (Explain on reverses side)	
		LAND/WATER BODY (1)				VEGETATION (2)				STRUCTURES (3)					
		STRONG	Moderate	WEAK	NONE	STRONG	Moderate	WEAK	NONE	STRONG	Moderate	WEAK	NONE		
ELEMENTS	FORM				X				X				X	3. Additional mitigating measures recommended __Yes <u> X </u> No (Explain on reverses side)	
	LINE				X				X			X			
	COLOR				X				X				X		
	TEXTURE				X				X				X		
														Evaluator's Names Stephanie Hansen	Date 9/24/16

SECTION D. (Continued)

Comments from item 2.

The change to the landscape as a result of the modified tower is low, as is the distance of the conductor, which is further from the ground. Because of the presence of existing towers along the right-of-way, the change in height of Tower M14-T1 does not result in a major change in the character of the area. The repetition of the towers, which is a dominant feature in the landscape, continues with the Proposed Project, thereby resulting in a minor change to the existing character of the area. The Proposed Project is consistent with the VRM Class III objective, which is to partially maintain the character of the landscape and allow management changes that repeat the basic element found in the existing environment.

Additional Mitigating Measures (See item 3)

None required.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
VISUAL CONTRAST RATING WORKSHEET

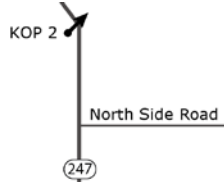
Date: September 23, 2016

District/ Field Office: Barstow

Resource Area: N/A (Private)

Activity (program): Transmission Line
Modification

SECTION A. PROJECT INFORMATION

1. Project Name Eldorado-Lugo-Mohave Series Capacitor Project	4. Location Township <u>5N</u>	
2. Key Observation Point KOP 2 on Barstow Road	Range <u>1W</u>	
3. VRM Class Class III	Section <u>12</u>	

SECTION B. CHARACTERISTIC LANDSCAPE DESCRIPTION

	1. LAND/WATER	2. VEGETATION	3. STRUCTURES
FORM	Flat with rugged terrain in the background	Low, small, asymmetrical	Simple, solid, low, small; and tall, regular, transparent
LINE	Horizontal and jagged in the background, with a banded edge	Asymmetrical, jagged, semicircular	Vertical and horizontal
COLOR	Tan (foreground); tans, browns, and grays (background)	Soft colors of gold, medium olive green, and gray/brown	Dark browns and dark gray/black
TEXTURE	Medium in the foreground; coarse in the background	Medium, random, patchy	Sparse, random, clumped; and uniform, directional

SECTION C. PROPOSED ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION

	1. LAND/WATER	2. VEGETATION	3. STRUCTURES
FORM	Flat with rugged terrain in the background	Low, small, asymmetrical	Simple, solid, low, small; and tall, regular, transparent
LINE	Horizontal and jagged in the background, with a banded edge	Asymmetrical, jagged, semicircular	Vertical and horizontal
COLOR	Tan (foreground); tans, browns, and grays (background)	Soft colors of gold, medium olive green, and gray/brown	Light browns and dark gray/black
TEXTURE	Medium in the foreground; coarse in the background	Medium, random, patchy	Sparse, random, clumped; and uniform, directional

SECTION D. CONTRAST RATING SHORT TERM X LONG TERM

1. DEGREE OF CONTRAST		FEATURES												2. Does project design meet visual resource management objectives? <u> X </u> Yes <u> </u> No (Explain on reverses side)
		LAND/WATER BODY (1)				VEGETATION (2)				STRUCTURES (3)				
		STRONG	MEDIUM	WEAK	NONE	STRONG	MEDIUM	WEAK	NONE	STRONG	MEDIUM	WEAK	NONE	
ELEMENTS	FORM				X				X				X	3. Additional mitigating measures recommended <u> </u> Yes <u> X </u> No (Explain on reverses side)
	LINE				X				X				X	
	COLOR				X				X				X	
	TEXTURE				X				X				X	
Evaluator's Names: Stephanie Hansen Date: 9/23/16														

SECTION D. (Continued)

Comments from item 2.

The change to the landscape as a result of the addition of the Barstow Fiber Optic Repeater is low. The main feature that is visible from KOP 2 is the enclosed equipment building. The form, bulk, and color of the building integrates into the random pattern, size, color, and bulk of the existing buildings that are scattered throughout this area along the same plane. The Proposed Project retains the existing character of the area, and is consistent with the VRM Class III objective, which is to partially maintain the character of the landscape and allow management changes that repeat the basic element found in the existing environment.

Additional Mitigating Measures (See item 3)

None required.

SECTION D. (Continued)

Comments from item 2.

The addition of the Newberry Springs Series Capacitor adds a new, semi-transparent, square feature to the landscape. The texture and color are similar to the existing elements in the viewshed, including Pisgah Substation, and the LSTs of the 500 and 220 kilovolt transmission lines. The form of the structure, however, is more solid, bulkier, and less transparent than the existing facilities in the landscape. Because the mid-line series capacitor is located within the transmission right-of-way and in proximity to existing LSTs and a substation, the effect is somewhat incremental. The Proposed Project retains the existing character of the area, and is consistent with the VRM Class III objective, which is to partially maintain the character of the landscape and allow management changes.

Additional Mitigating Measures (See item 3)

None required.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
VISUAL CONTRAST RATING WORKSHEET

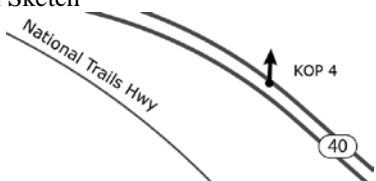
Date: January 5, 2017

District/ Field Office: Barstow

Resource Area: Open Access

Activity (program): Transmission Line
Modification

SECTION A. PROJECT INFORMATION

1. Project Name Eldorado-Lugo-Mohave Series Capacitor Project	4. Location Township__8N__	5. Location Sketch 
2. Key Observation Point KOP 4 on Interstate 40	Range__6E__	
3. VRM Class Class III	Section__21__	

SECTION B. CHARACTERISTIC LANDSCAPE DESCRIPTION

	1. LAND/WATER	2. VEGETATION	3. STRUCTURES
FORM	Flat with moderately rugged terrain in the background	Low and medium, small, asymmetrical	Tall, regular, transparent
LINE	Horizontal; jagged in the background, with a transitional edge	Asymmetrical, jagged, semicircular	Vertical (Lattice Steel Towers [LSTs]) and horizontal (conductor)
COLOR	Tan and gray (foreground); tan and brown (middle ground); browns and grays (background)	Soft colors of gold, medium olive green, and gray/brown	Dark gray and black
TEXTURE	Coarse in the foreground; medium in the background	Medium, random, patchy	Sparse, uniform, directional

SECTION C. PROPOSED ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION

	1. LAND/WATER	2. VEGETATION	3. STRUCTURES
FORM	Flat with moderately rugged terrain in the background	Low and medium, small, asymmetrical	Tall, regular, transparent (LSTs); semi-transparent square (mid-line capacitor); and low, rectangular (Mechanical Electrical Equipment Room [MEER] building)
LINE	Horizontal; jagged in the background, with a transitional edge	Asymmetrical, jagged, semicircular	Vertical (LST) and horizontal (conductor)
COLOR	Tan and gray (foreground); tan and brown (middle ground); browns and grays (background)	Soft colors of gold, medium olive green, and gray/brown	Dark gray/black, tan
TEXTURE	Coarse in the foreground; medium in the background	Medium, random, patchy	Sparse, uniform, and directional

SECTION D. CONTRAST RATING __SHORT TERM XLONG TERM

1. DEGREE OF CONTRAST		FEATURES												2. Does project design meet visual resource management objectives? <u>X</u> Yes __No (Explain on reverses side)	
		LAND/WATER BODY (1)				VEGETATION (2)				STRUCTURES (3)					
		STRONG	Moderate	WEAK	NONE	STRONG	Moderate	WEAK	NONE	STRONG	Moderate	WEAK	NONE		
ELEMENTS	FORM				X				X		X			3. Additional mitigating measures recommended __Yes <u>X</u> No (Explain on reverses side)	
	LINE				X				X			X			
	COLOR				X				X			X			
	TEXTURE				X				X			X			
														Evaluator's Names Stephanie Hansen	Date 1/5/17

SECTION D. (Continued)

Comments from item 2.

The addition of the Ludlow Series Capacitor adds a new, semi-transparent, square feature to the landscape. The texture and color are similar to the existing elements in the viewshed, the LSTs of the Lugo-Mohave 500 kilovolt Transmission Line. The form of the structure, however, is lower to the ground and more solid, bulkier, and less transparent than the existing LSTs in the landscape. Also visible is the MEER building associated with the facility. This building is a low, solid, rectangular structure, which is singular in its shape and bulk in the landscape. Because the mid-line series capacitor is located within the transmission right-of-way and in proximity to existing LSTs and conductor, the effect is somewhat incremental. The Proposed Project retains the existing character of the area, and is consistent with the VRM Class III objective, which is to partially maintain the character of the landscape and allow management changes.

Additional Mitigating Measures (See item 3)

None required.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
VISUAL CONTRAST RATING WORKSHEET

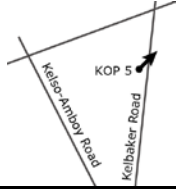
Date: October 31, 2016

District/ Field Office: Barstow

Resource Area: N/A (Private)

Activity (program): Transmission Line
Modification

SECTION A. PROJECT INFORMATION

1. Project Name Eldorado-Lugo-Mohave Series Capacitor Project	4. Location Township <u>9N</u>	5. Location Sketch 
2. Key Observation Point KOP 5 on Kelbaker Road	Range <u>13E</u>	
3. VRM Class Class III	Section <u>6</u>	

SECTION B. CHARACTERISTIC LANDSCAPE DESCRIPTION

	1. LAND/WATER	2. VEGETATION	3. STRUCTURES
FORM	Flat with rugged terrain in the background	Low, small, asymmetrical	Tall and transparent
LINE	Horizontal; jagged in the background, with a banded edge	Asymmetrical, jagged, semicircular	Vertical (Lattice Steel Tower [LST]); and horizontal (conductor)
COLOR	Tan (foreground); greens (middle ground); grays and reddish grays (background)	Soft colors medium olive green, with some gray/gold in the foreground	Dark and medium grays and black
TEXTURE	Coarse in the foreground and background; medium in the middle ground	Medium, random, patchy; finer in the middle ground	Sparse, uniform, and directional

SECTION C. PROPOSED ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION

	1. LAND/WATER	2. VEGETATION	3. STRUCTURES
FORM	Flat with rugged terrain in the background	Low, small, asymmetrical	Simple, solid, low, small (repeater building); Tall and transparent (LST)
LINE	Horizontal and jagged in the background, with a banded edge	Asymmetrical, jagged, semicircular	Vertical and horizontal; Horizontal (repeater building)
COLOR	Tan (foreground); tans, browns, and grays (background)	Soft colors of gold, medium olive green, and gray/brown	Dark and medium grays and black (LST); Dark brown (repeater building)
TEXTURE	Medium in the foreground; coarse in the background	Medium, random, patchy	Sparse, uniform, and directional (LST); Smooth and dense (repeater building)

SECTION D. CONTRAST RATING SHORT TERM X LONG TERM

1. DEGREE OF CONTRAST		FEATURES												2. Does project design meet visual resource management objectives? <u> X </u> Yes <u> </u> No (Explain on reverses side)	
		LAND/WATER BODY (1)				VEGETATION (2)				STRUCTURES (3)					
		STRONG	MEDIUM RATE	WEAK	NONE	STRONG	MEDIUM RATE	WEAK	NONE	STRONG	MEDIUM RATE	WEAK	NONE		
ELEMENTS	FORM				X				X		X			3. Additional mitigating measures recommended <u> </u> Yes <u> X </u> No (Explain on reverses side)	
	LINE				X				X		X				
	COLOR				X				X		X				
	TEXTURE				X				X		X				
														Evaluator's Names Stephanie Hansen	Date 10/31/16

SECTION D. (Continued)

Comments from item 2.

The addition of the Kelbaker Fiber Optic Repeater facility adds a new, solid, dark feature to the landscape. The main structure that is visible from KOP 5 is the enclosed equipment building. The form, bulk, and color of the building contrasts somewhat with the softer textures of the desert grasses and the transmission tower. It adds a small and low, but solid feature to the landscape. Because the fiber optic repeater is located within the transmission right-of-way and in proximity to an existing LST, the effect is somewhat incremental. The Proposed Project retains the existing character of the area, and is consistent with the VRM Class III objective, which is to partially maintain the character of the landscape and allow management changes.

Additional Mitigating Measures (See item 3)

None required.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
VISUAL CONTRAST RATING WORKSHEET


Date: October 31, 2016

District/ Field Office: Barstow

Resource Area: N/A (Private)

Activity (program): Transmission Line
Modification

SECTION A. PROJECT INFORMATION

1. Project Name Eldorado-Lugo-Mohave Series Capacitor Project	4. Location Township__10N__	5. Location Sketch 
2. Key Observation Point KOP 6 on Lanfair Road	Range__18E__	
3. VRM Class Class III	Section__15__	

SECTION B. CHARACTERISTIC LANDSCAPE DESCRIPTION

	1. LAND/WATER	2. VEGETATION	3. STRUCTURES
FORM	Flat with moderately rugged terrain in the background	Low and medium, small, asymmetrical	Tall, regular, transparent
LINE	Horizontal; jagged in the background, with a butt edge	Asymmetrical, jagged, semicircular	Vertical (Lattice Steel Towers [LSTs]) and horizontal (conductor)
COLOR	Tan and gray (foreground); greens and grays (middle ground); tans and grays (background)	Soft colors of gold, medium olive green, and gray/brown	Dark gray and black
TEXTURE	Coarse in the foreground; medium in the background	Medium, random, patchy	Sparse, uniform, directional

SECTION C. PROPOSED ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION

	1. LAND/WATER	2. VEGETATION	3. STRUCTURES
FORM	Flat with moderately rugged terrain in the background	Low and medium, small, asymmetrical	Tall, regular, transparent (LSTs); simple, solid, low, small (repeater building)
LINE	Horizontal; jagged in the background, with a butt edge	Asymmetrical, jagged, semicircular	Vertical (Lattice Steel Tower [LST]) and horizontal (conductor)
COLOR	Tan and gray (foreground); greens and grays (middle ground); tans and grays (background)	Soft colors of gold, medium olive green, and gray/brown	Dark gray/black (LSTs and conductor) and light brown (repeater building)
TEXTURE	Coarse in the foreground; medium in the background	Medium, random, patchy	Sparse, uniform, and directional (LSTs); Smooth and dense (repeater building)

SECTION D. CONTRAST RATING __SHORT TERM XLONG TERM

1. DEGREE OF CONTRAST		FEATURES												2. Does project design meet visual resource management objectives? <u>X</u> Yes __No (Explain on reverses side) 3. Additional mitigating measures recommended __Yes <u>X</u> No (Explain on reverses side) Evaluator's Names Stephanie Hansen Date 10/31/16
		LAND/WATER BODY (1)				VEGETATION (2)				STRUCTURES (3)				
		STRONG	Moderate	WEAK	NONE	STRONG	Moderate	WEAK	NONE	STRONG	Moderate	WEAK	NONE	
ELEMENTS	FORM				X				X				X	
	LINE				X				X				X	
	COLOR				X				X				X	
	TEXTURE				X				X				X	

SECTION D. (Continued)

Comments from item 2.

The addition of the Lanfair Fiber Optic Repeater facility adds a new, solid, dark feature to the landscape. The main structure that is visible from KOP 6 is the enclosed equipment building. The form, bulk, and color of the building contrasts somewhat with the softer textures of the desert grasses and the transmission towers. It adds a small and low, but solid feature to the landscape. Because the fiber optic repeater is located within the transmission right-of-way and in proximity to existing LSTs, the effect is somewhat incremental. The Proposed Project retains the existing character of the area, and is consistent with the VRM Class III objective, which is to partially maintain the character of the landscape and allow management changes.

Additional Mitigating Measures (See item 3)

None required.



KOP 1: Existing view looking northeast from Bowen Ranch Road



KOP 1: Visual simulation of the Proposed Project
Raised tower M14-T4 along the Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line



KOP 2: Existing view looking northeast from Barstow Road



KOP 2: Visual simulation of the Proposed Project
Barstow Fiber Optic Repeater Site along the Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line



KOP 3: Existing view looking east-northeast from the National Trails Highway.



KOP 3: Visual simulation of the Proposed Project
Newberry Springs Series Capacitor along the Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line



KOP 4: Existing view looking north-northeast from Interstate 40.



KOP 4: Visual simulation of the Proposed Project
Ludlow Series Capacitor along the Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line



KOP 5: Existing view looking northeast from Kelbaker Road



KOP 5: Visual simulation of the Proposed Project
Kelbaker Fiber Optic Repeater along the Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line



KOP 6: Existing view looking northeast from Lanfair Road



KOP 6: Visual simulation of the Proposed Project
Lanfair Fiber Optic Repeater along the Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line

5.2 Agriculture and Forestry Resources

AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Department of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment Project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. **Would the project:**

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c. Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d. Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Significance criteria established by CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G.

5.2.1 Environmental Setting

The following describes the existing conditions along the Proposed Project right-of-way for agriculture, grazing, and forestry.

Agriculture

The California Department of Conservation (DOC) established the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) in 1982 to assess the location, quantity, and quality of agricultural lands and conversion of these lands to other uses. Every even-numbered year, FMMP issues a Farmland Conversion Report. FMMP data are used in preparing elements of some county and city general plans, in regional studies on agricultural land conversion, and in environmental documents as a way of assessing project-specific impacts on Prime Farmland.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) (formerly Soils Conservation Service), classifies notable agricultural lands as follows:

- **Prime Farmland:** Land that has the best combination of physical and chemical properties for the production of crops
- **Farmland of Statewide Importance:** Similar to Prime Farmland, but with minor shortcomings (e.g., steeper slopes, inability to hold water)
- **Unique Farmland:** Land of lesser quality soils, but recently used for the production of specific high economic value crops. Land is usually irrigated, but may include nonirrigated orchards or vineyards as found in some climatic zones in California
- **Farmland of Local Importance:** Farmlands of Local Importance are considered vital to the local agricultural economy, as identified by each county's local advisory committee and board of supervisors.

The DOC's FMMP has not designated any prime farmland, farmland of statewide importance, unique farmland, or farmland of local importance within 3 miles of the Proposed Project in California (SCE, 2018).

The Proposed Project traverses land zoned for agriculture-related use in San Bernardino County. Specifically, the Lugo-Mohave 500 kV line crosses the following (SCE, 2018):

- 0.1 miles of land zoned as Floodway-Agriculture Preserve (FW-AP) intended to protect vital agriculture and related uses and/or agriculture by-products
- 0.1 miles of land zoned as Rural Living – 10 Acre Minimum-Agriculture Preserve (RL 10-AP) intended to protect vital agriculture and related uses and/or agriculture byproducts while allowing residential development
- 0.1 miles of land zoned as Lucerne Valley/Agriculture (LV/AG-20) for commercial agricultural operations, agriculture support services, rural residential uses and similar and compatible uses at tower M18-T4
- 1.5 miles of land zoned LV/AG near the Barstow Repeater site
- 0.7 miles of land zoned Lucerne Valley/Agriculture-40 Acre Minimum (LV/AG-40)

The Proposed Project does not cross land designated as agriculture in the City of Hesperia or in Nevada. In Hesperia, at Arrowhead Lake Road west of tower M8-T1, the Proposed Project is adjacent to land designated as Agriculture (A2) in the Hesperia General Plan (Hesperia, 2017). This location would include a temporary guard structure at Arrowhead Lake Road.

The Williamson Act allows local governments to establish agricultural preserves, which are lands set aside for continued agricultural use under a land conservation contract. The Proposed Project crosses 0.1 miles of land under Williamson Act contract at Arrowhead Lake Road and is within 30 feet of land under Williamson Act contract but it would not require any ground disturbance on lands under Williamson Act contract.

The Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV line crosses 0.1 miles of land zoned as FW-AP and 0.1 miles of lands zone as RL 10-AP.

Forestry

The Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line crosses approximately 0.4 miles of area mapped as Joshua tree woodland in San Bernardino County near tower M14-T4, near a proposed helicopter landing zone, and scattered east of M15-T3 near two proposed helicopter landing zones. The Proposed Project crosses no other forest land in California and Nevada.

Grazing

The Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line and Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line cross the following BLM grazing allotments:

- Cady Mountain grazing allotment (over 232,000 acres in size)
- Johnson Valley grazing allotment (over 118,000 acres in size)
- Ord Mountain grazing allotment (nearly 155,000 acres in size)
- Round Mountain grazing allotment (over 18,000 acres in size)

The Lugo-Mohave Transmission Line also crosses the Colton Hills grazing allotment in the Mojave Preserve. The Colton Hills allotment is over 190,000 acres (NPS, 2002).

The Proposed Project does not cross any grazing allotments in Nevada.

5.2.2 Regulatory Background

State and Local

California

California Land Conservation Act of 1965 (Williamson Act). The Williamson Act preserves agricultural and open space lands from conversion to urban land uses by establishing a contract between local governments and private landowners to voluntarily restrict their landholdings to agricultural or open space use. In return, landowners receive property tax assessments based on farming or open space use. Williamson Act contracts are valid for a minimum of 10 years and, in the absence of a notice of non-renewal, they are automatically renewed each year for an additional 10-year term.

The Williamson Act also allows local governments to establish agricultural preserves, which must include a minimum of 100 acres (Cal. Govt. Code §51230). Government Code Section 51238 states, “notwithstanding any determination of compatible uses by the county or city pursuant to this article, unless the board or council after notice and hearing makes a finding to the contrary, the erection, construction, alteration, or maintenance of gas, electric, water, communication, or agricultural laborer housing facilities are hereby determined to be compatible uses within any agricultural preserve.”

California Public Resources Code and California Government Code. Public Resources Code Section 12220(g) defines forest land as “land that can support 10-percent native tree cover of any species, including hardwoods, under natural conditions, and that allows for management of one or more forest resources, including timber, aesthetics, fish and wildlife, biodiversity, water quality, recreation, and other public benefits.” Section 4526 defines timberland as “land, other than land owned by the federal government and land designated by the State Board of Forestry as experimental forest land, which is available for, and capable of, growing a crop of trees of any commercial species used to produce lumber and other forest products, including Christmas trees.”

Chapter 6.7 of the Government Code (§§ 51100 to 51155) regulates timberlands within the State of California. According to the code, examples of compatible uses are watershed management; grazing; and the erection, construction, alteration, or maintenance of electric transmission facilities.

“Timberland production zone” (TPZ) is defined in Section 51104(g) as an area that has been zoned pursuant to California Government Code (CGC) Sections 51112 or 51113 and is devoted to and used for growing and harvesting timber and compatible uses. In this context, “compatible uses” include any use

that “does not significantly detract from the use of the property for, or inhibit, growing and harvesting timber.” (CGC §51104[h]).

Local

The CPUC has sole and exclusive jurisdiction over the siting and design of the Proposed Project components located in the State of California. Pursuant to CPUC G.O. 131-D, Section XIV.B, “Local jurisdictions acting pursuant to local authority are preempted from regulating electric power line projects, distribution lines, substations, or electric facilities constructed by public utilities subject to the CPUC’s jurisdiction. However, in locating such projects, the public utilities shall consult with local agencies regarding land use matters.” Consequently, public utilities are directed to consider local regulations and consult with local agencies, but the county and cities’ regulations are not applicable as the county and cities do not have jurisdiction over the Proposed Project. For informational purposes, local regulations in California jurisdictions are provided in Appendix C. The Proposed Project is subject to local regulations in the State of Nevada. However, the Proposed Projects does not cross agricultural, forest, or grazing lands in Nevada. Therefore, Nevada regulations for these resources have not been included.

Federal

Bureau of Land Management

Public Land Grazing Administration 43 CFR 4100. The BLM administers the public lands grazing program under regulations that implement provisions in the Taylor Grazing Act of 1934, the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976, and the Public Rangelands Improvement Act of 1978. The Taylor Grazing Act set forth regulations intended to stop injury to the public grazing lands by preventing overgrazing and soil deterioration; provide for the lands’ orderly use, improvement, and development; and stabilize the livestock industry dependent upon the public range. FLPMA provides authority and direction for the multiple use and sustained yield of public lands. FLPMA also provides specific guidance for range management (FLPMA Subchapter IV). The Public Rangelands Improvement Act establishes a national policy to improve public rangeland conditions to support all rangeland values. The act also requires a national inventory, consistent federal management policies and funding for range improvement projects.

National Park Service

The California Desert Protection Act of 1994 that created Mojave National Preserve stated, that “[t]he privilege of grazing domestic livestock on lands within the preserve shall continue to be exercised at no more than the current level, subject to applicable laws and National Park Service regulations.” Mojave National Preserve’s General Management Plan states that, for permit holders unwilling to sell, grazing privilege will continue at no more than existing level under existing BLM management plans, subject to NPS regulations and policy and relevant Biological Opinions, with emphasis on preservation and protection of resources.

5.2.3 Applicant Proposed Measures

The Proposed Project does not include any APMs related to Agriculture and Forestry.

5.2.4 CEQA Significance Criteria

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR 15000 et seq.) provides guidance on assessing whether a project would have significant impacts on the environment. Consistent with Appendix G, the Proposed Project would have significant agriculture and forestry resources impacts if it would:

- a. *Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use*
- b. *Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract*
- c. *Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?*
- d. *Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use*
- e. *Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use*

5.2.5 Methodology

This analysis reviews the existing agriculture, grazing, and forestry land along the Proposed Project alignment and in particular at the location of ground disturbance. It then reviews whether the Proposed Project would permanently convert or temporarily impact agriculture, grazing, or forestry land. BLM and NPS lands include grazing but do not include agriculture or forestry lands.

5.2.6 Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

- a. ***Would the project convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as Shown on the Maps Prepared Pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to Non-agricultural use?***

Construction

NO IMPACT. The DOC's FMMP has not designated any farmland as Prime, Unique, or Farmland of Statewide Importance along the Proposed Project corridor so there would be no impacts to these lands. These designations do not apply to federal lands administered by the BLM and the NPS.

Operation and Maintenance

NO IMPACT. The DOC's FMMP has not designated any farmland as Prime, Unique, or Farmland of Statewide Importance along the Proposed Project corridor so there would be no impacts to these lands from operation and maintenance of the project.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

- b. ***Would the project conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?***

Construction

NO IMPACT. Although the Proposed Project alignment crosses lands under Williamson Act contract, no ground disturbance or other impact is proposed on these lands.

The Proposed Project would result in the permanent conversion of 0.13 acres of land zoned for agriculture at the Barstow Repeater Station. It would result in the temporary use of 13.3 acres of land zoned for agriculture. This land would be restored to as close to the original state as possible after the project. While the Proposed Project would result in a minor amount of conversion of land zoned as agriculture, the amount of land converted is minimal. Additionally, for agriculture land, electric transmission facilities fall under the San Bernardino zoning code 85.02.050 that states that no Conditional Use Permit is required for the project when it has completed alternate review procedures including having been approved at a public hearing by a State or Federally appointed body or commission empowered to approve or license the land use (Policy 85.02.050(a)(1)). Because the project would not conflict with the existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract, there would be no impact. Federal lands do not include zoning nor do the agencies enter into Williamson Act contracts.

Operation and Maintenance

NO IMPACT. Operation and Maintenance (O&M) activities associated with the Proposed Project would be similar to those currently performed by SCE for existing facilities. They include repairing conductors, washing or replacing insulators, repairing or replacing other hardware components, repairing or replacing poles and towers, tree trimming, brush and weed control, and access road maintenance. O&M practices would also include routine inspections and emergency repair within substations and rights-of-way (ROWs), which would require the use of vehicles and equipment. SCE inspects the transmission and sub-transmission overhead facilities in a manner consistent with CPUC G.O. 165, which requires observation a minimum of once per year, but inspection typically occurs more frequently to ensure system reliability. Following construction of the mid-line series capacitors, additional O&M activities would consist of monthly and annual inspections, as well as equipment testing and maintenance of emergency generators ranging from once a year to once every five years. SCE would conduct additional testing, inspections and maintenance of the building, site, generator, and fuel tank at the new fiber optic repeater facilities every six months to once a year. While O&M activities would occur along the portions of the alignment that cross Williamson Act lands, these would be the same as what currently occurs because none of the Proposed Project components are located within these lands. Therefore, no impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

c. Would the project conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production?

Construction

NO IMPACT. The Proposed Project alignment crosses areas mapped as Joshua tree woodland but these areas are not zoned as forest lands, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production. The areas are zoned as Resource Management and Rural Residential. Electric transmission facilities fall under the San Bernardino zoning code 85.02.050 on Resource Management and Rural Residential zoning. The zoning code states that no Conditional Use Permit is required for the project when it has completed alternate review procedures including having been approved at a public hearing by a State or Federally appointed body or commission empowered to approve or license the land use (Policy 85.02.050(a)(1)). Because the project would not conflict with the existing zoning for the forest land there would be no impact. Federal lands do not include zoning, so this criterion does not apply.

Operation and Maintenance

NO IMPACT. O&M activities associated with the Proposed Project would be similar to those currently performed for the existing facilities, with additional O&M activities associated with the proposed mid-line series capacitors and fiber optic repeater facilities. Because O&M activities would be similar to current practices and would not conflict with zoning of forest lands, no impact would result from the Proposed Project.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

d. Would the project result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. As previously discussed, the existing Eldorado-Lugo and Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Lines span approximately 0.4 miles of mapped forest land. Two proposed potential helicopter landing zones would be located within mapped forest land. Following construction, if they are used the proposed landing zones would be restored to as close to pre-construction conditions as possible. Restoration in the desert can be challenging and be lengthy to complete. However, given the small acreage of land used for the landing zones (less than 1 acre) and because the use would not be permanent, the impact would be less than significant. There is no forest land on the BLM and NPS portions of the Proposed Project.

Operation and Maintenance

NO IMPACT. O&M activities associated with the Proposed Project would be similar to those currently performed for the existing facilities, with additional O&M activities associated with the proposed mid-line series capacitors and fiber optic repeater facilities. Because O&M activities would be similar to current practices and would not involve the loss of forest land, no impact would result from the Proposed Project.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

e. Would the project involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use?

Construction

State and Local

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. As noted under Impact b above, the Proposed Project would result in the permanent conversion of 0.13 acres of land zoned for agriculture at the Barstow Repeater Station. It would result in the temporary use of 13.3 acres of land zoned for agriculture. This land would be restored to as close to the original state as possible after the project. While the project would result in the conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use, the amount of land converted would be substantially less than an acre and would be adjacent to existing energy infrastructure. Therefore, the impact would be less than significant.

Bureau of Land Management

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. The Proposed Project would result in a permanent loss of an estimated 2.9 acres in the Cady Mountain grazing allotment, as well as in temporary losses of an estimated 34.9 acres in the Cady Mountain grazing allotment, 13 acres in the Ord Mountain allotment, and 3.4 acres in the Round Mountain allotment. Temporary losses would be restored to as close to the original state as possible after project construction and grazing would continue at these locations. While the project would result in permanent conversion of 4 acres of grazing land to non-agricultural use, this would be less than 0.01 percent of the grazing allotment and would be unlikely to change the existing number of animals allowed to graze at the allotment. Therefore, the loss would be less than significant.

National Park Service

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. The Proposed Project activities would occur on the Colton Hills grazing allotment in the Mojave National Preserve. Activities would include OPGW modification and splicing towers from M118-T2 to M137-T3, some of which include modifications to the body of the facilities. Ground disturbance associated with this work would be temporary and limited. Temporarily used land would be restored to as close to the original state as possible after project construction and animals would continue to graze at these locations. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Operation and Maintenance

NO IMPACT. O&M activities associated with the Proposed Project would be similar to those currently performed for the existing facilities, with additional O&M activities associated with the proposed mid-line series capacitors and fiber optic repeater facilities. Because O&M activities would be similar to current practices and would not result in a conversion of forest or farmland, no impact would result from the Proposed Project.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

5.2.7 References

Hesperia (City of Hesperia). 2017. General Plan Land Use Map. Effective Date: April 18, 2017.

NPS (National Park Service). 2002. Mojave General Management Plan Figure 13. Cattle Grazing Permits. <https://www.nps.gov/moja/learn/management/loader.cfm?csModule=security/getfile&PageID=115057>. Accessed November 29, 2018.

SCE (Southern California Edison). 2018. Eldorado-Lugo-Mohave Series Capacitor Project: Proponent's Environmental Assessment (PEA). Volumes 1 through 8. April.

5.3 Air Quality

AIR QUALITY

Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management district or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. **Would the project:**

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable Federal or State ambient air quality standard?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Significance criteria established by CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G.

5.3.1 Environmental Setting

Existing Conditions

Air Basin and Local Air Districts. The Proposed Project would be in California's Mojave Desert Air Basin within the jurisdiction of the Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District (MDAQMD) and in the undeveloped, open lands in southern Clark County, Nevada. The local agencies that regulate sources of air pollution and establish the programs to protect and improve air quality in the project area are the MDAQMD in the San Bernardino County, California and, for portions of the project in Nevada, the Clark County Department of Air Quality (DAQ). The Mojave Desert Air Basin is characterized by a low population density within an assemblage of mountain ranges interspersed with long broad valleys that often contain dry lakes. Prevailing winds in the Mojave Desert Air Basin are out of the west and southwest (MDAQMD, 2016).

Criteria Air Pollutants. Air quality is determined by measuring ambient concentrations of certain criteria air pollutants. The criteria pollutants are ozone, respirable particulate matter (PM₁₀), fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}), carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), sulfur dioxide (SO₂), and lead. Ozone is an example of a secondary pollutant that is not emitted directly from a source (e.g., an automobile tailpipe), but it is formed in the atmosphere by chemical and photochemical reactions. Reactive organic gases (ROG), including volatile organic compounds (VOC), are regulated as precursors to ozone formation.

The California Air Resources Board (ARB) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) have independent authority to develop and establish health-protective ambient air quality standards, although the different legislative and scientific contexts cause some diversity between State and Federal standards currently in effect in California. The standards of ambient air quality in Nevada also differ from the U.S. EPA NAAQS, and the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection provides oversight of the Clark County DAQ to ensure that the Nevada standards are not exceeded.

The monitored levels of the pollutants are compared to the current National and California Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS and CAAQS) to determine degree of existing air quality degradation. The ambient air quality standards are shown in Table 5.3-1.

Table 5.3-1. National and California Ambient Air Quality Standards

Pollutant	Averaging Time	California Standards	National Standards
Ozone	1-hour	0.09 ppm	—
	8-hour	0.070 ppm	0.070 ppm
Respirable Particulate Matter (PM10)	24-hour	50 µg/m ³	150 µg/m ³
	Annual Mean	20 µg/m ³	—
Fine Particulate Matter (PM2.5)	24-hour	—	35 µg/m ³
	Annual Mean	12 µg/m ³	12.0 µg/m ³
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	1-hour	20 ppm	35 ppm
	8-hour	9.0 ppm	9 ppm
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO ₂)	1-hour	0.18 ppm	0.100 ppm
	Annual Mean	0.030 ppm	0.053 ppm
Sulfur Dioxide (SO ₂)	1-hour	0.25 ppm	0.075 ppm
	24-hour	0.04 ppm	0.14 ppm
	Annual Mean	—	0.030 ppm

Notes: ppm = parts per million; µg/m³ = micrograms per cubic meter; “—” = no standard.
Source: ARB (<http://www.arb.ca.gov/research/aaqs/aaqs2.pdf>, May 2016).

Ambient Air Quality Attainment Status. The U.S. EPA, ARB, and the local air district classify an area as attainment, unclassified, or nonattainment with regard to certain pollutants, and these designations dictate the air quality management planning activities needed to make future air pollutant reductions. The classification depends on whether the monitored ambient air quality data show compliance, insufficient data available, or non-compliance with the ambient air quality standards, respectively.

Table 5.3-2 summarizes attainment status for the San Bernardino County portion of the Mojave Desert Air Basin as designated for the criteria air pollutants relative to the state and federal standards.

Table 5.3-2. Attainment Status for Mojave Desert Air Basin, San Bernardino County

Pollutant	California Designation	Federal Designation
Ozone	Nonattainment-Moderate	Nonattainment–Severe (West Mojave Desert) and Unclassifiable/Attainment (remainder)
PM10	Nonattainment	Nonattainment–Moderate (24-hour standard)
PM2.5	Nonattainment (West Mojave Desert) and Unclassifiable/Attainment (remainder)	Unclassified/Attainment
CO	Unclassifiable/Attainment	Unclassifiable/Attainment
NO ₂	Unclassifiable/Attainment	Unclassifiable/Attainment
SO ₂	Attainment	Attainment

Source: ARB, 2018; U.S. EPA, 2018.

Proposed Project components in southern Clark County, Nevada would be within a “maintenance” area for ozone (under the 1997 NAAQS), and no components of the Proposed Project would be within the Las Vegas, Nevada federal ozone nonattainment area. All other portions of southern Clark County are designated by U.S. EPA as in attainment or unclassifiable for the criteria air pollutants.

Air Quality Management Plans. The most recent air quality management plan for the Mojave Desert air basin addresses the Western Mojave Desert federal ozone nonattainment designation (MDAQMD, 2017). The plan presents the latest planning assumptions regarding population, vehicle activity and industrial

activity, and demonstrates how management of existing and forecasted ozone precursor-producing activities within the MDAQMD would achieve attainment of the 2008 ozone NAAQS in 2027. The current ozone attainment plan (MDAQMD, 2017) builds upon previous planning efforts including the 2004 and 2008 Ozone Attainment Plans.

The MDAQMD air quality management plan for PM₁₀ contains a control strategy that provides for the adoption and implementation of federally approved Reasonably Available Control Measures to reduce PM₁₀ emissions arising from human activities (MDAQMD, 1995). Reducing PM₁₀ emissions from construction/demolition activities, disturbed areas, and unpaved road travel is a focus of MDAQMD Rule 403 and Rule 403.2, which specify the dust control requirements applicable to construction of the Proposed Project.

Ambient Air Quality Data. The most-recent three years of air quality measurements from stations near western end of the project area are shown in Table 5.3-3. The Phelan and Hesperia monitoring stations are closest to Proposed Project activities and typically have the highest historical ozone concentrations within the MDAQMD due to the proximity of the stations to the South Coast Air Basin, which is the source of the majority of transported ozone and ozone precursors (MDAQMD, 2017).

Table 5.3-3. Ambient Air Quality Data for the Project Area

Pollutant	Air Quality Indicator	2015	2016	2017
Data from Phelan (Beekley and Phelan Roads)				
Ozone	Highest 1-hour (ppm)	0.129	0.132	0.156
	Days above 1-hour California Standard (0.09 ppm)	9	15	33
	Highest 8-hour (ppm)	0.092	0.109	0.118
	Days above 8-hour National Standard (0.070 ppm)	42	51	66
Data from Hesperia (Olive Street)				
Ozone	Highest 1-hour (ppm)	0.125	0.119	0.114
	Days above 1-hour California Standard (0.09 ppm)	7	25	18
	Highest 8-hour (ppm)	0.105	0.098	0.094
	Days above 8-hour National Standard (0.070 ppm)	50	65	75
PM₁₀	Highest 24-hour (µg/m ³)	64.1	203.5	163.6
	Days above 24-hour National Standard (150 µg/m ³)*	0	1	2
	Annual Average (µg/m ³)	23.8	25.3	26.9
Data from Lucerne Valley-Middle School (Aliento Road)				
PM₁₀	Highest 24-hour (µg/m ³)	79.5	199.6	135.7
	Days above 24-hour National Standard (150 µg/m ³)*	0	1	0
	Annual Average (µg/m ³)	14.6	18.1	21.1

Source: California Air Resources Board: iADAM: Air Quality Data Statistics (ARB, 2018).

Note: * These PM₁₀ stations provide measurements for comparison with the 24-hour National Standard (150 µg/m³) rather than the California Standard (50 µg/m³).

Toxic Air Contaminants. Toxic air contaminants (TACs) are air pollutants that may lead to serious illness or increased mortality, even when present in relatively low concentrations. Potential human health effects of TACs include birth defects, neurological damage, cancer, and death. There are hundreds of different types of TACs with varying degrees of toxicity. Individual TACs vary greatly in the health risk they present; at a given level of exposure, one TAC may pose a hazard that is many times greater than another's. TACs do not have ambient air quality standards but are regulated by the local air districts using a risk-based approach. The Proposed Project would not be considered a stationary source subject

to risk assessment programs, and surveys will be necessary to determine whether demolition or renovation work at the substations could encounter asbestos. Diesel particulate matter (DPM) is classified as a TAC, and statewide programs focus on managing this pollutant through motor vehicle fuels, engine, and tailpipe standards because many toxic compounds adhere to diesel exhaust particles. California's local air districts support these programs by issuing permits and requiring controls for larger stationary sources of DPM, including diesel powered engines rated over 50 horsepower.

Sensitive Receptor Land Uses. The MDAQMD defines certain land uses as sensitive to air pollution. Residences, schools, daycare centers, playgrounds and medical facilities are considered sensitive receptor land uses (MDAQMD, 2016). Areas with residential land use designations are listed in Section 5.11, Land Use and Planning, Table 5.11-1. Several occupied residential dwellings would be approximately 300 feet to 500 feet from Proposed Project activities (SCE, 2018).

The locations of sensitive land uses near Proposed Project components include:

- Low-density residential land uses throughout unincorporated San Bernardino County in the vicinity of the Eldorado-Lugo and Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Lines.
- Residential development north of Lugo Substation.
- Residential development west of Mohave Substation near Needles Highway in Laughlin, Nevada.
- Residential development in the northern portion of the City of Boulder City, Nevada.

5.3.2 Regulatory Background

State and Local

California

California Clean Air Act. Implemented by the ARB, the California Clean Air Act establishes broad authority for California to regulate emissions from mobile sources and requires regions to develop and enforce strategies to attain California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS). In the project area, the local (regional) air district is responsible for demonstrating how these standards are met.

ARB Off-Road Mobile Sources Emission Reduction Program. The California Clean Air Act mandates that ARB achieve the maximum degree of emission reductions from all off-road mobile sources to attain the state ambient air quality standards. Off-road mobile sources include construction equipment. The earliest (Tier 1) standards for large compression-ignition engines used in off-road mobile sources became effective in California in 1996. Since then, the Tier 3 standards for large compression-ignition engines used in off-road mobile sources went into effect in California for most engine classes in 2006. In a 2004 rulemaking, the U.S. EPA established a phase-in of Tier 4 standards for certain "nonroad" engines beginning in 2008, and the Tier 4 or Tier 4 Interim (4i) standards apply to all off-road diesel engines model year 2012 or newer. These standards and standards applicable to fleets that are already in-use address emissions of NO_x and toxic particulate matter from diesel combustion.

ARB In-Use Off-Road Diesel-Fueled Fleets Regulation. The regulations for in-use off-road diesel equipment are designed to reduce nitrogen oxides (NO_x) and toxic diesel particulate matter (DPM) from existing fleets of equipment. Depending on the size of the fleet, the owner would need to ensure that the average emissions performance of the fleet meets certain state-wide standards. In lieu of improving the emissions performance of the fleet, electric systems can be installed to replace diesel equipment in the fleet average calculations. Presently, all equipment owners are subject to a five-minute idling restriction in the rule (13 California Code of Regulations, Chapter 10, Section 2449).

ARB Portable Equipment Registration Program (PERP). This program allows owners or operators of portable engines and associated equipment commonly used for construction or farming to register their units under a statewide portable program that allows them to operate their equipment throughout California without having to obtain individual permits from local air districts.

Nevada

Nevada Division of Environmental Protection (NDEP) and Clark County DAQ. The Clark County DAQ implements and enforces the air pollution control program in Clark County with oversight provided by the NDEP. The Clark County DAQ enforces the local air pollution control rules and regulations, which include Section 41 (Fugitive Dust), Section 94 (Permitting and Dust Control for Construction Activities). These local air quality regulations prohibit excessive fugitive dust from becoming airborne, require taking reasonable precautions to abate fugitive dust, and require non-exempt construction activities such as the Proposed Project to apply for and obtain a dust control permit from the Clark County DAQ, which will include an enforceable list of best management practices (per Section 94.3.5).

Local

The CPUC has sole and exclusive jurisdiction over the siting and design of the Proposed Project components located in the State of California. Pursuant to CPUC G.O. 131-D, Section XIV.B, “Local jurisdictions acting pursuant to local authority are preempted from regulating electric power line projects, distribution lines, substations, or electric facilities constructed by public utilities subject to the CPUC’s jurisdiction. However, in locating such projects, the public utilities shall consult with local agencies regarding land use matters.” Consequently, public utilities are directed to consider local regulations and consult with local agencies, but the county and cities’ regulations are not applicable as the county and cities do not have jurisdiction over the Proposed Project. However, regional air quality management districts are not considered local authorities, having been created by the state to implement state and federal regulations.

Relevant regional requirements in California include:

Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District Permitting Requirements. New stationary sources of air pollutants are subject to the New Source Review (NSR) permitting program, which gives the MDAQMD the authority to review and regulate equipment or facilities to ensure they are constructed and operated in a manner consistent with the air quality management planning strategies. The requirements for stationary sources are established in MDAQMD Rule 201 (Permits to Construct) and Rule 203 (Permit to Operate), and Rule 1303 (NSR Requirements) sets the thresholds and requirements for best available control technology and for obtaining offsets.

MDAQMD Visible Emissions and Fugitive Dust Control Requirements. The MDAQMD implements a series of rules and regulations to prevent excessive visible emissions (Rule 401) and prohibit excessive particulate matter from becoming airborne. MDAQMD Rule 403 (Fugitive Dust) and Rule 403.2 (Fugitive Dust Control for the Mojave Desert Planning Area) specify how activities including construction must be conducted to prevent anthropogenic fugitive dust from causing NAAQS violations for PM₁₀ in the Mojave Desert Planning Area. These rules ensure that the measures adopted within the Mojave Desert Planning Area Federal PM₁₀ Attainment Plan are implemented. Some of the measures include the application of dust suppressants, covering bulk materials during hauling and in storage piles, and limiting vehicle speeds on unpaved roads.

MDAQMD Asbestos Notification Requirements. Projects involving demolition or renovation must determine whether the proposed activity would involve removal or disturbing building materials that

contain asbestos, which is a California-listed toxic air contaminant and a hazardous air pollutant. To ensure that demolition activities implement proper controls for removal and disposal of asbestos, the MDAQMD would require SCE to survey the substation work sites and complete a checklist and, if applicable, submit a Notification of Demolition/Renovation with a payment of the fee under MDAQMD Rule 302(E), Asbestos Demolition/Renovation Fees.

Federal

The federal regulatory framework for air quality includes many requirements for state and local action. Actions by federal agencies, including BLM and NPS, must comply with the Federal Clean Air Act, which is implemented by a combination of federal, state, and local rules.

Federal Clean Air Act (CAA). The National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for criteria air pollutants were established in 1970 with a mandate for periodic updating. The CAA places responsibility on state and local air agencies to maintain these ambient air quality standards. In the project area, the local air districts have the responsibility to establish regulations, enforce air pollution control requirements, and develop the necessary air quality management plans and strategies to achieve the NAAQS. Each local air district administers its rules and regulations to protect air quality and ensure progress towards attainment. The U.S. EPA implements most aspects of the CAA and provides oversight of local and state air quality management plans, rules and regulations to ensure attainment with the NAAQS.

The federal CAA provides the authority for programs to ensure that all areas of the country achieve the federal ambient air quality standards and to protect those areas that already meet the federal ambient air quality standards. Federal Class I areas are provided the greatest protection, and the CAA prevents air quality deterioration for these areas.

The nearest Federal Class I area to the Proposed Project activities would be the Cucamonga Wilderness Area, managed by the U.S. National Forest Service, approximately 11.5 miles (18.5 kilometers) from the western edge of the project. The San Geronio Wilderness Area (at least 17 miles away) and Joshua Tree National Park (at least 40 miles away) are also Class I areas outside of the region of Proposed Project activities.

Federal General Conformity Rule. Federal lead agencies must make a determination of whether approval of the Proposed Project (i.e., a federal action) would cause or contribute to a violation of the NAAQS or interfere with attainment planning (40 CFR Part 93, Subpart B, et seq.). The westernmost portions of the Proposed Project would be in the federally designated West Mojave Desert severe ozone nonattainment area and moderate PM10 nonattainment area. Southern Clark County, Nevada is a “maintenance” area for ozone, under the 1997 NAAQS. Federal agency actions in these areas are subject to the federal general conformity review requirements, and a conformity determination is required where the total of direct and indirect emissions of criteria pollutants or precursors in the nonattainment or maintenance area caused by a Federal action would equal or exceed certain *de minimis* emission rates (40 CFR 93.153).

5.5.3 Applicant Proposed Measures

The Proposed Project includes five APMs regarding Air Quality.

APM AIR-01: Fugitive Dust. During construction, fugitive dust would be controlled by implementing the following measures:

- Surfaces disturbed by construction activities would be covered or treated with a dust suppressant or water until the completion of activities at each site of disturbance.

- Inactive disturbed (e.g., excavated or graded areas) soil and soil piles would be sufficiently watered or sprayed with a soil stabilizer to create a surface crust or would be covered.
- Drop heights from excavators and loaders would be minimized to a distance of no more than 5 feet. Vehicles hauling soil and other loose material would be covered with tarps or maintain at least 6 inches of freeboard.
- Within Nevada, vehicle speeds on unpaved traffic and parking areas would be restricted to 15 miles per hour. In California, vehicle speeds on unpaved roadways would adhere to all posted speed limits.
- Within Nevada, unpaved non-public traffic and parking areas designated for utilization during Proposed Project construction would be effectively stabilized to control dust emissions (e.g., using water or chemical stabilizer/suppressant). In California, unpaved non-public traffic and parking areas designated for utilization during Proposed Project construction would be effectively stabilized to control dust emissions with a chemical stabilizer/suppressant.

APM AIR-02: Tier 4 Engines. Off-road diesel construction equipment with a rating between 100 and 750 horsepower would be required to use engines compliant with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's final Tier 4 non-road engine standards. In the event that a Tier 4 engine is not available, the equipment would be equipped with a Tier 3 engine and documentation would be provided from a local rental company stating that the rental company does not currently have the required diesel-fueled, off-road construction equipment, or that the vehicle is specialized and is not available to rent. Similarly, if a Tier 3 engine is not available, that equipment would be equipped with a Tier 2 or 1 engine, and documentation of unavailability would be provided.

APM AIR-03: Idling. Equipment would not be left idling in excess of five minutes, except when idling is required for the equipment to perform its task or has a California clean-idle sticker.

APM AIR-04: Equipment Maintenance. Diesel engines would be maintained in good working order and according to manufacturer's specifications to reduce emissions.

APM AIR-05: Ridesharing. Workers would be encouraged to carpool to work sites, and/or utilize public transportation for employee commutes.

5.3.4 CEQA Significance Criteria

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR 15000 et seq.) provides guidance on assessing whether a project would have significant impacts on the environment. Consistent with Appendix G, where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management district or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make determination as to whether the project would:

- a. *Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan*
- b. *Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable Federal or State ambient air quality standard*
- c. *Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations*
- d. *Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people.*

5.3.5 Methodology

All construction- and operation-related emissions are quantified based on the best available forecast of activities. For each of the activities of the Project Description, the Applicant (SCE, 2018) developed emissions estimates within a database that draws emissions factors from the California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod; version 2016.3.2) software developed by the California Air Pollution Control Officers Association (CAPCOA). The emission factors were drawn from the most recent version of the CalEEMod software, which relies upon mobile source emission factors from the Air Resources Board (ARB) OFFROAD inventory and EMFAC2014 models. The activity assumptions, emission factors, and resulting quantities of emissions appear in Appendix B, Air Quality/Greenhouse Gas Emissions Data Tables.

State and Local

For emissions in California, the quantities of direct and indirect air pollutant emissions are compared against the CEQA threshold of significance as recommended by the MDAQMD. The MDAQMD quantitative thresholds are on the basis of tons per year (tpy) or pounds per day (lb/day) of a given pollutant, although the daily value would not apply to the Proposed Project because the construction phase would extend for more than one year (MDAQMD, 2016). For emissions in Nevada, the thresholds of 100 tpy are drawn from federal programs. The CEQA thresholds for significant emissions are shown in Table 5.3-4.

Table 5.3-4. MDAQMD Significant Emissions Thresholds

	NOx	VOC	PM10	PM2.5	CO	SOx
Annual Significance Thresholds (tpy)	25	25	15	12	100	25
Daily Significance Thresholds (lb/day)	137	137	82	65	548	137

Source: MDAQMD, 2016.

Federal

Bureau of Land Management

For portions of the Proposed Project that cause emissions due to federal agency actions the following *de minimis* thresholds would apply for establishing the applicability of the requirement to prepare a general conformity determination, as shown in Table 5.3-5.

Table 5.3-5. Federal General Conformity Rule De Minimis Emissions Thresholds (tons per year)

	NOx	VOC	PM10	PM2.5	CO	SOx
West Mojave Desert portion of San Bernardino County	25	25	100	—	—	—
Remainder of San Bernardino County	—	—	—	—	—	—
Southern Clark County, outside Las Vegas planning area	100	100	—	—	—	—

Note: “—” means area attains all federal standards and no *de minimis* threshold applies.

National Park Service

The information provided above for BLM also applies to NPS-managed lands of the Mojave National Preserve.

5.3.6 Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

a. Would the project conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. Each of California's local air districts is responsible for managing local air quality and administering other California and federal programs ensuring implementation of the air quality management plan. A project could be inconsistent with the applicable air quality management plan or attainment plan if it could cause population and/or employment growth or growth in vehicle-miles traveled in excess of the growth forecasts included in the attainment plan.

The Proposed Project would create no additional permanent full-time positions for providing routine operation and maintenance. The construction workforce would involve an average of 159 workers daily and up to 346 workers during peak periods with multiple crews working concurrently at different locations along the project. Operation and maintenance would require some additional worker-trips, which would cause minor amounts of emissions from motor vehicles, and installation of only minor stationary sources, namely emergency-use, standby generators fired on propane, which would be subject to air permit requirements.

Regional air quality management plans anticipate a baseline level of construction activity and some permanent population growth. The anticipated growth includes the construction of some new infrastructure, such as the Proposed Project. All activities associated with Proposed Project construction and O&M would be subject to compliance with applicable air quality rules and regulations, which are administered by the local air districts to ensure progress towards achieving air quality attainment and implementation of air pollution control requirements. This means that all construction activity would be required to comply with local air district rules regarding dust control such as MDAQMD Rule 403.2 and Clark County Air Quality Regulations Section 94, and operation-phase stationary sources would be subject to the MDAQMD permitting authority. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan. This impact would be less than significant, and no mitigation is required.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

b. Would the project result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?

Construction

State and Local

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION. This discussion addresses whether the Proposed Project would result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is nonattainment. Within the West Mojave planning area of the MDAQMD, emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors, PM₁₀, or PM_{2.5} could represent a cumulatively considerable net increase by contributing to existing violations of the ambient air quality standards for ozone or particulate matter.

Construction-phase emissions would be the result of Proposed Project activity on unpaved and paved surfaces, ground disturbance, and materials hauling, which cause fugitive dust, and the necessary use of

equipment and motor vehicles that cause tailpipe emissions through the use of motor gasoline or diesel fuel. Typical fugitive dust sources include earth-moving activities (e.g., grading and equipment foundations for the two proposed mid-line series capacitors, excavation for tubular steel pole foundations, as well as excavation of the underground duct bank trenches, and repeater sites), the loading and unloading of fill and spoil materials, and vehicle travel across unpaved areas and paved roads. Tailpipe emissions result from the combustion of fuels in off-road construction equipment, helicopters, and on-road vehicles (SCE, 2018).

Overall construction-phase emissions would span two calendar years. The total quantities of criteria air pollutants that could be emitted over the full duration of construction, without consideration of the APMs or additional controls, are shown in Table 5.3-6.

Table 5.3-6. Overall Proposed Project Construction Emissions, without APMs or Mitigation (tons)

Sources	NOx	VOC	PM10	PM2.5	CO	SOx
Helicopters	10.2	1.6	4.2	3.8	10.2	2.6
Off-Road Equipment and Fugitive Dust	26.9	2.5	1.6	1.1	22.9	0.1
On-Road Motor Vehicles and Fugitive Dust	4.1	0.9	182.7	18.7	8.5	0.0
Total, Duration of Construction	41.2	5.0	188.5	23.5	41.6	2.7

Source: Appendix B (SCE, 2018; Responses to Data Requests).

The Proposed Project construction emissions would be reduced through the Applicant Proposed Measures for air quality (Table 5.3-4), which include steps to control fugitive dust, use equipment with Tier 4 engines, limit idling of equipment, maintain equipment properly, and encourage ridesharing. Basic dust control strategies for PM10 and PM2.5 include application of water or dust suppressants on disturbed areas, and the proposed engine exhaust controls would reduce NOx and PM10 that could otherwise be emitted with off-road equipment exhaust.

With implementation of Applicant-Proposed Measures APM-AIR-01, APM-AIR-02, APM-AIR-03, APM-AIR-04, and APM-AIR-05, overall construction emissions would be substantially reduced, as quantified in Table 5.3-7.

Table 5.3-7. Overall Proposed Project Construction Emissions, with APMs and Mitigation (tons)

Sources	NOx	VOC	PM10	PM2.5	CO	SOx
Helicopters	10.2	1.6	4.2	3.8	10.2	2.6
Off-Road Equipment and Fugitive Dust	4.7	0.7	0.4	0.1	28.4	0.1
On-Road Motor Vehicles and Fugitive Dust	4.1	0.9	39.3	4.3	8.5	0.0
Total, Duration of Construction	19.0	3.2	43.9	8.3	47.2	2.7

Source: Appendix B (SCE, 2018; Responses to Data Requests).

Even with implementation of APM AIR-01, the steps taken to control fugitive dust would need careful oversight to be effective. Because the Proposed Project overall land disturbance (Project Description, Section 4.6.7) would involve 375.4 acres being disturbed by project activities, this analysis identifies additional mitigation to ensure formal oversight of dust control efforts by the lead agencies and MDAQMD. For construction activities disturbing 100 acres or more, MDAQMD Rule 403.2 requires implementation of a Dust Control Plan that describes the applicable control measures. Similarly, Clark County Air Quality Regulations Section 94 (Permitting and Dust Control for Construction Activities) requires the Proposed Project to apply for and obtain a dust control permit from the Clark County DAQ that will include an enforceable list of best management practices for dust abatement. Mitigation Measure MM AQ-1 speci-

fies the applicable control measures and other features to be included with the Dust Control Plan for presentation to the air quality management agencies.

The potential for the Proposed Project to violate or contribute substantially to violations of ambient air quality standards would depend on the location of the sources of construction emissions. For this Proposed Project, construction emissions would span across portions of two states. The western-most components of the Proposed Project are within the West Mojave Desert federal ozone nonattainment-(severe) area. These include the Lugo Substation, the western-most 100 miles of the Lugo-Mohave and Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Lines, and the proposed Newberry Springs Series Capacitor and Ludlow Series Capacitor sites. Components of the Proposed Project in Nevada would occur almost entirely on federal lands under BLM jurisdiction.

The annual construction emissions in each state are quantified in Table 5.3-8.

Table 5.3-8. Annual Construction Emissions by State, with APMs and Mitigation (tons per year)

Sources	NOx	VOC	PM10	PM2.5	CO	SOx
California; 2020	3.4	0.5	9.2	1.3	11.2	0.3
California; 2021	8.7	1.5	12.8	3.4	19.1	1.5
Thresholds of Significance (tons per year)	25	25	15	12	100	25
Significant?	No	No	No	No	No	No
Nevada; 2020	5.8	1.0	16.1	2.8	13.5	0.8
Nevada; 2021	1.1	0.2	5.7	0.7	3.4	0.1
Thresholds of Significance (tons per year)	100	100	100	100	100	100
Significant?	No	No	No	No	No	No

Source: Appendix B (SCE, 2018; Responses to Data Requests).

Project construction activities would need to be compliant with federal, state, and local air district rules and regulations and would adhere to the APMs. Table 5.3-8 shows that during construction, the emissions generated would not exceed the applicable significance threshold levels for any air pollutants. Mitigation for this impact (MM AQ-1) would formalize the controls of APM AIR-01 and ensure that dust control efforts would be consistent with local air district rules adopted for the purpose of preventing violations of the PM10 ambient air quality standards. With the Proposed Project APMs and additional mitigation, the construction emissions would not result in a cumulatively considerable new increase of any criteria pollutants and would not be likely to violate any air quality standard. Accordingly, this impact resulting from construction-related emissions would be less than significant with mitigation for dust control.

Federal

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION. On both BLM and NPS lands, mitigation recommended for this impact (MM AQ-1) would ensure that dust control efforts would be consistent with local air district rules adopted for the purpose of preventing violations of the PM10 ambient air quality standards. With mitigation, the construction emissions would not violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation, and the impacts resulting from construction-related emissions would be less than significant with mitigation.

Operation and Maintenance

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. O&M activities associated with the Proposed Project would be similar to those currently performed by SCE for existing facilities. Beyond a continuation of existing O&M activities, additional equipment use and motor vehicle emissions would occur with maintenance necessary for the new mid-line series capacitors and fiber optic repeater sites.

Following construction of the mid-line series capacitors, additional O&M activities would consist of monthly and annual inspections, as well as equipment testing, and propane fuel deliveries and maintenance of the emergency generators, once a year or less frequently. Additional testing, inspections, and maintenance of the new fiber optic repeater facilities, including the building, site, generator, and propane fuel tank refilling would also be required at every six months to once a year (SCE, 2018). A minor increase in emissions would occur due to the periodic inspections and upkeep of the mid-line series capacitors and fiber optic repeater sites (SCE, 2018).

Minor emissions increases would also occur from propane combustion by the following emergency-use proposed stationary sources of air pollutants:

- Each of the three fiber optic repeater facilities in the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line ROW would include emergency generators, each rated to produce approximately 37 kW output and equipped with 499-gallon propane fuel tanks.
- Each of the two mid-line series capacitor sites would include propane powered emergency generators, each rated to produce approximately 351 kW output and equipped with 499-gallon propane fuel tanks.

These five emergency-use, standby generators would be powered by engines that are stationary sources of air pollutants, and MDAQMD may require air permits for each of these engine-generator sets. Depending on final selection of these generators, the engines proposed for the fiber optic repeater sites may qualify as having a rating of less than 50 brake-horsepower, which would not require a permit (according to the terms in MDAQMD Rule 219). Because the generators at the repeater and capacitor sites would provide a backup supply of emergency power, the non-emergency use of the engines would amount to less than 100 hours annually for each unit. As such, these stationary sources would be exempt from emissions standards for engines in MDAQMD Rule 1160 (Internal Combustion Engines).

Emissions from these engine-generator sets would be below the thresholds for triggering any requirements for best available control technology or for obtaining offsets under MDAQMD Rule 1303 (NSR Requirements). Table 5.3-9 shows that the emissions from the proposed engines would not exceed the significance threshold levels for any air pollutants. The quantities of emissions appear in Appendix B, Air Quality/Greenhouse Gas Emissions Data Tables.

Table 5.3-9. Operation Emissions, Standby Generators

Sources, Daily Emissions during Testing	NOx (lb/day)	VOC (lb/day)	PM10 (lb/day)	PM2.5 (lb/day)	CO (lb/day)	SOx (lb/day)
Each Generator at Fiber Optic Repeater Sites (3 each rated at ~37 kW output)	0.31	0.05	< 0.01	< 0.01	2.82	< 0.01
Each Generator at Series Capacitor Sites (2 each rated at ~351 kW output)	6.27	3.11	< 0.01	< 0.01	10.21	< 0.01
Thresholds of Significance (lb/day)	137	137	82	65	548	137
Significant?	No	No	No	No	No	No

Table 5.3-9. Operation Emissions, Standby Generators

Sources, Annual Emissions	NOx (tpy)	VOC (tpy)	PM10 (tpy)	PM2.5 (tpy)	CO (tpy)	SOx (tpy)
Total, All Five Standby Generators	0.03	0.01	< 0.01	< 0.01	0.24	< 0.01
Thresholds of Significance (tons per year)	25	25	15	12	100	25
Significant?	No	No	No	No	No	No

Source: Appendix B (SCE, 2018; Responses to Data Requests).

The operation and maintenance emissions would be less than the level of emissions during construction activities, which would also be less than the significance thresholds. These O&M emissions would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant and would not be likely to violate any air quality standard. Therefore, during operation and maintenance this impact would be less than significant, and no additional mitigation is required.

Mitigation Measures

AQ-1 Prepare and implement a Dust Control Plan. SCE shall ~~avoid-minimize~~ visible fugitive dust emissions by implementing the following dust control measures derived from MDAQMD Rule 403.2. Prior to commencing earth-moving activity, SCE shall prepare and submit to the MDAQMD, Clark County DAQ, CPUC, BLM and NPS a Dust Control Plan that describes all dust control measures that will be implemented for the project, including, but not limited to:

- Use periodic watering for short-term stabilization of disturbed surface area to minimize visible fugitive dust emissions. If used, non-water-based or chemical soil stabilizers and dust suppressants shall be non-toxic and must not cause loss of vegetation, adverse odors, or additional emissions of ozone precursor reactive organic gases (ROG) or volatile organic compounds (VOC).
- Provide stabilized access route(s) to the project site as soon as is feasible and enforce a maximum 15 mile per hour vehicle speed limit on any unpaved surface.
- Stabilize graded site surfaces upon completion of grading when subsequent development is delayed or expected to be delayed more than thirty days, except when such a delay is due to precipitation that dampens the disturbed surface sufficiently to eliminate visible fugitive dust emissions.
- Maintain natural topography to the extent possible.
- Construct parking lots and paved areas first, where feasible.
- Take actions sufficient to prevent project-related trackout or spills onto paved surfaces and cleanup within 24 hours.
- Cover loaded haul vehicles while operating on publicly maintained paved surfaces.
- Reduce non-essential earth-moving activity under high wind conditions, gusts exceeding 25 miles per hour.

c. Would the project expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. Sensitive receptors include the nearest residences, and a number of occupied residential dwelling(s) would be as close as 300 to 500 feet from Proposed Project activities (PEA Table 4.3-1; SCE, 2018). Construction activities would result in locally increased concentrations of construction-related emissions, including diesel particulate matter (DPM) and other toxic air contaminants, which would cause increased health risk and hazards near the site. The construction-related emissions would be short-term and dispersed across the region, ensuring that no single location would be exposed to substantially increased pollutant concentrations, and that the duration of exposure would be limited to approximately 15 months or less at any single location. Because the nearest sensitive receptor would be at least 300 feet from the project activities that could cause locally increased construction-related pollutant concentrations, construction-phase emissions would not expose any sensitive receptors to substantial concentrations.

Installation of new equipment at existing substations could require demolition work that may encounter asbestos-containing building materials. Because asbestos is a toxic air contaminant, SCE will survey the substation work sites and submit a notification to the MDAQMD for any proposed demolition activities at substations that could encounter asbestos; if applicable, payment of the fee under MDAQMD Rule 302(E), Asbestos Demolition/Renovation Fees, would also be required.

For any given proposed industrial land use development that is within 1,000 feet of an existing residential use, the MDAQMD recommends conducting an evaluation of whether the project would expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations (MDAQMD, 2016), which can result in cancer risks or health hazards. The Proposed Project would not be a new industrial land use development or install new sources that could emit substantial levels of toxic air contaminants. Accordingly, the Proposed Project would not warrant further analysis of air quality health risks or hazards. The impact of potentially exposing sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations would be less than significant, and no mitigation is required.

Operation and Maintenance

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. During operation, the emissions produced by the Proposed Project components and O&M activities would be limited to the use of vehicles for routine maintenance and occasional testing of emergency-use, standby generators. These emissions would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial concentrations of air pollutants. The impact would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

d. Would the project result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. The Proposed Project would not include any notable source of odors except for very small quantities of cleaners, solvents or architectural coatings that may include organic compounds. Construction odors would be minimal because of the mandatory use of ultra-low sulfur diesel fuel. Project-related activities would occur in compliance with local air district rules and regulations prohibiting nuisances and would not create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people. This impact would be less than significant, and no mitigation is required.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

5.3.7 References

- MDAQMD (Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District). 2017. Federal 75 ppb Ozone Attainment Plan (Western Mojave Desert Nonattainment Area). Adopted on February 27, 2017.
- _____. 2016. California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and Federal Conformity Guidelines. August.
- _____. 1995. Mojave Desert Planning Area, Federal Particulate Matter (PM10) Attainment Plan. July 31, 1995.
- SCE (Southern California Edison). 2018. Eldorado-Lugo-Mohave Series Capacitor Project: Proponent's Environmental Assessment (PEA). Volumes 1 through 8. April.

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5.4 Biological Resources

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or State habitat conservation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Significance criteria a through f established by CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G.

5.4.1 Environmental Setting

This section describes the biological resources that occur in the Proposed Project area. It includes a description of the existing biotic environment, including sensitive habitats and natural communities as well as special-status species and their locations in relation to the Proposed Project. Section 5.4.2 presents an analysis of potential impacts to biological resources and, where necessary, specifies mitigation measures to reduce potential impacts to less-than-significant levels. Information used in preparing this section was derived from:

- SCE Eldorado-Lugo-Mohave Series Capacitor Project: Proponent's Environmental Assessment (PEA). Volumes 1 through 8 (SCE, 2018);
- Revised Biological Resources Technical Report for the Eldorado-Lugo-Mojave Series Capacitor Project (Insignia, 2018);
- Eldorado-Lugo-Mohave Series Capacitor Project Spring 2019 Rare Plant Survey Summary (Insignia, 2019);
- A search of the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) (CDFW, 2018) for special-status species records within 5 miles of the Proposed Project;
- A search of the Nevada Natural Heritage Program (NNHP) database (NDCNR, 2018);
- A search of California Native Plant Society (CNPS) Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants of California for all U.S. Geological Survey 7.5-minute quadrangles surrounding or spanned by the Proposed Project;

- A search of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Environmental Conservation Online System critical habitat data;
- A search of USFWS Information, Planning, and Conservation System for federally endangered, threatened, and candidate species that may occur within or near the Proposed Project; and
- Review of local government plans and ordinances for the County of San Bernardino and the City of Hesperia in California, and for Clark County and the City of Boulder City in Nevada.
- Environmental documents of other projects in the Proposed Project area.

Each of the background documents was reviewed for content and accuracy and a site visit was conducted on December 4, 2018. Information contained in these documents and observations made during the site visit provide the basis for the environmental setting for biological resources.

Regional Setting

The ELM Project route crosses largely undeveloped federal lands, including lands under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the National Park Service (NPS), the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR), and the Department of Defense (DOD). The Proposed Project also crosses rural and low-density residential land uses on non-federal land in San Bernardino County, California, and Clark County, Nevada.

The Project route is within the Mojave Desert, a hot, dry desert region south of the Sierra Nevada Mountains and east-northeast of the Transverse Ranges. It is characterized by widely scattered mountain ranges and desert plains (basins). General climate conditions are characterized by large fluctuations in daily temperature, high seasonal winds, and low humidity. Summers in the Mojave Desert typically reach maximum temperatures of 119 degrees Fahrenheit, whereas winter temperatures can reach lows in the single digits. The average annual precipitation is approximately 5 inches. The elevation in the project area ranges from 1,200 to 5,000 feet along the Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line, 680 to 4,600 feet on the Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line alignment, and 680 to 3,600 feet along the Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line alignment.

Throughout this section, the “Project footprint” refers to all areas that may be directly affected by the Proposed Project, including work areas within the ROW, access routes, and off-site work areas such as equipment yards and helicopter landing zones. The *Biological Resources Technical Report* (Insignia, 2018) summarizes field surveys completed during 2016 and 2017. It defines the Proposed Project Biological Resources Survey Area (BRSA) as the Proposed Project area (or “footprint”) and a buffer of variable widths to allow for changes in Proposed Project engineering. Therefore, the BRSA conservatively comprises a larger area than would actually be impacted by the Proposed Project.

Vegetation Communities

Vegetation in the Proposed Project area is generally characterized by the dominance of creosote (*Larrea tridentata*) shrubs, although other shrubs and emergent trees may be present at low densities.

Common Vegetation Communities

The BRSA consists mostly of undeveloped lands, with few urbanized areas. Vegetation within the Project vicinity (i.e., the BRSA) was surveyed and mapped to the alliance level described in *A Manual of California Vegetation Online* (CNPS, 2018). Thirty-seven vegetation community alliances and land cover types were identified within the BRSA.

The three creosote bush communities (creosote bush scrub, creosote bush–brittle bush scrub, creosote bush–white bursage scrub) were observed throughout the majority of the BRSA, accounting for approximately 52 percent of the BRSA. These alliances are characterized by the dominance of creosote bush, although other shrubs and emergent trees may be present at low densities. These alliances support a variety of wildlife species, consisting mainly of rodents, reptiles, and invertebrates, as well as nesting and foraging birds and raptors.

Sensitive Natural Communities

Sensitive natural communities are defined as communities that are of limited distribution within California¹ or within a county or region and are often vulnerable to environmental effects of projects. These communities may or may not contain special-status species or their habitats.

There are six sensitive natural communities within the Proposed Project footprint as described in the Biological Resources Technical Report (Insignia, 2018). Acreages of each sensitive natural community located within the project footprint are indicated in Table 5.4-1; descriptions of each community are presented in Appendix D (Biological Resources).

Table 5.4-1. Sensitive Natural Communities

Vegetation Alliance	State Ranking	Acres within Project Footprint
Desert needlegrass grassland (<i>Achnatherum speciosum</i> – Herbaceous Alliance)	S2 (Imperiled)	0.1
Teddy bear cholla patches (<i>Cylindropuntia bigelovii</i> – Shrubland Alliance)	S3 (Vulnerable)	0.1
Black-stem rabbitbrush scrub (<i>Ericameria paniculata</i> – Shrubland Alliance)	S3 (Vulnerable)	0.3
Desert almond – Mexican bladdersage scrub (<i>Prunus fasciculata</i> – <i>Salazaria mexicana</i> – Shrubland Alliance)	S3 (Vulnerable)	2.0
Bush seepweed scrub (<i>Suaeda moquinii</i> – Shrubland Alliance)	S3 (Vulnerable)	0.3
Joshua tree woodland (<i>Yucca brevifolia</i> – Woodland Alliance)	S3 (Vulnerable)	4.9
Total Acres of Sensitive Natural Communities		7.7

Note: Subsequent to conducting biological surveys, selected potential yard sites and helicopter landing zones were eliminated. As a result, values in this table may be somewhat overstated.

Special-Status Plants and Animals

Special-status species are defined as plants or animals that meet one or more of the following criteria:

- Have been designated as either rare, threatened, or endangered by CDFW or the USFWS, and are protected under the California or federal Endangered Species Act (CESA or ESA);
- Are candidate species being considered or proposed for listing under these same acts;
- Are designated Species of Special Concern by CDFW;

¹ The California Department of Wildlife’s (CDFW’s) list of California Sensitive Natural Communities was used to evaluate sensitive natural communities within the Proposed Project area in both California and Nevada. No equivalent list for sensitive natural communities in Nevada is available. All six sensitive natural communities occur in both California and Nevada. Nomenclature for sensitive communities here follows CDFW rankings. The word “community” is a general term for vegetation or habitat types. BLM generally refers to “vegetation communities,” while CDFW refers to “natural communities” and classifies them into smaller units such as alliances.

- Are fully protected by the California State Fish and Game Code, Sections 3511, 4700, 5050, or 5515, or Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations Section 460;
- Are species considered to be “sensitive” by the BLM;
- State-listed species considered to be critically imperiled, imperiled, or vulnerable under the Nevada Natural Heritage Program;
- Are classified as California Rare Plant Rank (CRPR) 1, 2, 3, or 4 by CDFW and the California Native Plant Society (CNPS);
- Are listed on watch lists or provided with special conservation designations by professional working groups/societies (e.g., Western Bat Working Group).

Special-Status Plant Species

Insignia (2018) reviewed data sources to identify all special-status plants reported within 5 miles of the BRSA, which covered a much greater extent than the BRSA. Based on this review, a list was developed of 135 special-status plants potentially present in the BRSA. Most of these species are ranked 1B or 2B in the California Rare Plant Ranking (CRPR) system adopted by CDFW and the California Native Plant Society. CRPR 1B species are defined as Rare, threatened, or endangered in California and throughout their ranges; CRPR 2B species are defined as rare, threatened, or endangered in California but more common elsewhere. In general, the CRPR 2B species identified below are found in eastern California where they are relatively rare, but are more common in Nevada, where they do not have special conservation status. Additionally, three CRPR 4 plant species were identified during field surveys. CRPR 4, while considered a special-status designation, is defined as a watch list and does not indicate rarity or threat. These three plants are golden-rayed pentachaeta, Mojave Indian paintbrush, and revolute spurge.

A detailed project route map showing all tower numbers and work areas can be found in SCE’s PEA Volume 5 Appendix E Part 1 and 2. The Special-Status Plant Survey Reports and maps in the Revised Biological Resources Technical Report can be found in SCE’s PEA Volume 6, Appendix G.

During Insignia’s field surveys, botanists identified 20 of these potential 135 species as being within the BRSA and reported the others as “absent” (Table 9 of the Revised Biological Resources Technical Report [BRTR]). While “absent” appears to be an accurate conclusion for those species whose habitats and geographic ranges are entirely outside the BRSA, it does not accurately reflect potential for occurrence within the BRSA or within the Project footprint for many other species. BRTR Attachment 5.4-A (Special-Status Plants that Could Occur in the Project Vicinity) refines the potential for occurrence of all 135 species in consideration of the habitat and range of each species and the results of Insignia’s pre-survey field research, seasonal rainfall preceding the surveys, and the survey dates themselves. The species observed in the BRSA and their locations are described in detail in MND Appendix D, and include the following:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| ■ Abram’s spurge (2B.2) | ■ Pink funnel lily (2B.2) |
| ■ Appressed muhly (2B.2) | ■ Playa milk-vetch (2B.2) |
| ■ Clokey’s cryptantha (1B.2) | ■ Rosy two-toned beardtongue (1B.2 and NV S2) |
| ■ Cove’s cassia (2B.2) | ■ Rusby’s desert-mallow (1B.2) |
| ■ Johnson’s bee-hive cactus (2B.2) | ■ Salina Pass wild-rye (2B.3) |
| ■ Matted cholla (2B.2) | ■ Short-jointed beavertail (1B.2) |
| ■ Mojave menodora (1B.2) | ■ Slender cottonheads (2B.2) |
| ■ Mojave milkweed (2B.1) | ■ Spiny cliff-brake (2B.3) |
| ■ Narrow-leaved yerba santa (2B.3) | ■ Spiny-hair blazing star (2B.1) |
| ■ Parry’s spurge (2B.3) | ■ Yucca buckwheat (NV S3) |

Similarly, 50 additional special-status plant species may be found within the project footprint during future surveys, depending on rainfall and other seasonal factors.

- Abert's sanvitalia (2B.2)
- Arizona cottontop (2B.3)
- Aven Nelson's phacelia (2B.3)
- Beaver dam breadroot (1B.2)
- Booth's evening primrose (2B.3)
- Burro grass (2B.3)
- Cima milk-vetch (1B.2)
- Clark Mountain spurge (2B.1)
- Creamy blazing star (1B.3)
- Darlington's blazing star (2B.2)
- Desert beardtongue (2B.2)
- Desert pincushion (2B.1)
- Dwarf abutilon (2B.3)
- Glandular ditaxis (2B.1)
- Harwood's eriastrum (1B.3)
- Jackass-clover (2B.2)
- Juniper sulfur-flowered buckwheat (2B.3)
- Latimer's woodland-gilia (1B.2)
- Limestone beardtongue (1B.3)
- Lobed groundcherry (2B.3)
- Long-stem evening-primrose (2B.2)
- Mojave Desert plum (1B.2)
- Mojave monkeyflower (1B.2)
- Mormon needle grass (2B.3)
- Nevada onion (2B.3)
- Nine-awned pappus grass (2B.2)
- Orocopia Mountains spurge (1B.1)
- Plains flax (2B.3)
- Providence Mountains lotus (1B.3)
- Purple-nerve cymopterus (2B.2)
- Red four o'clock (2B.3)
- Reveal's buckwheat (2B.3)
- Rough menodora (2B.3)
- Roughstalk witch grass (2B.1)
- Sagebrush loeflingia
- Scaly cloak fern (2B.3)
- Scrub lotus (1B.3)
- Sky-blue phacelia (2B.3)
- Small-flowered bird's-beak (2B.3)
- Small-flowered sand-verbena (2B.3)
- Southern Mountains skullcap (1B.2)
- Spearleaf (2B.3)
- Stephens' beardtongue (1B.3)
- Sticky ringstem (S2 NV)
- Thorny milkwort (2B.3)
- Three-awned grama (2B.3)
- Utah beardtongue (2B.3)
- Utah daisy (2B.3)
- Violet twining snapdragon (2B.3)
- White-margined beardtongue (1B.1)

Special-Status Wildlife Species

A detailed project route map showing all tower numbers and work areas can be found in SCE's PEA Volume 5, Appendix E, Parts 1 and 2. Special-status wildlife surveys and maps in the Revised Biological Resources Technical Report can be found in SCE's PEA Volume 6 Appendix G.

Two special-status wildlife species were observed within or immediately adjacent to the BRSA during site visits for the Proposed Project:

- Desert bighorn sheep
- Desert tortoise

An additional ~~nine~~-eleven special-status wildlife species were not observed in surveys but are likely to occur within or immediately adjacent to the Proposed Project footprint. Summary descriptions of each of the following species are presented in MND Appendix D:

- Banded Gila monster
- Desert rosy boa
- Mojave fringe-toed lizard
- Loggerhead shrike
- Bendire's thrasher
- Golden eagle

- Western burrowing owl
- Pallid bat
- American badger
- Ringtail
- Desert kit fox

Following are summary descriptions of the wildlife species that are most likely to require protection during ELM Project construction. The specific potential habitat locations for these species along the Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line project are presented in MND Appendix D.

Desert bighorn sheep. Desert bighorn sheep is a BLM sensitive species and Fully Protected species that inhabits rocky, steep, and open terrain encompassing plateaus and springs. It occurs in desert mountain ranges in eastern California, much of Nevada, northwestern Arizona, New Mexico, southern Utah, southern Colorado, and Mexico. Desert bighorn sheep graze on a wide variety of plants, especially green, succulent grasses and forbs. They are often found in herds that are dependent on their proximity to water during the summer and may disperse during the winter. Desert bighorn sheep are susceptible to livestock diseases, and entire herds may be lost to disease. They are also threatened by habitat loss and competition from feral ungulates and livestock for forage.

Within the BRSA, suitable habitat for desert bighorn sheep is limited to desert mountain ranges, including the Providence Mountains, the Dead Mountains, and the Newberry Mountains. Desert bighorn sheep were observed in 2016 within the BRSA in Nevada. In California, there are two recent CNDDDB occurrence records within 0.25 miles of the BRSA. Desert bighorn sheep could occur in any of the mountainous or lower foothill portions of the ELM route.

Desert tortoise. The Mojave species of desert tortoise is federally and state listed as threatened. The species includes those animals living north and west of the Colorado River, primarily in the Mojave Desert of California and Nevada, with small portions of the range occurring in northwestern Arizona and southwestern Utah. Desert tortoise inhabits sandy flats, rocky foothills, alluvial fans, washes, and canyons with sandy or gravelly soils. Soils must be loose for den construction, but firm enough that dens do not collapse. Desert tortoise occurs at elevations ranging from below sea level to 7,300 feet, but most optimal habitat exists between 1,000 and 3,000 feet. Desert tortoises could occur nearly anywhere along the ELM route, excluding urbanized areas. Fourteen live desert tortoises were observed within the BRSA during protocol-level surveys in October 2016. These observations were documented in Clipper Valley, the Dead Mountains, and in the vicinity of the Kelso Dunes. All tortoises were observed north of I-40.

Banded Gila monster. The banded Gila monster is a BLM sensitive species, a California Species of Special Concern, and a Nevada Protected Reptile. The banded Gila monster inhabits rocky crevices and steep canyons associated with high-elevation desert mountain ranges. It utilizes desert washes and associated riparian vegetation for foraging, where it feeds on young mammals, birds, reptiles, and eggs. Banded Gila monster generally winters at more elevated locations on rocky slopes, and spends summers in adjacent valleys or bajadas. Banded Gila monsters face some pressure from habitat loss, due to their restrictive habitat needs.

Suitable habitat for banded Gila monster, coinciding with recent CNDDDB or NNHP occurrence records, is found in the Providence Mountains (California), Highland Range (Nevada), and Newberry Mountains (Nevada).

Mojave fringe-toed lizard. Mojave fringe-toed lizard is a BLM sensitive species and a California Species of Special Concern. It is known almost exclusively from California, primarily in San Bernardino and eastern Riverside Counties, but is also found to the north in southeastern Inyo County and historically to the

west in northeastern Los Angeles County in California and in La Paz County in Arizona. Mojave fringe-toed lizard is found in arid, sandy, sparsely vegetated habitats. Sand dunes and sand fields are its primary habitat, although it can also be found on the margins of dry lakebeds and washes, and in or around isolated sand pockets against hillsides or at the margins of more extensive windblown sand systems. At a minimum, it requires scattered patches of fine, loose, windblown sand, into which it burrows to avoid predators and to thermoregulate. It has been documented in the CNDDDB within 0.25 miles of the BRSA in California. Suitable habitat for Mojave fringe-toed lizard is located within the Project area in California, including large dune or sandfield systems at the Kelso Dunes. Additionally, suitable habitat is found in smaller, scattered areas of windblown sand and adjacent shrublands where sand accumulates. Mojave fringe-toed lizard may occur in or near any suitable windblown sand habitat within its geographic range along the ELM route.

Desert rosy boa. Desert rosy boas occur in rocky shrublands from sea level to about 6700 feet elevation, throughout most of the Mojave Desert and much of the Sonoran Desert, eastward into Nevada and Arizona. They are active during warm seasons, mostly nocturnally. The rosy boa is a protected species in Nevada. It has been recognized as a “special animal” in California but it is no longer included in the CDFW Special Animals compendium. It has no formal status under state or federal Endangered Species Acts.

Loggerhead shrike. Loggerhead shrike is a California Species of Special Concern and a USFWS bird of conservation concern. It is an uncommon year-round resident throughout most of the southern portion of its range, including southern California. In southern California, loggerhead shrikes are generally much more common in interior desert regions than along the coast. In the Mojave Desert it appears to be most numerous in flat or gently sloping foothills and bajadas, especially along the eastern slopes of mountainous areas. Loggerhead shrike begins breeding in February and may continue with raising a second brood as late as July. Loggerhead shrike inhabits lowland, open habitat types, including creosote scrub and other desert habitats, sage scrub, non-native grasslands, chaparral, riparian, croplands, and areas characterized by open scattered trees and shrubs. Fences, posts, or other potential perches are typically present. It feeds on large insects, small birds, amphibians, reptiles, and small rodents over open ground within areas of short vegetation, usually by impaling prey on thorns, wire barbs, or sharp twigs to cache for later feeding. Suitable habitat for loggerhead shrike occurs throughout the scrub habitats within the project area and they have been observed during surveys for adjacent projects. They may occur anywhere along the project route, except perhaps the higher elevation mountain sites.

Bendire’s thrasher. Bendire’s thrasher is a BLM sensitive species, a USFWS bird of conservation concern, and a California Species of Special Concern. In California, Bendire’s thrasher is known from scattered locations in Kern, Inyo, San Bernardino, and Riverside Counties, and with one occurrence in San Diego County. Bendire’s thrasher inhabits open grassland, desert scrub, shrubland, or woodland with scattered trees. It is closely associated with plants of the *Yucca* and *Opuntia* genera, and it selectively occupies areas with higher densities of these plants. Bendire’s thrasher typically avoids rocky outcrops or areas with steep slopes, apparently favoring flat areas with densely packed dirt. It forages mainly on the ground, feeding on arthropods, seeds, and berries. This species is known to inhabit elevations from 1,900 to 5,800 feet, but mostly occurs between 3,100 and 5,000 feet.

Golden eagle. Golden eagle is a BLM sensitive species and a USFWS bird of conservation concern. It is federally protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA) and is a fully protected species by the State of California. Golden eagle is a year-round resident throughout most of its range in the western U.S., including the project region. In the southwest, it is more common during winter when eagles that nest in Canada migrate south into the region. It breeds from late January through August,

mainly during late winter and early spring in the California deserts. In the desert, nests are typically in steep, rugged terrain, often on sites with overhanging ledges, cliffs, or large trees that are used as cover. Golden eagles have also been documented nesting on transmission line towers. The golden eagle prefers mountainous or hilly terrain, and hunts over open spaces for small mammals, snakes, birds, and some carrion. It may vacate hot deserts during the summer months to nest in desert mountains, then return to winter in basin areas. In the desert, an individual's territory may extend as far as 119 square miles.

Suitable foraging habitat for the golden eagle is present throughout the Proposed Project area in California and Nevada. Nesting habitat is present within mountainous and hilly areas, and possibly also on transmission towers, as indicated by recent and historic CNDDDB and NNHP records of nests within 5 miles of the Proposed Project area. The entire Proposed Project area is located within suitable habitat, with the exception of urbanized areas that would lack a prey base.

Wide-ranging Raptors. In addition to golden eagle, several special-status wide-ranging or migratory raptors could occasionally fly over the Project area. These could include Swainson's hawk, peregrine falcon, and bald eagle. The site is outside the nesting range and/or provides no suitable nesting habitat for these species. They are not expected to nest in the Project vicinity and would be foraging in the vicinity only during brief seasonal overflights.

Western burrowing owl. Western burrowing owl is a BLM sensitive species and a California Species of Special Concern. It is found across the Mojave and Colorado deserts of Inyo, eastern Kern, northern Los Angeles, San Bernardino, eastern Riverside, eastern San Diego, and Imperial Counties. Burrow sites occur in open, dry annual or perennial grasslands, deserts, and scrublands with low-growing vegetation. It nests in burrows that are often dug by small mammals, typically those of the California ground squirrel (*Otospermophilus beecheyi*). It can also occur in open areas of farmland, levee banks, and other disturbed or managed habitats where burrows or burrow-like refuges (e.g., small-diameter pipes, rock piles with voids, or similar hollow spaces) are present. It breeds from February 1 through August 30. Young are capable of full flight at six weeks of age and are fed by parents for approximately one year. Western burrowing owl is generally found at elevations from 200 to 5,000 feet.

The Project area is located within the breeding range of western burrowing owl in California and Nevada. Suitable habitat is present throughout the BRSA, and recent CNDDDB occurrences were documented within 5 miles of the BRSA in California. An active burrow was incidentally observed near the BRSA near the community of Ludlow during special-status plant surveys conducted in the spring of 2016. Burrowing owl surveys were conducted in 2018.

Pallid bat. The pallid bat is a BLM sensitive species, a California Species of Special Concern, and a Nevada Protected Mammal. The pallid bat inhabits low desert shrublands, juniper woodlands, grasslands, and cottonwood-riparian zones through western North America. It is generally found at elevations between 100 and 7,000 feet. It needs open, dry areas with rocky areas for roosting. Pallid bat may also roost in abandoned, man-made structures.

Suitable roosting habitat for the pallid bat is distributed throughout the Proposed Project area in California and Nevada in the many rocky areas and mineshafts. The abundance of open, dry areas surrounding the rocky areas provide ample foraging habitat throughout the Proposed Project area, as well. Due to the large range size of this species, the entire Proposed Project area is located within suitable habitat for the species, with the exception of disturbed and developed areas that would lack a prey base.

American badger. American badger is a California Species of Special Concern that occupies open, uncultivated habitats. It occurs primarily in grasslands, parklands, farms, and other treeless areas with friable

soil and a supply of rodent prey. It is also found in forest glades and meadows, marshes, brushy areas, hot deserts, and mountain meadows. It is sometimes found at elevations up to 12,000 feet, but is usually found at elevations lower and warmer than those characterized by coniferous forests. American badgers are occasionally found in open chaparral (with less than 50-percent plant cover) and riparian zones. American badgers create burrows for sleeping and concealment, protection from weather, and natal dens. Burrows typically range from 4 to 10 feet in depth and 4 to 6 feet in width. Breeding generally occurs between December and February, and cubs are born between March and April.

The proposed project is located within the range of American badger. Suitable habitat occurs throughout the project area, and recent occurrences have been documented within 5 miles of the BRSA in California.

Ringtail. The ringtail is fully protected in California. Suitable habitat for ringtail is forest and shrubland with rocky areas, usually near permanent water and riparian areas. It could occur anywhere along the project alignment, particularly in steep rocky shrubland habitats, where springs, seeps, or anthropogenic water sources may provide drinking water. Ringtails den and rear their cubs in rock crevices, hollow logs, abandoned burrows, or woodrat middens.

Desert kit fox. The desert kit fox is protected under Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations § 460 which prohibits the take of certain furbearing mammals. It is found throughout the Mojave and Colorado Deserts in California and occupies desert scrub habitat. The desert kit fox inhabits desert habitat where there is an abundance of small mammals, its main food source. It lives in burrows and burrow complexes and requires soils with appropriate composition for burrow construction. Desert kit fox is nocturnal and generally forages within a few miles of its den. Desert kit fox is generally found at elevations of 1,300 feet to 6,000 feet. Suitable habitat for desert kit fox occurs throughout the project area.

Critical Habitat

Under the ESA, and to the extent prudent and determinable, the USFWS is required to designate critical habitat for endangered and threatened species (16 USC § 1533 [a][3]). Critical habitat is defined as areas of land, water, and airspace containing the physical and biological features essential for the survival and recovery of endangered and threatened species. Designated critical habitat includes sites for breeding and rearing, movement or migration, feeding, roosting, cover, and shelter. The critical habitat designation delineates all suitable habitat, occupied or not, that is essential to the survival and recovery of the species.

Approximately 67 acres of the project footprint areas are located in designated critical habitat for desert tortoise. Between the Barstow Repeater site (northeast of Lucerne Valley) and I-40, the route crosses desert tortoise critical habitat in two sections of ROW. The majority of the Mojave National Preserve crossed by the Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line is designated as critical desert tortoise habitat and most of the Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line ROW in Nevada also is within critical habitat.

Critical habitat for the following six additional species is located within 5 miles of the Proposed Project route, but not within the BRSA or the Project footprint. Moreover, no suitable habitat for these species is found within the BRSA or the Project footprint:

- Cushenbury buckwheat
- Cushenbury oxytheca
- Arroyo toad
- Razorback sucker

- Bonytail chub
- Southwest willow flycatcher

Other special-status wildlife species with potential to occur within or adjacent to the Project area, along with the ones listed above, are presented in BRTR Attachment 5.4-B (Special-status Wildlife that Could Occur in the Project Vicinity).

Wildlife Corridors

Wildlife corridors are defined as areas that connect suitable habitat for a species in a region otherwise fragmented by rugged terrain, changes in vegetation, or human disturbance. Natural features (e.g., canyon drainages, ridgelines, or areas with vegetation cover) provide corridors for wildlife travel. Wildlife corridors are important because they provide access to mates, food, and water; allow the dispersal of individuals away from high-population-density areas; and facilitate gene flow between populations. Wildlife corridors are considered sensitive by resource and conservation agencies. No specific wildlife corridors are identified along the Project route, although wildlife are expected to move freely throughout the area, beneath the existing transmission lines.

Jurisdictional Waters

With the exception of the Mojave River and several smaller intermittent streams, streams on the ELM Project route consist of ephemeral dry washes that carry water for short periods of time as the result of seasonal precipitation.

Major drainages crossed by the ELM Project route include the Mojave River, Budweiser Wash, and Piute Wash. Within the vicinity of Lugo Substation, water generally flows from south to northeast, toward the Mojave River, and from there to isolated basins in the interior of the Mojave. Near Mohave Substation, water flows from west to east, toward the Colorado River. In the vicinity of Eldorado Substation, water generally flows from southwest to northeast and into the Eldorado Dry Lake.

In 2016 and 2017, Insignia biologists delineated water features in the BRSA that are potentially under the jurisdiction of the USACE, SWRCB, NDEP, and CDFW. A total of 588 water features were mapped. This included 582 ephemeral drainages and five intermittent drainages. No perennial streams occurred within the BRSA. One wetland was also delineated, measuring approximately 0.2 acres. CDFW-jurisdictional riparian vegetation was also mapped within the BRSA.

5.4.2 Regulatory Background

State and Local

California

California Endangered Species Act (CESA; Fish and Game Code Section 2050 et seq.). The CESA prohibits take of state-listed threatened or endangered species, or candidates for listing, except as authorized by the CDFW. Authorization may be issued as an Incidental Take Permit or, for species listed under both CESA and the federal ESA, through a Consistency Determination with the federal incidental take authorization.

Fully Protected Designations (Fish and Game Code Sections 3511, 4700, 5050, and 5515). The California Fish and Game Code designates 36 fish and wildlife species as “fully protected” from take, including hunting, harvesting, and other activities. The CDFW may only authorize take of designated fully protected species through a Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP) or for necessary scientific research.

Birds (Fish and Game Code Sections 3503, 3503.5, and 3513). The California Fish and Game Code prohibits take, possession, or needless destruction of bird nests or eggs except as otherwise provided by the code. Section 3513 provides for the adoption of the MBTA's provisions (above).

Protected Furbearers (California Code of Regulations Title 14 Section 460). Specifies that several furbearing mammals, including desert kit fox, may not be taken at any time. The CDFW may permit capture or handling of these species for scientific research but does not issue Incidental Take Permits for other purposes.

Native Plant Protection Act (Fish and Game Code Sections 1900-1913). Prior to enactment of CESA and the federal ESA, California adopted the Native Plant Protection Act (NPPA). The CESA (above) generally replaces the NPPA for plants originally listed as endangered under the NPPA. However, plants originally listed as rare retain that designation, and take is regulated under provisions of the NPPA. The California Fish and Game Commission adopted revisions to the NPPA allowing CDFW to issue incidental take authorization for listed rare plants, effective January 1, 2015.

Lake and Streambed Alteration (Fish and Game Code Sections 1600 1616). The CDFW regulates project activities that would divert, obstruct or change the natural flow, bed, channel, or bank of any river, stream, or lake.

Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act of 1969 (California Water Code Sections 13000 et seq.). This Act provides Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCBs) regulation of Waters of the State including State coordination with the Clean Water Act where federally jurisdictional waters are present. The Project site is within the Colorado River RWQCB area.

Nevada

Nevada Revised Statutes Section 527.260-527.300. This statute section protects native plant species that are threatened by extinction with fully protected status. These species may only be removed under special permit issued by the State Forester Fire Warden.

Nevada Revised Statutes Section 503.585. NRS Section 503.585 requires a special purpose permit from the NDOW for the capture, removal, or destruction of any State-listed wildlife species. The special purpose permit specifies the relocation methods required on a project site.

Nevada Revised Statutes Chapter 445A. NRS Chapter 445A requires permits for discharges of any pollutant, including dredged soil and biological material, into any water of the State. A general permit is available for all projects that involve similar categories of discharges as previous projects. Individual permits may be granted if a proposed project does not fall within the parameters of the general permit.

Nevada Administration Code 503. The Nevada Administrative Code (NAC) 503 establishes the State's list of endangered, threatened, sensitive, and protected species. A permit issued by the Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) is required to handle, move, or temporarily possess any wildlife species classified as endangered, threatened, sensitive, or protected.

Local

The CPUC has sole and exclusive jurisdiction over the siting and design of the Proposed Project components located in the State of California. Pursuant to CPUC G.O. 131-D, Section XIV.B, "Local jurisdictions acting pursuant to local authority are preempted from regulating electric power line projects, distribution lines, substations, or electric facilities constructed by public utilities subject to the CPUC's jurisdiction. However, in locating such projects, the public utilities shall consult with local agencies regarding

land use matters.” Consequently, public utilities are directed to consider local regulations and consult with local agencies, but the county and cities’ regulations are not applicable as the county and cities do not have jurisdiction over the Proposed Project. For informational purposes, local regulations in California jurisdictions are provided in Appendix C. The Proposed Project is subject to local regulations in the State of Nevada.

Clark County Comprehensive Plan. The Conservation and Open Space Element contains the following policies that are relevant to biological resources for the Proposed Project:

- Land Conservation Policy 3: Encourage preservation and protection of washes and waterways.
- Species Protection Policy 1: Encroachment upon endangered species habitats and unique biological resource areas should be avoided or mitigated.
- Species Protection Policy 3: Clark County and Federal agencies should coordinate land uses and disposals near federally designated management areas to reduce environmental and habitat impacts within protected areas.
- Species Protection Policy 4: Protect existing threatened or endangered species and those species that may be listed under the provisions of the Federal Endangered Species Act.
- Species Protection Policy 5: Throughout the 30-year term of the permit, Clark County will administer and maintain Permit TE 034927-0 for the Clark County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP), under Section 10(a)1(B) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973.
- Water Quality Policy 8: Actively pursue efforts to ensure the quality of water entering the Colorado River.

Clark County Code of Ordinances, Chapter 30.32.050, Incidental Take Permit. Compliance with Endangered Species Act, details the process required by developers to comply with the Clark County Multiple Species HCP (MSHCP).

Clark County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan. Provides federal ESA Section 10 incidental take authorization for qualifying activities; requires specific protective measures by permittee agencies. Applicable on BLM lands outside the utility corridor ROW and on non-federal lands in Nevada.

- Limit motorized use in the Eldorado/Piute “Conserved Habitat” to designated trails.
- Protect snags as important ecological features.
- Work with the Nevada Power Company and other utilities to modify existing power line towers or poles to meet BLM standards for the prevention of raptor mortality.
- Protect key nesting areas, migration routes, important prey base areas, and concentration areas for birds of prey on public lands through the mitigation of activities during National Environmental Policy Act compliance.
- Limit the construction of new roads for the development of utility lines within special status species habitat.
- Protect important resting/nesting habitat, such as riparian areas and mesquite/acacia woodlands. Do not allow projects that may adversely impact the water table supporting these plant communities.
- Within desert tortoise critical habitat, require reclamation of activities that result in loss or degradation of habitat, with habitat to be reclaimed to pre-disturbance condition.

- During development of all activity plans, give special attention to protecting riparian zones as wildlife habitat and to protecting associated native wildlife.
- Prohibit collection or harassment of any wildlife in Nevada State Parks.
- Prohibit unconstrained pets or domestic animals in Nevada State Parks.

Clark County Laughlin Land Use Plan. The Natural Environment Section Policy 39.4 encourages preservation of natural washes and unlined channels to an extent practical and consistent with the need for flood protection, erosion control, and water quality. Policy 39.6 encourages the preservation of natural washes and waterways. The Conservation Areas Section Goal 44 encourages the conservation of wilderness and preservation lands.

South Clark County Land Use Plan. The Natural Environment Section Policy 46.4 encourages preservation of natural washes and unlined channels to an extent practical and consistent with the need for flood protection, erosion control, and water quality. The Conservation section encourages preservation and protection of washes and waterways and buffering of environmentally sensitive lands with adjacent low intensity uses, among other goals.

City of Boulder City Master Plan. The Conservation and Open Space Elements of the Boulder City Master Plan include the following relevant policies: NRC 5, continue to preserve, wherever possible, natural habitat for wildlife and plants native to the region through compliance with the Clark County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan, and NRC 9, continue to work with the Regional Flood Control District to ensure that future development projects provide multi-purpose flood control systems.

City of Boulder City – City Code. Chapter 43 requires that development comply with the Clark County MSHCP. Chapter 40 prohibits the alteration of natural floodplains, stream channels, and natural protective barriers, which help channel flood waters and sediments.

Federal

Federal – Applicable in California and Nevada

Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA; 43 USC Sections 1701-1787). FLPMA directs management of public lands managed by the U.S. Forest Service, National Park Service, and BLM; it addresses land use planning, rights-of-way, wilderness, and multiple use policies. The Act provides a regulatory framework for land management and establishes the authority of the BLM to grant rights-of-way for generation, transmission, and distribution of electrical energy. The FLPMA also gives authority to the BLM to manage sensitive species on BLM lands.

Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973, USC, Title 16, Sections 1531 through 1543. The EAS establishes requirements for the conservation of endangered and threatened species and the ecosystems upon which they depend. Section 9 of the ESA prohibits the taking of ESA-listed wildlife and lists prohibited actions. The ESA defines take as “harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, collect, or attempt to engage in such conduct” (50 *Code of Federal Regulations* [CFR] 17.3). The ESA also governs the removal, possession, malicious damage, or destruction of endangered plants on federal land. Taking is allowed only when incidental to an otherwise legal activity through the ESA Section 7 process for federal agencies and through the ESA Section 10 habitat conservation plan process for private entities.

Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA; 16 USC Sections 703-711). The MBTA prohibits take of any migratory bird, including eggs or active nests, except as permitted by regulation (e.g., licensed hunting of waterfowl or upland game species). Under the MBTA, “migratory bird” is broadly defined as “any species or

family of birds that live, reproduce or migrate within or across international borders at some point during their annual life cycle” and thus applies to most native bird species. The U.S. Department of Interior has recently issued a solicitor’s opinion interpreting the MBTA prohibitions as being inapplicable to “incidental take.”

Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA; 16 USC Section 668). The BGEPA prohibits the take, possession, and commerce of bald eagles and golden eagles. Under the BGEPA and subsequent rules published by the USFWS, “take” may include actions that injure an eagle or affect reproductive success (productivity) by substantially interfering with normal behavior or causing nest abandonment. The USFWS can authorize incidental take of bald and golden eagles for otherwise lawful activities.

Desert Tortoise Recovery Plan and Critical Habitat Designation. This plan and designation establish a strategy for the recovery and eventual delisting of the desert tortoise. It establishes five recovery units that cover the entire range of the desert tortoise. It also delineates 12 Critical Habitat Units established by the USFWS. The ELM Project route crosses the Colorado Desert, Western Mojave, and Eastern Mojave Recovery Units and is partly located in critical habitat. The plan outlines specific restoration and revegetation standards

Clean Water Act. (33 USC 1251 et seq.). the CWA establishes requirements for the restoration and maintenance of the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the nation’s waters.

Section 401. Requires that an applicant for a federal license or permit that allows activities resulting in a discharge to waters of the United States must obtain a State certification that the discharge complies with other provisions of the Clean Water Act. The Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCBs) administer the certification program in California.

Section 404. Establishes a permit program administered by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) regulating the discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States, including wetlands. Implementing regulations by the USACE are found at 33 CFR Parts 320-330. Guidelines for implementation are referred to as the Section 404(b)(1) Guidelines and were developed by the EPA in conjunction with the USACE (40 CFR Parts 230). The Guidelines allow the discharge of dredged or fill material into the aquatic system only if there is no practicable alternative that would have less adverse impacts.

Invasive Species, Executive Order 13112 (February 3, 1999). Executive Order (EO) 13112 directs federal agencies to prevent and control the spread of invasive plants and animals, and avoid direct or indirect impacts whenever there is a practicable alternative.

Executive Order 13186, Responsibilities of Federal Agencies to Protect Migratory Birds. This EO directs federal agencies to review the effects of actions and agency plans on migratory birds according to NEPA or other established environmental review processes, with emphasis on species of concern (Section 6 of the order) and identify unintentional take reasonably attributable to agency actions, focusing first on species of concern, priority habitats, and key risk factors and to develop and use principles, standards, and practices to lessen the amount of unintentional take (Section 9).

Plant Protection Act of 2000. This Act prevents importation, exportation, and spread of pests that are injurious to plants, and provides for the certification of plants and the control and eradication of plant pests. The Act consolidates requirements previously contained within multiple federal regulations including the Federal Noxious Weed Act, the Plant Quarantine Act, and the Federal Plant Pest Act.

Federal – Applicable in California

California Desert Conservation Area Plan, As Amended (CDCA Plan). The CDCA Plan guides the management of approximately 12 million acres of BLM-administered lands in the California Desert District, including the Mojave, Sonoran, and a small portion of the Great Basin Deserts. BLM lands within the Project area in California are within the CDCA Plan Area. The CDCA Plan directs management policy for multiple resources, including wildlife and vegetation.

Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP), Land Use Plan Amendment to the CDCA. The purpose of the DRECP is to conserve and manage plant and wildlife communities in the desert regions of California while facilitating the timely permitting of compatible renewable energy projects. The DRECP covers over 10 million acres of BLM land. The BLM Record of Decision (ROD) for the DRECP was issued in September 2016.

Mojave National Preserve General Management Plan. This plan seeks to perpetuate native plant life as critical components of the Mojave Desert ecosystem within the MNP. Specifically, it allows the manipulation of plant and plant communities only when necessary and requires that all disturbed vegetation be restored to pre-disturbance conditions. This plan also seeks to identify, inventory, and promote conservation for any plant, as well as USFWS-designated critical habitat for any ESA-listed species or State- and locally listed threatened, endangered, rare, or candidate species. Outlines specific management policies and goals for desert tortoise and desert bighorn sheep, as follows:

- Management of trash and litter that may attract common ravens;
- Prohibition of surface disturbance, unless it is appropriately restored or mitigated;
- No new roads will be constructed in desert tortoise critical habitat;
- ROWs and easements will be reduced on MNP lands;
- Holders of ROWs and easements may be required to install tortoise fencing through critical habitat;
- An active restoration program will be established on previously disturbed lands.

5.4.3 Applicant Proposed Measures

SCE proposes 8 APMs regarding Biological Resources:

APM BIO-01: Revegetation Plan. [Superseded by Mitigation Measure BR-4.] To the extent feasible, SCE would minimize temporary impacts and permanent loss to sensitive natural vegetation communities and special-status plants. Impacts would be minimized at construction sites by clearly demarcating work areas and flagging resources to be avoided. If unable to avoid impacts to sensitive natural vegetation communities and special-status plants, a revegetation plan would be prepared in coordination with the applicable agencies. The revegetation plan would describe, at a minimum, which vegetation restoration method (e.g., natural revegetation, planting, or reseeding with native seed stock in compliance with the Proposed Project's SWPPPs) would be implemented in the Proposed Project area. The revegetation plan would also include the plant species or habitats to be restored or revegetated, the replacement or restoration ratios (as appropriate), the restoration methods and techniques, and the monitoring periods and success criteria.

APM BIO-02: Special-Status Plant Species Protection. [Superseded by Mitigation Measure BR-6.] Prior to construction and during the appropriate phenological (i.e., blooming) periods, a qualified biologist would flag the locations of any special-status plants present within a work area. These flagged areas would be avoided to the extent possible and monitored by a qualified biologist during construction activities. Where disturbance to these areas cannot be avoided, SCE would develop and implement a

revegetation plan (APM BIO-01). Weed species would be removed, where necessary, from areas to be revegetated to ensure successful revegetation to pre-construction conditions.

APM BIO-03: Noxious and Invasive Weed Management Plan. [Superseded by Mitigation Measure BR-5.] Prior to construction, SCE would prepare a Noxious and Invasive Weed Management Plan (NIWMP) that is intended to minimize the spread of noxious and invasive weeds during construction. The NIWMP would include, but would not be limited to, ensuring that construction (earth-moving or ground-disturbing) vehicles arrive to work sites clean and weed-free prior to entering the ROW in cross-country areas, ensuring straw wattles used to contain stormwater runoff are weed-free, and documenting the extent of noxious weeds within the construction areas prior to construction. Noxious weeds are defined as species rated as High on the California Invasive Plant Inventory Database, published by the California Invasive Plant Council. Construction within urban/developed areas and intensive agricultural areas would be exempt from the NIWMP requirements.

APM BIO-04: Desert Tortoise Protection. [Superseded by Mitigation Measure BR-9.] The following list of measures is designed to avoid and minimize impacts to desert tortoise and would apply to all construction activities in areas with the potential to support the species:

1. **Pre-activity Surveys:** No more than seven days prior to the onset of ground-disturbing activities, an agency-approved biologist — with experience monitoring and handling desert tortoise — would conduct a pre-activity survey in all work areas within potential desert tortoise habitat, plus an approximately 300-foot buffer. All desert tortoise burrows within the pre-activity survey area (including desert tortoise pallets) would be prominently flagged at that time so that they may be avoided during work activities. Proposed actions would avoid disturbing desert tortoise burrows to the extent possible. However, burrows would be excavated if they would be impacted by construction activities. If a potential tortoise burrow must be excavated, the biologist would proceed according to the Desert Tortoise Council's Guidelines for Handling Desert Tortoise during Construction Projects.
2. **Monitoring:** The approved tortoise biologist would be available on site to monitor any work areas for desert tortoise, as needed. The approved tortoise biologist would be responsible for performing surveys prior to Proposed Project activities in suitable desert tortoise habitat. The approved tortoise biologist would have the authority to halt all non-emergency actions (as soon as safely possible) that may result in harm to desert tortoise and would assist in the overall implementation of APMs for the tortoise.
3. **Desert Tortoise in Work Area:** In the event that a desert tortoise is encountered in the work area, all work would cease, and the approved biologist would be contacted. Work would not commence until the animal has voluntarily moved to a safe distance away from the work area. Desert tortoises may be moved by an agency-approved biologist if necessary, to move them out of harm's way. Encounters with desert tortoise would be reported to an approved biologist. Encounters with desert tortoise would be documented and provided to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), BLM, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). In the event that a dead or injured desert tortoise is observed, the approved biologist would be responsible for notifying SCE's herpetologist and reporting the incident to the CDFW, BLM, and USFWS.
4. **Under Vehicle Checks:** Desert tortoises commonly seek shade during the hottest times of the day. Employees working within the geographic range of this species would be required to check under their equipment or vehicles before they are moved. If desert tortoises are encountered, the vehicle is not to be moved until the animals have voluntarily moved to a safe distance away from the parked vehicle. Desert tortoises may be moved by the approved biologist, if necessary, to move them out of harm's way.

5. Handling Desert Tortoise: Only an agency-approved biologist may move or handle desert tortoises. When a desert tortoise is moved, the approved biologist would be responsible for taking appropriate measures to ensure that the animal is not exposed to harmful temperature extremes. The approved biologist would follow the appropriate protocols outlined in the Desert Tortoise Council's Guidelines for Handling Desert Tortoises During Construction Projects when handling desert tortoises or excavating their burrows.
6. Excavation of Desert Tortoise Burrows: Should it prove necessary to excavate a desert tortoise from its burrow to move it out of harm's way, excavation would be done using hand tools, either by or under the direct supervision of an approved biologist. Excavation of desert tortoise burrows would occur no more than seven days before the onset of construction or O&M activities. All desert tortoises removed from burrows would be placed in an unoccupied burrow that is approximately the same size as the one from which it was removed. If an existing burrow is unavailable, the approved biologist would construct or direct the construction of a burrow of similar shape, size, depth, and orientation as the original burrow. To ensure their safety, desert tortoises moved during inactive periods would be monitored for at least two days after placement in the new burrows or until the end of the construction activity.

If desert tortoises need to be moved at a time of day when ambient temperatures could harm them (i.e., at temperatures lower than 40 degrees Fahrenheit (°F) or higher than 90°F), they would be held overnight in a clean cardboard box. These desert tortoises would be kept in the care of the approved biologist under appropriate controlled temperatures and released the following day when temperatures are favorable. All cardboard boxes would be appropriately discarded after one use.

7. Disposal of Trash: Trash and food items would be contained in closed containers and removed daily to reduce attractiveness to opportunistic predators, such as common ravens (*Corvus corax*), coyotes (*Canis latrans*), and feral dogs (*Canis lupus familiaris*).
8. Pets Prohibited: Employees would not bring pets to the Proposed Project area.
9. Vehicle Travel: Motor vehicles would be limited to maintained roads and designated routes. If additional routes are needed, they would be surveyed by the approved biologist.
10. Raven Management: SCE would implement a Raven Management Plan (RMP) to minimize avian predation of desert tortoise for the Proposed Project. The purpose of the RMP is to utilize methods that deter raven depredation of juvenile desert tortoises, and other wildlife species. The RMP is not intended to eliminate or control raven populations but would target offending ravens that have been found to prey upon desert tortoises. The RMP would incorporate an adaptive management strategy for immediate implementation following construction of the Proposed Project. The RMP would be evaluated after three years of implementation, or as needed, if avian predation becomes apparent. The following activities may be implemented as part of the RMP: (1) Common raven nest/power line monitoring, (2) Funding of offending raven control via contract with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and (3) Alternative control strategies developed in coordination with USFWS (e.g. egg-oiling, laser deterrents, etc.). Mutual and timely cooperation between SCE and the BLM, USFWS, and CDFW is central to effective implementation of the RMP.

APM BIO-05: Compensation for Impacts to Desert Tortoise Critical Habitat. [Superseded by Mitigation Measure BR-8.] Compensation for temporary and permanent impacts to desert tortoise habitat disturbance is proposed at the following ratios:

- A 5-to-1 ratio for impacts to desert tortoise critical habitat.
- A 1-to-1 ratio for impacts to desert tortoise habitat, excluding critical habitat.

No compensatory mitigation is required for disturbed areas (i.e., totally denuded, mostly denuded with scattered shrub-like vegetation, active agricultural, residential, and urban) that provide no habitat value to the species. Although much of the desert tortoise habitat disturbance resulting from Proposed Project activities would be temporary, compensatory mitigation would be provided at a permanent ratio due to the slow recovery time of habitats in desert ecosystems. No mitigation would occur for impacts to developed land within the Proposed Project area.

APM BIO-06: Nesting Birds. [Superseded by Mitigation Measure BR-10.] SCE would conduct pre-construction clearance surveys no more than seven days prior to construction to determine the location of nesting birds and territories, during the nesting bird season (typically February 1 to August 31, or earlier for species such as raptors). An avian biologist would establish a buffer area around active nest(s) and would monitor the effects of construction activities to prevent failure of the active nest. The buffer would be established based on construction activities, potential noise disturbance levels, and behavior of the species. Monitoring of construction activities that have the potential to affect active nest(s) would continue until the adjacent construction activities are completed or until the nest is no longer active.

APM BIO-07: Western Burrowing Owl (*Athene cunicularia*) Protection. [Superseded by Mitigation Measure BR-11.] Pre-construction burrowing owl surveys would be conducted within suitable habitat in accordance with Appendix D of the Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation (CDFW, 2012). Prior to construction activities SCE would prepare a survey report in accordance with the requirements of the staff report. If a breeding territory or nest is confirmed, the CDFW would be notified and SCE would avoid impacts to burrowing owl to the extent feasible. If unavoidable impacts to western burrowing owl are anticipated, SCE would implement mitigation methods as outlined in the staff report and in coordination with the CDFW.

APM BIO-08: Compensation for Permanent Impacts to Jurisdictional Water Resources. All necessary authorizations must be obtained from the applicable jurisdictional agencies for impacts to aquatic resources. Permanent impacts to all jurisdictional water resources would be compensated for at a one-to-one ratio, or as agreed upon with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, State Water Resources Control Board, NDEP, and CDFW.

5.4.4 CEQA Significance Criteria

The significance criteria for biological resources impacts are based on the questions included in Appendix G of the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines, which provides guidance on assessing whether a project would have significant impacts on the environment. Consistent with Appendix G, the Proposed Project would have significant impacts on biological resources if it would:

- a. *Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.*²
- b. *Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.*

² Because of the broad coverage of significance criterion a, impacts are addressed in the MND in several categories, allowing separate analysis of the following: (1) reduction of habitat, (2) effects on special-status plants, and (3) effects on special-status wildlife, including nesting birds.

- c. Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means*
- d. Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites.*
- e. Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance.*
- f. Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or State habitat conservation plan?*

5.4.5 Methodology

SCE's consultant, Insignia Environmental (Insignia) collected biological resources data for the Proposed Project's BRSA (described in Section 5.4.1, Environmental Setting, under subheadings Regional Setting, Vegetation Communities, and Special-Status Plants and Wildlife) to evaluate and inventory biological resources. Background resources data were obtained through a literature review of aerial photographs, U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) topographic maps, USFWS National Wetland Inventory maps (USFWS, 2016); survey reports for the Proposed Project, and literature and database searches. In addition, Insignia conducted field visits including a habitat assessment, vegetation community mapping, special-status plant and wildlife surveys, and jurisdictional delineations of wetlands and waters to assess biological and aquatic resources in the BRSA.

Special-status plant surveys were conducted in two passes during the spring of 2016 on approximately 2,511 acres of the BRSA. Between October 2015 and May 2016, the Mojave Desert experienced approximately 64 percent of its average rainfall, which is around 5 inches. The surveys were conducted in accordance with guidelines published by the CNPS (2001), CDFW (2009), and USFWS (2000). Following these guidelines, surveys were conducted during the flowering seasons for special-status plant species from the region; however, plants may not be evident and flowering in any given year due to weather variations or other factors. All areas of the BRSA were examined by walking transects through potential habitat, and by closely examining any existing microhabitats that are more likely to support special-status plants. Nomenclature used for plant names follow The Jepson Manual: Vascular Plants of California, Second Edition (Baldwin et al., 2012). Nomenclature changes made after the publication date of The Jepson Manual follow the Jepson eFlora (2016) website.

Several supplemental surveys were completed in spring 2017. New botanical surveys were completed twice during 2017 on approximately 74 acres that had not been previously surveyed, based on project design refinements. Approximately 50 additional acres in the Pisgah-Broadwell Valley area were re-surveyed once in 2017 due to potential occurrence of special-status plants and improved rainfall compared to the previous year. Finally, following late summer rainfall in 2017, follow-up surveys were conducted in the eastern half of the Proposed Project alignment on approximately 774 acres.

Two rounds of supplemental special-status plant surveys were conducted in the spring of 2019, and one more round of surveys is anticipated following the 2019 monsoon season. The spring 2019 surveys were conducted following above-average rains in the preceding winter and spring months, which caused an increase in blooms across the Mojave Desert.

A wildlife habitat assessment was conducted within 1,000 feet (i.e., 500 feet on either side) of the entire approximately 240-mile Proposed Project alignment on February 22 through 24, 2016. Insignia biologists flew above the alignment in a helicopter moving at low speed. The biologists verified the publicly available vegetation data layer and made refinements where needed, mapped nests within tower sites, noted wind-blown sand areas (i.e., potential habitat for the Mojave fringe-toed lizard), and described the general characteristics of the drainage features.

Special-status wildlife surveys were conducted for the following species:

- Least Bell's vireo, federally endangered (FE)
- Southwestern willow flycatcher (FE)
- Desert tortoise, federally threatened (FT)

Phoenix Biological Consulting conducted presence/absence surveys for least Bell's vireo within the BRSA in eight rounds between April 20 and July 19, 2016. The surveys were conducted in accordance with USFWS (2001) survey protocol. Surveys were conducted within 10 acres of the BRSA in four riparian habitat sites that were previously identified by Insignia personnel as potential suitable habitat. Least Bell's vireo protocol surveys and dates are provided in the Biological Resources Technical Report (BRTR).

Phoenix Biological Consulting conducted presence/absence surveys for southwestern willow flycatcher within the BRSA in five rounds between May 23 and July 6, 2016. The surveys were conducted in accordance with USFWS (2000 and 2001) and Sogge et al. (2010) survey guidelines. Surveys were conducted within 10 acres of the BRSA in four riparian habitat sites that were previously identified by Insignia personnel as potential suitable habitat. Southwestern willow flycatcher protocol surveys and dates are provided in the BRTR.

Insignia conducted presence/absence surveys for desert tortoise in the BRSA between October 3 and 29, 2016; between May 11 and 15, 2017; and on October 4 and 5, 2017. The surveys were conducted in accordance with the USFWS's survey guidelines (2010), as modified with approval by the USFWS. Surveys were conducted within a 20-meter buffer around the perimeter of each work area. This 20-meter survey buffer was approved by the USFS which did not require additional surveys for buffers of 200, 400, or 600 meters. Survey methods for desert tortoise surveys are provided in the BRTR.

Impact Assessment Methodology. This section of the Initial Study (IS) identifies and describes the potential impacts of the project to the biological resources of the project areas, described in Section 5.4.1, Setting. Each potential impact is evaluated to determine if it would be significant and, if so, if mitigation would reduce its impact to less than significant. There are two overall categories of measures designed to minimize or mitigate project impacts to biological resources, listed below.

- Project-Specific Applicant Proposed Measures (APMs) – Measures incorporated by SCE as a part of project design.
- Mitigation Measures (MMs) – This Initial Study identifies additional mitigation measures to supplement the APMs where needed, to reduce potential impacts to less than significant.

Additional protection for biological resources may result from BLM implementation of Conservation and Management Actions (CMAs), which have been incorporated into the California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA) Plan, as amended by the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP). If applicable, these measures will be imposed by the BLM through its NEPA compliance actions. Because implementation of CMAs is uncertain and would not apply to private lands, this analysis relies only on APMs and mitigation measures.

It should be noted that SCE must obtain multiple permits and approvals for the Proposed Project, and authorizations issued by regulatory agencies (such as CDFW, BLM, and USFWS) would likely include conditions of approval for the same species and resources analyzed in this IS. Those additional conditions may be more or less stringent than the measures required to minimize, avoid, and mitigate impacts identified in this IS. If SCE's project is approved, it would be required to implement all conditions of authorizations, and where multiple authorizations address the same resource, the most stringent avoidance and minimization measures would be required in addition to the less stringent measures.

The following discussion of impacts to biological resources is organized to:

- Describe each potential impact to biological resources according to a series of significance criteria identified herein;
- Identify which APMs, if any, would serve to mitigate the impact and if they would reduce the impact to less than significant levels;
- If needed, identify additional mitigation measures that would further reduce the impact; and
- Provide a conclusion stating whether each potential impact would be less than significant without need for mitigation, mitigated to less than significant through implementation of mitigation measures identified; or potentially significant even with available mitigation.

5.4.6 Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

- a. *Would the project have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?***

Note: Impacts during construction for criterion a. are discussed below for various special-status plants and special status wildlife. Because impacts during operations and maintenance are similar for these categories, O&M impacts are discussed at the end of the analysis for criterion a.

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION. Because of the breadth of this checklist question, this analysis is divided into the following subtopics:

- Reduction of Habitat
- Special-Status Plants
- Special-Status Wildlife
 - Invertebrates
 - Fish
 - Amphibians
 - Reptiles
 - Birds
 - Mammals

All recommended mitigation measures are presented at the end of this impact discussion.

Construction impacts to special-status plant and animal species are described in the sections that follow, and mitigation is identified as needed for each resource. Where mitigation measures are recommended

to supersede SCE's APMs (presented in Section 5.4.3 above), the shortcomings of the APMs are explained.

Reduction of Habitat

The total area disturbed by the Proposed Project is approximately 378.1 acres. Of this total, project impacts are characterized by SCE as either permanent (7.0 acres) or temporary (371.1 acres). Permanent impacts would be areas that are paved or otherwise modified for project purposes throughout the life of the project (e.g., series capacitor sites and fiber optic repeater sites). Temporary impacts refer to areas temporarily disturbed during project construction (e.g., lay-down areas, yards, helicopter landing zones). The temporarily disturbed areas include approximately 125.5 acres of previously disturbed land (e.g., areas around existing towers, existing access and spur roads, and previously disturbed yard areas) as well as approximately 245.6 acres of land not previously disturbed, which would require restoration. However, depending on pre-disturbance conditions, temporary ground disturbance will lead to permanent or long-term loss or degradation of habitat or other biological resources. For example, creosote bushes can re-sprout a full canopy within five years after damage from heavy vehicle traffic (Gibson et al., 2004), but more severe damage involving vegetation removal and soil disturbance can take from 50 to 300 years for partial recovery; complete ecosystem recovery may require much longer (Lovich and Bainbridge, 1999). Consequently, due to the slow recovery rates of plant communities in desert ecosystems, all permanent and temporary habitat loss or degradation impacts of the proposed project are conservatively considered permanent (a total of 252.6 acres, which excludes previously disturbed areas).

The total ground disturbance (temporary and permanent) resulting from construction of the Proposed Project within each habitat or land use type is shown in Table 5.4-2. This ground disturbance includes the Newberry Springs and Ludlow Series Capacitors, the fiber optic repeater sites, and grading of new access roads. As shown in the first three rows of the tables, about 176.8 acres of estimated ground disturbance would occur on agricultural, barren, or developed lands. The remaining 198 acres of estimated disturbance would occur on natural lands.

Table 5.4-2. Estimated Acres of Ground Disturbance.

Habitat or Land Type	Total Project Disturbance (Acres)
Active agriculture	1.0
Barren	47.7
Developed	128.1
California juniper woodland	1.2
Joshua tree woodland (S3) ¹ = <i>Yucca brevifolia</i> woodland alliance	4.9
Desert needlegrass grassland (S2) ¹ = <i>Achnatherum speciosum</i> woodland alliance	0.1
Unlabeled provisional alliance	1.7
Allscale scrub	18.9
Black brush scrub	0.3
Black-stem rabbitbrush scrub (S3) ¹ = <i>Ericameria paniculata</i> shrubland alliance	0.3
Brittle bush scrub	1.2
Bush seepweed (scrub (S3) ¹ = <i>Suaeda moquinii</i> shrubland alliance	0.3
California buckwheat scrub	11.5
Catclaw acacia–desert lavender–chuparosa scrub	1.2

Table 5.4-2. Estimated Acres of Ground Disturbance.

Habitat or Land Type	Total Project Disturbance (Acres)
Cheesebush–sweetbush scrub	1.5
Creosote bush–brittle bush scrub	3.8
Creosote bush–white bursage scrub	115.4
Creosote bush scrub	23.3
Desert almond–Mexican bladdersage scrub (S3) ¹ = <i>Prunus fasciculata</i> – <i>Salazaria mexicana</i> shrubland alliance	2.0
Desert pavement	1.1
Mojave yucca scrub	3.9
Mormon tea scrub	0.0
Narrowleaf goldenbush–bladderpod scrub	0.5
Rubber rabbitbrush scrub	4.0
Shadscale scrub	0.6
Teddy bear cholla patches (S3) ¹ = <i>Cylindropuntia bigelovii</i> shrubland alliance	0.1
White bursage scrub	0.3
Total	374.8

1 - Sensitive natural community; see Table 5.4-1.

Note: Subsequent to conducting biological surveys, selected potential yard sites and helicopter landing zones were eliminated. As a result, values in this table may be somewhat overstated.

Proposed Project impacts to natural vegetation and habitat would substantially degrade habitat for several animals identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species. Without mitigation, these impacts would be significant. SCE proposes APM BIO-01 (Revegetation Plan) and APM BIO-03 (Noxious and Invasive Weed Management Plan) to mitigate these impacts. However, APM BIO-01 does not include sufficient performance standards, or details of restoration and monitoring, to ensure effective habitat replacement. APM BIO-03 does not include sufficient detail regarding prevention, and does not address control and monitoring, to prevent invasive weeds from becoming established and spreading in Project disturbance areas or spreading to adjacent undisturbed habitat. None of the APMs address on-site methods to minimize disturbance, train Project workers in the various avoidance and mitigation requirements, or monitor project activities.

Additional mitigation measures listed below are needed to mitigate the potential special-status species habitat impacts to less than significant.

Mitigation Measure BR-1 (Conduct biological monitoring and reporting) contains multiple components for avoidance, minimization, and protection of special-status species habitat, including monitoring to ensure that authorized construction areas and sensitive areas are monitored to prevent unnecessary impacts to habitat.

Mitigation Measure BR-2 (Prepare and implement a Worker Environmental Awareness Program) would inform Project workers of Project requirements and worker responsibilities regarding avoidance and minimization of habitat impacts.

Mitigation Measure BR-3 (Minimize native vegetation and habitat loss) contains multiple components for avoidance, minimization, and protection of special-status species habitat, including marking

authorized construction areas and sensitive areas are prevent disturbance outside authorized work areas.

Mitigation Measure BR-4 (Restore or revegetate temporary disturbance areas) supersedes APM BIO-01 (Revegetation Plan). Mitigation Measure BR-4 requires revegetation of temporarily disturbed sites to minimize erosion, dust, and vulnerability to weed invasions; provides performance standards and needed implementation details to effectively minimize the impacts.

Mitigation Measure BR-5 (Prepare and implement an Integrated Weed Management Plan) supersedes APM BIO-03 (Noxious and Invasive Weed Management Plan). Mitigation Measure BR-5 provides additional performance standards to minimize likelihood that new invasive species are introduced to the Project area, and existing invasive species are detected and adequately controlled to prevent on-site or off-site habitat degradation.

Implementation of Mitigation Measures BR-1 (Conduct biological monitoring and reporting), BR-2 (Prepare and implement a Worker Environmental Awareness Program (WEAP)), BR-3 (Minimize native vegetation and habitat loss), BR-4 (Restore or revegetate temporary disturbance areas), and BR-5 (Prepare and implement an Integrated Weed Management Plan), would minimize Proposed Project impacts and would mitigate remaining potential impacts to habitat to less than significant.

Special-Status Plants

No listed threatened or endangered plant species are expected to occur within the Project ROW or footprint (as defined in BRTR Attachment 5.4-A 1). Twenty special-status plants (see Section 5.4.1 above), ranked as CRPR 1 or 2 (conservation status rankings are presented in BRTR Attachment 5.4-A 1) have been located during field surveys within the ROW and surrounding buffer area. One of them, Rosy two-toned beardtongue, is also ranked S2 in Nevada. One of them, Yucca buckwheat, is not ranked in California but ranked S3 in Nevada. Three of these (Mojave menodora, Pink funnel lily, and Rusby's desert-mallow) have been located within project footprint sites.

Due to the seasonality of plant occurrences and dependence on fluctuations in annual rainfall, special-status plants not observed at project footprint sites, but located elsewhere in the survey area, may occur as dormant seed, bulbs, or below-ground rootstocks within project footprint sites. Thus, all 20 species could be found during future surveys of the project footprint.

Similarly, 50 additional special-status plant species (listed in Section 5.4.1) were not found in project surveys, but may be found within the project footprint during future surveys, depending on rainfall and other seasonal factors.

Potential direct impacts to special-status plants as a result of grading, vegetation clearing and grubbing, excavation, and vehicle and foot traffic can include burying, crushing, or uprooting individual plants, root damage from soil compaction and disturbance, and disturbing seed banks. Although many of the project footprint areas would be only temporarily disturbed by project activities (i.e., the sites would be disturbed during construction but would not be permanently converted to project facilities), the direct effects on special-status plants could nonetheless be permanent. Indirect impacts to special-status plants may result from construction-related runoff, sedimentation and erosion, which could alter site conditions sufficiently to favor the establishment of other native and non-native species. Indirect impacts may also result from equipment and vehicles introducing invasive weeds that compete with special-status species. Increased fugitive dust could reduce the growth and vigor of special-status plants.

Determining potential significance of impacts to special-status plants is based on the conservation status for each species, as well as the extent of the impact and the species' local or regional distribution. Most of the special-status plants documented during field surveys have relatively low conservation status (e.g., CRPR 2 or 4), potential impacts are small, or both (see MND Appendix D). Therefore, potential impacts to most special-status plants would be less than significant.

- Without mitigation, impacts to Mojave menodora and Rusby's desert-mallow (both California Rare Plant Rank 1B.2; defined as rare, threatened or endangered throughout their respective ranges) would be significant if a substantial proportion of a local occurrence is affected. Alternately, if surrounding habitat supports large numbers of either species and the project impact is small relative to the overall occurrence, then the impact would be less than significant.
- Potential impacts to pink funnel-lily (CRPR 2B.2, defined as rare in California but more common elsewhere in its range), documented at or near the primary land disturbance areas at the proposed series capacitor sites, would be less than significant due to the large number of plants throughout the surrounding vicinity as documented for numerous projects (California Energy Commission, 2010). The large numbers of plants in the region are not accurately reflected in the CRPR status.

Potential impacts to other special-status plants not currently documented within the project footprint by the field surveys conducted to date must be evaluated on a case by case basis, depending primarily on numbers of plants or extent of occupied habitat surrounding the project site. Impacts to BLM Sensitive Species, CRPR 1B species, and Nevada Natural Heritage S1, S2, or S3 species would necessitate mitigation if the impacts substantially reduce a local occurrence. This analysis conservatively estimates that if ten percent of a local occurrence is lost, then the impact would be significant because a loss of more than ten percent of the local occurrence could affect local genetic diversity and demographic population viability. However, if the local occurrence extends beyond the bounds of the project footprint and the project directly affects less than 10 percent of the occurrence, then impacts would not need mitigation. Impacts to CRPR 2B plants in the Nevada portion of the footprint would be less than significant, unless the plants are also listed by Nevada Natural Heritage.

Mitigation for Impacts to Special-Status Plants. SCE proposes APM BIO-01 (Revegetation Plan) and APM BIO-02 (Special-status Plant Species Protection) to minimize and mitigate impacts to special-status plants. APM BIO-02 includes pre-construction surveys, avoidance, and monitoring to minimize impacts as feasible. For unavoidable impacts in temporary disturbance areas, APM-BIO-01 would prepare a plan to revegetate natural communities. In addition, SCE proposed APM BIO-03 (Noxious and Invasive Weed Management Plan), which would reduce the indirect effects of invasive weeds on all resources, including special-status plants.

With incorporation of SCE's APMs, impacts to special-status plants may remain significant for the following reasons:

- APM BIO-01 (Revegetation Plan) would revegetate disturbed areas but would not replace or mitigate special-status plant occurrences lost during construction. Mitigation Measure BR-4 (Restore or revegetate temporary disturbance areas) supersedes APM BIO-01 to reduce potential impacts to special-status plant species.
- APM BIO-02 (Special-status Plant Species Protection) would flag and protect known special-status plant locations as feasible and would revegetate disturbed special-status plant occurrence. The flagging does not provide for needed field surveys to update existing data, and the proposed revegetation would not mitigate or offset impacts to special-status that are not avoided. Mitigation Measure

BR-6 (Minimize and mitigate impacts to special-status plants) supersedes APM BIO-02 to reduce potential impacts to special-status plant species.

- APM BIO-03 (Noxious and Invasive Weed Management Plan) does not include sufficient detail regarding prevention, and does not address control and monitoring, to prevent invasive weeds from becoming established and spreading in Project disturbance areas or spreading to adjacent undisturbed habitat. Mitigation Measure BR-5 (Prepare and implement an Integrated Weed Management Plan) supersedes APM BIO-3 and provides the necessary detail.

Even with implementation of the APMs described above, the Proposed Project's impacts to special-status plant species could be significant.

Mitigation Measure BR-6 (Minimize and mitigate impacts to special-status plants) would avoid or mitigate potential impacts to special-status plants by (1) requiring seasonal pre-construction surveys to identify plants, (2) avoiding occurrences where possible, and (3) determining which impacts, if any, would be significant based on a threshold of ten-percent of the local occurrence, and (4) mitigating unavoidable impacts to the specific plant that is impacted through one or more of several methods identified in the measure (avoidance, off-site compensation, salvage, or horticultural propagation — with off-site introduction).

Implementation of Mitigation Measures BR-1 through BR-5 (described under Reduction of Habitat) and Mitigation Measure BR-6, would minimize Proposed Project impacts and would ensure that remaining potential impacts to special-status plants would be less than significant.

Special-Status Wildlife

This analysis considers the following types of wildlife: invertebrates, fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds, and mammals.

One listed California and federally threatened species, desert tortoise, is expected to occur within the Project ROW or footprint (BRTR Attachment 5.4-B). Other special-status species present or with a high potential to occur within or near the Project ROW or footprint include the following:

- Banded Gila monster (BLM Sensitive Species, CA Species of Special Concern, NV Protected Species)
- Desert rosy boa (NV Protected Species)
- Mojave fringe-toed lizard ([Not expected in NV] BLM Sensitive Species, CA Species of Special Concern)
- Golden eagle (Fully Protected, CA Fish and Game Code; federal Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act)
- Swainson's hawk – migratory flyover (CA Threatened)
- Gray vireo (BLM Sensitive Species, CA Species of Special Concern)
- Western burrowing owl (CA Species of Special Concern)
- American badger ([Low potential in NV] CA Species of Special Concern)
- Desert bighorn sheep (BLM Sensitive Species, Fully Protected, CA Fish and Game Code)
- Pallid bat ([Not expected in NV] BLM Sensitive Species, CA Species of Special Concern)
- Western mastiff bat (BLM Sensitive Species, CA Species of Special Concern)

Special-status species with a moderate potential to occur within or adjacent to the Project ROW or footprint include:

- Bald eagle (CA Endangered, Fully Protected; federal Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act)
- Peregrine falcon (Fully Protected, CA Fish and Game Code)
- Bendire's thrasher ([Low potential in NV] BLM Sensitive Species, DRECP, CA Species of Special Concern)
- Pallid San Diego pocket mouse ([Not expected in NV] CA Species of Special Concern)

In addition to the special-status species identified above, most birds and their nests are protected under the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act and the California Fish and Game Code (see Section 5.4.2, Regulatory Background). Therefore, potential impacts to common birds species, such as nest destruction or collision hazard with transmission structures and conductors, are addressed under Birds, below.

Mitigation for Special Status Wildlife. The potential project effects on these protected species are described below, under subheadings for each category of wildlife. Mitigation is required to ensure that these protected species are not significantly affected by project activities.

While SCE has identified several APMs addressing special-status wildlife (see Section 5.4.3 above), these measures would not fully reduce impacts to less than significant levels. Therefore, the following mitigation measures are recommended to ensure protection of special status wildlife. The full text of all mitigation measures is presented at the end of this section.

- **Mitigation Measure BR-1 (Conduct biological monitoring and reporting)** would reduce impacts by requiring on-site biologists to document resources that may be in harm's way, coordinate avoidance as needed, ensure various wildlife protection measures are in place, and establish a communication and reporting schedule. No APM was presented for this purpose.
- **Mitigation Measure BR-2 (Prepare and implement a Worker Environmental Awareness Program (WEAP))** would reduce impacts to special-status wildlife by instructing construction crews on avoidance and minimization requirements for each relevant species and its habitat. No APM was presented for this purpose.
- **Mitigation Measure BR-3 (Minimize native vegetation and habitat loss)** would protect special-status wildlife habitat by requiring clear on-site marking of authorized construction or disturbance areas and requiring avoidance of any other areas. No APM was presented for this purpose.
- **Mitigation Measure BR-4 (Restore or revegetate temporary disturbance areas)** would protect special status wildlife habitat by minimizing erosion, dust, and vulnerability to weed invasions; provides performance standards and needed implementation details to reduce the impacts. This mitigation measure supersedes APM BIO-01 (Revegetation Plan), because the APM does not include performance standards, details of restoration, monitoring, and success standards.
- **Mitigation Measure BR-5 (Prepare and implement an Integrated Weed Management Plan)** would protect special-status wildlife habitat by specifying performance standards to minimize likelihood that new invasive species are introduced to the Project area. It would ensure that existing invasive species are detected and adequately controlled to prevent on-site or off-site habitat degradation. This mitigation measure supersedes APM BIO-03 (Noxious and invasive weed management plan) because the APM does not include complete performance standards, nor does it does address control measures or monitoring of invasive weed occurrences.
- **Mitigation Measure BR-7 (Ensure wildlife impact avoidance and minimization)** would protect special-status wildlife by requiring multiple protective measures for all wildlife, including special-status species, reducing likelihood of significant mortality or injury, disturbance, or other adverse effects of construction. No APM was presented for this purpose.
- **Mitigation Measure BR-8 (Compensate for habitat loss)** would protect desert tortoise and its habitat and other native wildlife species by specifying details of habitat compensation. These details include selecting and proposing compensation lands, defining real estate transaction requirements, implementing short-term habitat improvements as needed, and implementing long-term conservation management to ensure that significant habitat loss is offset. This mitigation measure supersedes APM

BIO-05 (Compensation for Impacts to Desert Tortoise Critical Habitat) because the APM does not include adequate specificity regarding scheduling and site management details. However, the proposed compensation ratios defined by SCE in APM BIO-05 are not modified.

- **Mitigation Measure BR-9 (Conduct surveys and avoidance for special-status reptiles)** would protect desert tortoise and other reptiles. It would require pre-construction surveys for desert tortoise, banded Gila monster, rosy boa, and Mojave fringe-toed lizard to prevent potentially significant mortality or injury impacts to both species. This mitigation measure supersedes APM BIO-04 (Desert tortoise protection) because the APM does not minimize or avoid potential impacts to the broader category of protected reptiles, including the banded Gila monster, desert rosy boa, and Mojave fringe-toed lizard.
- **Mitigation Measure BR-10 (Prepare and implement a Nesting Bird Management Plan)** would protect nesting birds by specifying performance standards such as biologist qualifications, field survey scheduling, and assessment of potential impacts according to species and project activities. It also establishes a standard buffer distance with specific measures for adjusting the distance according to circumstances, and a method to amend the Plan if needed. This mitigation measure supersedes APM BIO-06 (Nesting birds) because the APM lacks specificity regarding nest buffer distances and it does not present a means for modifying buffers if needed. Also, the APM does not define how active nests would be monitored and how reporting of monitoring data would occur, nor does it address potential use of nest deterrents or protection of golden eagle nests.
- **Mitigation Measure BR-11 (Conduct surveys and avoidance for burrowing owl)** would protect burrowing owls by specifying pre-construction survey requirements, avoidance measures, passive relocation measures, and provision of alternate burrow sites in the event that active burrowing owl burrows are located on or near project work areas. This mitigation measure supersedes APM BIO-07 (Western burrowing owl protection) because the APM lacks details including buffer distances from active burrows, means of conducting passive exclusion from an active burrow if needed, assessment of replacement burrow availability, construction of replacement burrows, and follow-up reporting requirements.
- **Mitigation Measure BR-12 (Conduct surveys and avoidance for bats)** would protect special-status bats by specifying pre-construction surveys, avoidance measures, passive relocation measures, and provision of alternate roost sites in the event that active special-status bat roosts are located on or near project work areas. No APM was presented for protection of bats.
- **Mitigation Measure BR-13 (Conduct surveys and avoidance for American badger, ringtail, and desert kit fox)** would protect American badger, ringtail, desert kit fox by requiring specific pre-construction surveys, avoidance measures, and passive relocation measures in the event that these special-status mammals are located on or near project work areas. No APM was presented for protection of these mammals.

Invertebrates

Special-status invertebrate species are not expected to occur in the Proposed Project area. Therefore, no impacts to special-status invertebrate species are anticipated.

Fish

Project activities would not impact water features that have the potential to support special-status fish. Therefore, no impacts to special-status fish species are anticipated.

Amphibians

Special-status amphibian species are not expected to occur in the Proposed Project area. Therefore, no impacts to special-status amphibian species are anticipated.

Reptiles

Desert tortoise (FT, ST) was observed and may be present throughout the Proposed Project area. In addition, Mojave fringe-toed lizard (S, SSC) banded Gila monster (S, SSC, NP), and desert rosy boa (NP) are likely to occur in the Project area. Proposed Project activities would result in temporary and permanent impacts to suitable habitat for these species. Note that most “temporary” habitat impacts would be long-term or permanent due to slow recovery of desert vegetation. One important exception to this generality is temporary impacts to active sandfield or dune habitat supporting Mojave fringe-toed lizard, where returning windblown sand will naturally restore pre-disturbance conditions. Habitat for desert tortoise and desert rosy boa can be found throughout the majority of the Proposed Project area, and portions of the Proposed Project are located within USFWS-designated critical habitat for the species. Mojave fringe-toed lizard is likely to occur near the Kelso Dunes in the eastern portion of the Mojave Desert in California, in the vicinity of the Pisgah Substation, and anywhere else that accumulated windblown sand is found within the species range. Banded Gila monster is likely to occur near the McCullough and Highland Ranges and the Dead Mountains in Nevada, and near the Providence Mountains in California. Rosy boa could occur throughout the Proposed Project area.

Direct impacts to special-status reptiles, especially desert tortoise, could result from vehicle or equipment strikes. Special-status reptiles could fall into or become trapped within excavation areas or pipe segments, which could injure them or make them more vulnerable to predation. They could also be crushed or buried in occupied burrows (or beneath the sand) during construction activities.

The risk of vehicle strikes to active desert tortoise would be greatest during the tortoise’s most active seasons, which are dependent on rainfall and temperature. The USFWS (2009) defines the spring activity season as April through May, and the fall activity season as September through October, although the actual dates and extent of tortoise activity vary widely from one year to another. Regardless of the season, desert tortoises are usually within their burrows when they are inactive. Inactive tortoises may be vulnerable to many of the potential direct impacts identified above if an occupied burrow is located within or near a work area. As described in Section 4 (Project Description), project activities are expected to occur over a 1 to 2-year period.

Suitable habitat for desert tortoise and other special-status reptiles would be impacted by ground-disturbing activities within the Project area, resulting in long-term or permanent habitat loss or degradation; these impacts include disturbances during soil excavation, soil stockpiling, grading access roads and work areas. Ground disturbing activities may also cause increased invasive, non-native plant species that may compete with or replace forage species for desert tortoise (i.e., grasses and the flowers of annual plants). An increase in invasive plants may also facilitate fires. In the case of Mojave fringe-toed lizard, temporary project disturbance areas would have only short-term impacts because windblown sand would return to the site, without need for active restoration.

Indirect impacts to desert tortoise, banded Gila monster, desert rosy boa, and Mojave fringe-toed lizard during project activities may be caused by increased human presence in the area. Specifically, human presence in isolated areas may attract opportunistic predators, such as ravens (*Corvus corax*), coyotes (*Canis latrans*), and feral dogs (*Canis lupus familiaris*), which are threats to desert tortoise and special-status reptile species. Over time, an increase in predation could impact tortoise population numbers.

The Proposed Project would directly affect approximately 67 acres of desert tortoise critical habitat. Shrubs and other vegetation used by desert tortoise would be destroyed in these areas, resulting in the loss of foraging, cover, and suitable sheltered burrow sites. Soil disturbance and compaction would destroy any burrows that may be present and could leave the area unsuitable for future burrowing.

SCE proposes APM BIO-01 (Revegetation Plan), APM BIO-04 (Desert Tortoise Protection), and APM BIO-05 (Compensation for Impacts to Desert Tortoise Critical Habitat) to minimize and mitigate impacts to desert tortoise. With incorporation of these APMs impacts to special-status reptiles may remain significant. As described above, additional mitigation is needed to ensure that impacts to desert tortoise and other special-status reptiles will be less than significant. Mitigation measures specific to reptiles are Mitigation Measure BR-4 (Restore or revegetate temporary disturbance areas), Mitigation Measure BR-9 (Conduct surveys and avoidance for special-status reptiles), Mitigation Measure BR-8 (Compensate for habitat loss) and Mitigation Measure BR-7 (Ensure wildlife impact avoidance and minimization).

In addition, SCE is pursuing take coverage for desert tortoise under Section 7 of the ESA under the 2017 programmatic Biological Opinion for Activities in the California Desert Conservation Area for Proposed Project work in California. For Proposed Project work in Nevada, SCE will seek coverage under the 2018 Biological Opinion (BO) issued for critical habitat in Southern Nevada. SCE is also seeking a Section 2081 ITP under the CESA for desert tortoise. Each of these authorizations is expected to include avoidance, protection, or compensation measures to mitigate potential impacts to desert tortoise. SCE would conduct construction activities in accordance with the requirements set forth in these permits.

Impact Conclusion for Special-Status Reptiles. Potential impacts to desert tortoise, Mojave fringe-toed lizard, banded Gila monster, and desert rosy boa would be avoided, minimized, and mitigated by implementing the measures identified above. Mitigation Measures BR-1 through BR-5 and BR-7 through BR-8 are applicable to all wildlife including desert tortoise. Mitigation Measure BR-9 is specifically applicable to reptiles. Additionally, project impacts to desert tortoise would be avoided, minimized, or mitigated in accordance with the requirements of the take permits issued pursuant to the California Endangered Species Act and Federal Endangered Species Act. With incorporation of these mitigation measures, project impacts to reptiles would be less than significant.

Birds

One special-status bird, western burrowing owl (SSC) is present in the Project area. Six special-status birds have a moderate to high potential to occur within the project area; these include bald eagle (SE/FP), Bendire's thrasher (S, SSC), golden eagle (S, FP), gray vireo (S, SSC), peregrine falcon (FP), and Swainson's hawk (ST).

Suitable nesting, foraging, or seasonal migratory stopover habitat for all these special-status birds and other migratory bird species is present within the Project footprint and the immediate vicinity. Birds, including their nests, eggs, and nestlings, are protected under the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and California Fish and Game Code Section 3503, 3503.5, and 3513. As described in Section 4 (Project Description), project activities are expected to occur during periods that overlap with the nesting season (February 15 through August 31) when birds may be vulnerable to nest disturbance.

Direct impacts to birds, including special-status birds, could include loss of active nests and loss of foraging habitat due to vegetation clearing and ground disturbance. The use of heavy equipment and vegetation removal within or adjacent to nesting habitat could cause disruption of nesting behavior due to a temporary increase in human presence, noise, vibration, and dust. Construction activities could impact foraging raptors, passerines, and other special-status bird species. Temporary impacts may

include degradation of foraging habitat, removal of some food sources, and the disruption of foraging behavior due to a temporary increase in noise and visual disturbances from construction equipment and vehicles. Specific impacts and mitigation requirements are described in the following paragraphs.

Avian Collision with Transmission Structures. The proposed Project would not increase the potential collision hazards to birds above existing baseline because no additional overhead lines are proposed. SCE's application indicates that any new transmission facilities would be designed consistent with the Avian Power Line Interaction Committee's (APLIC's) *Suggested Practices for Avian Protection on Power Lines: the State of the Art in 2006* (APLIC, 2006) where feasible. Transmission facilities would also be evaluated for potential collision reduction devices in accordance with *Reducing Avian Collisions with Power Lines: The State of the Art in 2012* (see Project Description, Section 4). No new or increased avian collision hazard would result from the project.

Nesting Birds. SCE proposes APM BIO-06 (Nesting Birds) to identify active bird nests, implement nest avoidance buffers, and monitor active nests, to minimize and mitigate impacts. As described above, this APM is not adequate to protect nesting birds, and Mitigation Measure BR-10 is presented, superseding APM BIO-06. Mitigation Measure BR-10 incorporates all of APM BIO-06 (Nesting Birds) and adds details including means of determining buffer distances or modifying them as needed; means for monitoring active nests and reporting monitoring data; addresses potential use of nest deterrents; addresses potential disturbance to golden eagle nests in the vicinity, and specifies agency reporting requirements. These additional details are required to minimize potential take of native birds, including special-status birds, protected under the Fish and Game Code and Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

Golden Eagles. SCE does not propose mitigation to prevent disturbance to golden eagles potentially nesting in the Project vicinity. Potential nesting habitat is present within mountainous and hilly areas, and possibly also on transmission towers, as indicated by recent and historic CNDDDB and NNHP records of nests within 5 miles of the Proposed Project area. Without mitigation, Project activities could significantly impact nesting golden eagles by disturbing nesting activities and potentially cause nest failure. Mitigation Measure BR-10 includes requirements to avoid disturbance in the vicinity of active golden eagle nests.

Wide-ranging Raptors. While Swainson's hawk, peregrine falcon, and bald eagle could briefly fly over the Project area during migration or seasonal dispersal, no impacts to these species are expected and no mitigation is necessary.

Burrowing Owl. Project activities could destroy occupied burrowing owl burrows or cause the owls to abandon them. Activities during the breeding season could result in the incidental loss of fertile eggs or nestlings. The loss of occupied burrows or reductions in the number of this species, directly or indirectly through nest abandonment or reproductive suppression, would constitute a significant impact.

SCE proposes APM BIO-07 (Western Burrowing Owl Protection), which requires pre-construction burrowing owl surveys to be conducted within suitable habitat in accordance with the CDFW's Appendix D of the Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation (CDFW, 2012). If unavoidable impacts to western burrowing owl are anticipated, SCE would implement mitigation methods as outlined in the staff report and in coordination with the CDFW. However, even with incorporation of this APM, impacts to burrowing owl may remain significant. Additional mitigation is needed for burrowing owl avoidance and protection. Therefore, Mitigation Measure BR-11 is presented, superseding APM BIO-07 (as explained above).

Mitigation Measure BR-11 incorporates all of APM BIO-07 (Western Burrowing Owl Protection) and adds details including buffer distances from active burrows, means of conducting passive exclusion from an

active burrow if needed, including assessment of replacement burrow availability, construction of replacement burrows if needed, and follow-up reporting requirements. These additional details are required to prevent potentially significant impacts including take of burrowing owl.

Impact Significance for Special-Status Birds and Other Protected Birds. Mitigation Measures BR-1 through BR-5 and BR-7 through BR-8 are applicable to all wildlife including birds. Mitigation Measures BR-10 and BR-11 are specifically applicable to birds. With incorporation of the mitigation measures identified in this IS/MND, project impacts to special-status birds and other protected bird species would be less than significant.

Mammals

One special-status mammal species, desert bighorn sheep (S, FP) is present within the Project area and was observed in the Newberry Mountains of Nevada during surveys. In addition, six special-status mammal species, American badger (SSC), desert kit fox (S, FE, ST), ringtail (FP), pallid San Diego pocket mouse (SSC), pallid bat (S, SSC, PM), and western mastiff bat (S, SSC) have a moderate to high potential to occur in the Project area. SCE does not propose APMs to protect specific mammals from potential Project impacts.

Desert Bighorn Sheep. Desert bighorn sheep have a high potential to occur throughout the desert mountain ranges within the Project area and were observed in the Newberry Mountains of Nevada during surveys. Temporary impacts to desert bighorn sheep may occur when construction activities take place near or within suitable habitat. Direct impacts could include mortality from vehicle strikes and altered behavior due to construction noise, vibration, and fugitive dust. Indirect impacts could include loss or degradation of foraging habitat. Implementation of wildlife protection and avoidance measures identified in Mitigation Measure BR-7 (Ensure wildlife impact avoidance and minimization) would avoid potentially significant impacts to desert bighorn sheep. No additional mitigation is necessary to prevent potentially significant impacts.

Special-status bats. Western mastiff bat may roost in the mountainous areas of the Project area; foraging habitat occurs throughout the Project area. Potential roost sites for pallid bat within the Project area or in the immediate vicinity include rock outcrops; snags; and abandoned, man-made structures; foraging habitat occurs throughout the Project area. Potential impacts to foraging habitat would not be significant. Impacts to special-status bats may occur if Proposed Project activities result in the disruption or abandonment of nearby active bat roosts due to noise, vibration, or lighting. If occupied roosting habitat for these species is directly impacted by construction activities (i.e., tree removal, structure removal, damage to rock outcrops), impacts to special-status bats could be significant. Mitigation Measure BR-12 would protect special-status bats by ensuring identification and avoidance of active special-status bat roosts.

Pallid San Diego pocket mouse occurs in areas of moderate canopy in arid shrubland or pinyon-juniper, or near rocky slopes and sandy areas. It has a moderate potential to occur in California where suitable habitat is present in a small portion of the southwestern end of Project area. Project activities could cause mechanical crushing of individuals or burrows and loss of habitat. Indirect impacts could include soil compaction that could preclude burrowing, and the spread of invasive weeds. However, these impacts, if any, would be limited to small construction areas in the southwestern Mojave Desert portion of the route. The largest ground disturbing components of the Proposed Project are the series capacitor sites, north of the animal's geographic range. Within the southern Mojave Desert portion of its range, there is extensive acreage of suitable habitat in Los Angeles and San Bernardino Counties, well outside the project area (e.g., a broad area between Victorville and Barstow, extending 20-30 miles east and

west). The Proposed Project impacts within the pallid San Diego pocket mouse's range is minimal and indicates that this potential impact would be less than significant, and no mitigation is required.

Badger, Ringtail, and Kit Fox. American badger has a high potential to occur in desert and treeless areas with friable soil within the Project area in California. Suitable habitat for desert kit fox is present throughout the Project area and ringtail has a high potential to occur above 1,300 feet elevation. Direct impacts to American badger, ringtail, and desert kit fox could include mechanical crushing of individuals or burrows by vehicles and construction equipment; disturbance from noise, vibration, and dust; and loss of habitat. Indirect impacts could include alteration of soils, such as compaction that could preclude burrowing, and the spread of invasive weeds. Tortoise exclusion fencing required around construction yards, laydown areas, and some work areas, could entrap these mammals if any of these species are present when the fencing is built. Animals trapped within the fence could be subject to mortality or injury from construction equipment. Mitigation Measure BR-13 would protect these species through surveys and avoidance during construction.

Impact Significance for Special-Status Mammals: As described above, Mitigation Measures BR-1 through BR-5 and BR-7 through BR-8 are applicable to all wildlife, including mammals. Mitigation Measures BR-12 and BR-13 are specifically applicable to mammals. With incorporation of the mitigation measures defined in this section, project impacts to special-status mammals would be less than significant.

Operation and Maintenance

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION. Potential operation and maintenance (O&M) impacts to special-status plants and wildlife, including their habitat, would be minimal throughout the O&M phase of the Proposed Project. O&M activities for the Proposed Project would require periodic vehicle access for inspections, testing, and maintenance. No direct habitat impacts on special-status plant are expected due to O&M. Minor increases in ambient noise would be associated with the operation of the proposed Newberry Springs and Ludlow Series Capacitors. There is some potential that wildlife, including special-status species, could be injured by vehicle collisions or other O&M activities. Potential biological resources impacts associated with O&M would be avoided or minimized through provisions of Mitigation Measures BR-7 (Ensure wildlife impact avoidance and minimization) and BR-9 (Conduct surveys and avoidance for special-status reptiles). With these measures, potential O&M impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

Mitigation measures recommended for biological resources are presented below. Before each measure, the rationale for its need is explained.

Mitigation Measure BR-1 is necessary because no corresponding APM is proposed, except the portion of APM BIO-04 covering desert tortoise. Pre-construction surveys of work areas are needed to identify all special-status wildlife or other biological resources that may be present and, as needed, avoided. Monitoring of project compliance is needed to ensure and document that avoidance measures are effectively implemented.

BR-1 Conduct biological monitoring and reporting. The following provisions shall apply to the approved project during the construction and post-construction restoration phases.

Lead biologist: SCE shall propose one or more lead biologists and submit their resume(s) to the CPUC and BLM for concurrence, no less than 60 days prior to the start of any ground-disturbing activities, including those occurring prior to site mobilization (including, but not

limited to geotechnical borings or hazardous waste evaluations). At minimum the lead biologist will hold a bachelor's degree in biological sciences, zoology, botany, ecology, or a closely related field; have at least three years of experience in field biology and at least one year of direct field experience with biological resources found in or near the project area, *OR* relevant education and experience that demonstrates the ability to carry out the tasks required of a lead biologist. The resume shall demonstrate to the satisfaction of the CPUC and BLM the appropriate education and experience to accomplish the assigned biological resources tasks.

The lead biologist will be SCE's primary point of contact to CPUC, BLM, NPS, CDFW, and USFWS regarding any biological resources issues and implementation of related mitigation measures and permit conditions throughout project construction and post-construction restoration work. In addition, the lead biologist will oversee supervision and training of biological monitors (below) and preparation and submission of all monitoring reports and notifications (below).

If the lead biologist is replaced, the specified information of the proposed replacement must be submitted to the CPUC and BLM at least ten working days prior to the termination or release of the preceding lead biologist. In an emergency, SCE shall immediately notify the CPUC and BLM to discuss the qualifications and approval of a short-term replacement while a permanent lead biologist is proposed for consideration.

Biological monitors: SCE shall assign qualified biological monitors to the project to monitor all work activities with the potential to impact special status species or their habitat during the construction phase. Work sites or activities considered to have not potential to impact special-status species or habitats will be subject to review and approval by CPUC in coordination with CDFW, USFWS, and BLM.

Monitors are responsible for ensuring that impacts to special-status species, native vegetation, wildlife habitat, and sensitive or unique biological resources are avoided or minimized to the fullest extent safely possible. Monitors are also responsible to ensure that work activities are conducted in compliance with the retained APMs, mitigation measures, permit conditions, and other project requirements.

Resumes of all biological monitors, including specialty monitors (including but not limited to bat, nesting bird, and special-status species monitors), shall be provided for concurrence by the CPUC and BLM, at least 10 working days prior to the monitor commencing field duties. The resumes shall demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the CPUC and BLM, the appropriate education and experience to accomplish the assigned biological resources tasks.

SCE shall provide training to biological monitors, in addition to WEAP (see Mitigation Measure BR-2) and prior to the monitor commencing field duties, on biological resources present or potentially present on the Proposed Project, as well as mitigation measures, permit requirements, project protocols, and the duties and responsibilities of a biological monitor.

Biological monitors shall inform construction crews daily of any environmentally sensitive areas (ESAs), nest buffers, or other resource issues or restrictions that affect the work sites for that day. Biological monitors shall communicate with construction supervisors and crews as needed (e.g., at daily tailgate safety meetings ("tailboards"), by telephone, text message, or email) to provide guidance to maintain compliance with mitigation measures and permit conditions. SCE shall ensure that adequate numbers of monitors are assigned to effectively monitor work activities and that communications from biological monitors are promptly

directed to crews at each work site for incorporation into daily work activities. If biological monitors are unavailable for a tailboard meeting, the construction supervisors shall communicate all ESA, nest buffers, or other resource restrictions to crews during the meeting. SCE shall ensure that biological monitors are provided with an accurate daily construction work schedule as well as updated information on any alterations to the daily construction work schedule. This information shall also be provided to CPUC/BLM monitors. SCE shall ensure that biological monitors are provided with up-to-date biological resource maps and construction maps in hardcopy or digital format. These maps shall also be provided to CPUC/BLM monitors.

Monitors shall be familiar with the biological resources present or potentially present, ESAs, nest buffers, and any other resource issues at the site(s) they are monitoring, as well as the applicable mitigation measures and permit requirements. Monitors shall exhibit diligence in their monitoring duties and refrain from any conduct or potential conflict of interest that may compromise their ability to effectively carry out their monitoring duties.

Biological monitor duties and responsibilities: Throughout the duration of construction, SCE shall conduct biological monitoring and have biological monitors on site at all times when project activities are occurring in any area where there is a potential to impact sensitive biological resources or jurisdictional waters, including but not limited to vegetation removal/trimming/disturbance, all ground-disturbing work activities, and initial “drive and crush” in the project area, including work sites, yards, staging areas, access roads, and any area subject to project disturbance. Pre-construction activities (e.g., for geotechnical borings, hazardous waste evaluations, etc.) and post-construction restoration shall also be monitored by a biological monitor during all such activities.

Each day, prior to work activities at each site, a biological monitor shall conduct clearance surveys (“sweeps”) for sensitive plant or wildlife resources that may be located within or adjacent to the construction areas. If sensitive resources are found, the biological monitor shall take appropriate action as defined in all adopted mitigation measures, retained APMs, and permit conditions. Work activities shall not commence at any work site until the clearance survey has been completed and the biological monitor communicates to the contractor that work may begin.

Biological monitors shall clearly mark sensitive biological resource areas with staking, flagging, or other appropriate materials that are readily visible and durable. The monitors will inform work crews of these areas and the requirements for avoidance and will inspect these areas at appropriate intervals for compliance with regulatory terms and conditions. The biological monitors shall ensure that work activities are contained within approved disturbance area boundaries at all times.

Biological monitors shall have the authority and responsibility to halt any project activities that are not in compliance with applicable mitigation measures, retained APMs, permit conditions, or other project requirements, or will have an unauthorized adverse effect on biological resources.

Handling, relocation, release from entrapment, or other interaction with wildlife shall be performed consistent with mitigation measures, safety protocols, permits (including CDFW and USFWS permits), and other project requirements.

Biological monitors shall, to the extent safe, practicable, and consistent with mitigation measures and permit conditions, actively or passively relocate wildlife out of harm’s way. On a

daily basis, biological monitors shall inspect construction areas where animals may have become trapped, including equipment covered with bird exclusion netting, and release any trapped animals. Daily inspections shall also include areas with high vehicle activity (e.g., yards, staging areas), to locate animals in harm's way and relocate them if necessary. If safety or other considerations prevent biological monitors from aiding trapped wildlife or wildlife in harm's way, SCE shall consult with the construction contractor, CDFW, wildlife rehabilitator, or other appropriate party to obtain aid for the animal, consistent with Mitigation Measure BR-7 (Ensure wildlife impact avoidance and minimization).

At the end of each work day, biological monitors shall verify that excavations, open tanks, and trenches have been covered or have ramps installed to prevent wildlife entrapment and communicate with work crews to ensure these structures are installed and functioning properly.

Biological monitors shall regularly inspect any wildlife exclusion fencing daily to ensure that it remains intact and functional. Any need for repairs to exclusion fencing shall be immediately communicated to the responsible party, and repairs shall be carried out in a timely manner, generally within one work day.

Reporting: SCE shall prepare and implement a procedure for communication among biological monitors and construction crews, to ensure timely notification (i.e., daily or sooner, as needed) to crews of any resource issues or restrictions. SCE will notify the CPUC and BLM of the procedure and will maintain records of daily communication. SCE will provide CPUC and BLM on-line access to project resource management maps and GIS data.

Monitoring activities shall be thoroughly and accurately documented on a daily basis. SCE shall prepare and submit daily, weekly, annual, and final monitoring reports to the CPUC and BLM. Prior to the start of monitoring activities, SCE shall provide proposed monitoring report formats, describing content and organization, for CPUC and BLM review and approval in consultation with CDFW and USFWS.

Mitigation Measure BR-2 is necessary because no corresponding APM is proposed. The measure will prevent potentially significant impacts to special-status plants and wildlife and ensure compliance with applicable laws and mitigation measures by instructing workers on avoidance and minimization requirements for species and habitat and required action by the workers.

BR-2 Prepare and implement a Worker Environmental Awareness Program (WEAP). SCE shall prepare and implement a project-specific Worker Environmental Awareness Program (WEAP) to educate on-site workers about the Proposed Project's sensitive environmental issues. The WEAP shall be presented by the lead biologist or a biological monitor to all personnel on-site during the construction phase, including but not limited to surveyors, engineers, inspectors, contractors, subcontractors, supervisors, employees, monitors, visitors, and delivery drivers. If the WEAP presentation is recorded on video, it may be presented by any competent project personnel. Throughout the duration of construction, SCE shall be responsible for ensuring that all on-site project personnel receive this training prior to beginning work. A construction worker may work in the field along with a WEAP-trained crew for up to 5 days prior to attending the WEAP training. SCE shall maintain a list of all personnel who have completed the WEAP training. This list shall be provided to the CPUC and BLM upon request.

The WEAP shall consist of a training presentation, with supporting written materials provided to all participants. At least 60 days prior to the start of ground-disturbing activities,

SCE shall submit the WEAP presentation and associated materials to the CPUC and BLM for review and approval in consultation with the USFWS and CDFW.

The WEAP training shall include, at minimum:

- Overview of the project, the jurisdictions the project route passes through (e.g., San Bernardino County, CA; Clark County, Nevada; CSLC; BLM; NPS; BOR; DOD) and any special requirements of those jurisdictions.
- Overview of the federal and state Endangered Species Acts, Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, Migratory Bird Treaty Act, and the consequences of non-compliance with these acts.
- Overview of the project mitigation and biological permit requirements, and the consequences of non-compliance with these requirements.
- Sensitive biological resources on the project site and adjacent areas, including nesting birds, special-status plants and wildlife and sensitive habitats known or likely to occur on the project site, project requirements for protecting these resources, and the consequences of non-compliance.
- Construction restrictions such as limited operating periods, Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs), and buffers and associated restrictions, and other restrictions such as no-grading areas, flagging, or signage designations, and consequences of non-compliance.
- Avoidance of invasive weed introductions onto the project site and surrounding areas, and description of the project's weed control plan and associated compliance requirements for workers on the site.
- Function, responsibilities, and authority of biological and environmental monitors and how they interact with construction crews.
- Requirement to remain within authorized work areas and on approved roads, with examples of the flagging and signage used to designate these areas and roads, and the consequences of non-compliance.
- Procedure for obtaining clearance from a biological monitor to enter a work site and begin work (including moving equipment), and the requirement to wait for that clearance.
- One-hour hold (or other method SCE will use to halt work when necessary to maintain compliance) and the requirement for compliance.
- Nest buffers and associated restrictions and the consequences of non-compliance. Procedure and time frame for halting work and removing equipment when a new buffer is established. Discussion of nest deterrents.
- Explanation that wildlife must not be harmed or harassed. Procedures for covering pipes, securing excavations, and installing ramps to prevent wildlife entrapment. What to do and who to contact if dead, injured, or entrapped animals are encountered.
- General safety protocols such as hazardous substance spill prevention, containment, and cleanup measures; fire prevention and protection measures; designated smoking areas (if any) and cigarette disposal; safety hazards that may be caused by plants and animals; and procedure for dealing with rattlesnakes in or near work areas or access roads.

- Project requirements that have resulted in repeated compliance issues on other recent transmission line projects, such as dust control, speed limits, track out (dirt or mud tracked from access roads or work sites onto paved public roads or other areas), personal protective equipment (PPE), work hours, working prior to clearance, and waste containment and disposal.
- Printed training materials, including photographs and brief descriptions of all special-status plants and animals that may be encountered on the project, including behavior, ecology, sensitivity to human activities, legal protection, penalties for violations, reporting requirements, and protection measures.
- Contact information for SCE, construction management, and contractor environmental personnel, and who to contact with questions.
- Training acknowledgment form to be signed by each worker indicating that they understand and will abide by the guidelines, and a hardhat sticker so WEAP attendance may be easily verified in the field.

WEAP Lite. An abbreviated version of WEAP training (“WEAP lite”) may be used for individuals who are exclusively delivery drivers, concrete truck drivers, or visitors to the project site, and will be provided by a qualified project biologist, biological monitor, or environmental field staff prior to those individuals entering or working on the project. Short-term visitors (total of 5 days or less per year) to the project site who will be riding with and in the company of WEAP-trained project personnel for the entire duration of their visit(s) are not required to attend WEAP or WEAP lite training. WEAP lite presentations shall be tailored to delivery/concrete truck drivers and visitors as well as the situation and emphasize project requirements that are relevant to those individuals and that situation.

WEAP Refreshers. Biological monitors or environmental field staff will periodically present brief WEAP refresher presentations at tailboards to help construction crews and other personnel maintain awareness of environmental sensitivities and requirements. A 5- to 10-minute informal talk will be presented at each of the project’s main contractor/subcontractor tailboards at least once a week.

When a contractor or subcontractor resumes work after a long break, a biological monitor or environmental field staff will provide an extended WEAP refresher presentation (10-20 minutes) at each of the contractor/subcontractor tailboards on the first day back to work.

Mitigation Measure BR-3 is necessary because no corresponding APM is proposed. The measure will prevent potentially significant impacts to special-status plant and wildlife habitat by delineating areas on the site where construction activity is authorized and prevent inadvertent or unnecessary ground disturbance to habitat outside the authorized areas.

BR-3 Minimize native vegetation and habitat loss. Final engineering of the project shall minimize the extent of disturbance and removal of native vegetation and habitat, to the extent safely possible. Work activities and roadways will avoid or minimize direct or indirect effects to sensitive habitat types or jurisdictional waters and provide buffer areas to minimize disturbance. Project access will utilize existing routes or bridges over jurisdictional waters wherever possible.

Consistent with project safety and security protocols, landowner preferences, and any other applicable regulations or requirements, existing gates on project access roads will be closed and secured when project personnel enter or leave an area.

Prior to beginning any ground-disturbing activities, SCE shall provide CPUC and BLM with final engineering GIS shapefiles depicting all temporary and permanent disturbance areas, as well as summary data on temporary and permanent disturbance for each vegetation or habitat type.

On completion of project construction, SCE shall provide CPUC and BLM with GIS shapefiles of all actual temporary and permanent disturbance areas, accurate aerial imagery of the project area, and summary data of all discrepancies between final engineering and “as-built” conditions for each vegetation or habitat type.

To the extent feasible and safe, vegetation removal within work areas will be minimized and construction activities will implement drive and crush access and site preparation rather than grading. Stockpiling of spoils and salvaged topsoil will be located in previously disturbed areas and/or will avoid native habitat areas.

Prior to any construction, equipment or crew mobilization at each work site, work areas will be marked with staking or flagging to identify the limits of work and will be verified by project environmental staff and CPUC Environmental Monitor. Staking and flagging will clearly indicate the work area boundaries. Where staking cannot be used, traffic cones, traffic delineators, or other markers shall be used. Staking and flagging or other markers shall be in place during construction activities at each work site and refreshed as needed. Coded flagging colors or color combinations will be consistent and uniform across the project. All work activities, vehicles, and equipment will be confined to approved roads and staked and flagged or marked work areas.

Mitigation Measure BR-4 (Restore or revegetate temporary disturbance areas) supersedes APM BIO-01 (Revegetation Plan) and mitigates impacts to special status wildlife habitat by minimizing erosion, dust, and vulnerability to weed invasions. It also provides performance standards and needed implementation details not included in APM BIO-1, and is required to reduce the impacts below a level of significance.

BR-4 Restore or revegetate temporary disturbance areas. [Replaces APM BIO-01 to provide further specificity.] SCE will implement a restoration or revegetation plan for all temporarily disturbed sites. Given that temporary impacts to desert tortoise habitat is considered a permanent impact in this MND and under BLM’s Programmatic Biological Opinion (BO) provides federal take authorization for the Project, SCE will mitigate for all desert tortoise habitat impacts as permanent impacts through compensatory mitigation. These temporarily disturbed sites will be subject to revegetation (i.e., re-establishment of vegetation to minimize long-term erosion, dust, and weed infestation) but habitat restoration will not be required. SCE will be required to implement habitat restoration at temporarily disturbed sites not mitigated through off-site compensation. SCE will provide a Habitat Restoration and Revegetation Plan (HRRP) to cover all temporarily disturbed sites, identifying sites to be subject to revegetation alone and those to be restored. The HRRP will describe, at a minimum, which revegetation or restoration method (e.g., natural revegetation, planting, or reseeding with native seed stock in compliance with the Proposed Project’s SWPPPs) will be implemented at each temporarily disturbed site. It will include the plant species or habitats to be restored or revegetated, the restoration or revegetation methods and techniques, and the monitoring periods and success criteria.

All temporarily disturbed areas will be subject to revegetation and site management activities and success criteria of the Proposed Project's SWPPP/Erosion Control Plan (HWQ-1) and the Integrated Weed Management Plan (BR-5) to ensure soil stabilization, vegetation cover, and weed prevention. In addition to those requirements, for any temporarily disturbed area not subject to compensatory mitigation (BR-8), the HRRP shall include:

- Restoration goals and objectives for each portion of the project area, based on vegetation type and jurisdictional status of each site.
- Quantitative success criteria for each restoration site, area, or category.
- Implementation details, including but not limited to topsoil stockpiling and handling; post-construction site preparation; soil decompaction and recontouring; planting and seeding palettes to include only native, locally sourced materials with confirmed availability from suppliers; fall or other suitable season planting or seeding dates (seeding outside the fall season may increase the risk of revegetation failure and need for subsequent remedial reseeding, irrigation, or other measures).
- Maintenance details, including but not limited to irrigation or hand-watering schedule and equipment, erosion control, and weed control measures.
- Monitoring and Reporting, specifying monitoring schedule and data collection methods throughout establishment of vegetation with key indicators of successful or unsuccessful progress, and quantitative criteria to objectively determine success or failure at the conclusion of the monitoring period.
- Contingency measures such as reseeding, replanting, drainage repairs, adjustments to irrigation or weeding schedule, and extension of maintenance beyond the original schedule, to repair or remediate sites not on track to meet success criteria, or not meeting the criteria at the close of the originally scheduled monitoring period.
- A Gantt chart or similar exhibit identifying all components of the HRRP, including acquisition of plant materials, specifying site preparation and seeding or planting dates, identifying entity to perform each task (e.g., EPC contractor or restoration contractor) and indicating critical path activities.

The Draft HRRP shall be submitted to CPUC and BLM review and approval prior to the beginning of ground-disturbing activities. SCE shall incorporate all requested revisions in coordination with the CPUC and BLM and finalize the HRRP within 12 months from the start of construction.

For all restoration areas, if a fire, flood, or other disturbance beyond the control of SCE, CPUC, and BLM damages the area within the monitoring period, SCE shall be responsible for a one-time replacement. If a second event occurs, no replacement is required.

For all revegetation (per SWPPP requirements) or restoration sites (per the HRRP), only seed or potted nursery stock of locally occurring native species will be used. Seeding and planting will be informed by Chapter 5 of *Rehabilitation of Disturbed Lands in California* (Newton and Claassen, 2003). The list of plants observed during botanical surveys of the project area will be used as a guide to site-specific plant selection.

Monitoring of the restoration sites will continue annually for up to 5 years or until the defined success criteria in the HRRP are achieved. SCE will be responsible for implementing remediation measures as needed. Following remediation work, each site will still be subject

to the success criteria required for the initial restoration. The monitoring period for remediation work will be concurrent with the monitoring period required for the initial restoration.

Reporting. For all restoration areas, SCE will provide annual reports to the CPUC and BLM verifying the total vegetation acreage subject to temporary and permanent disturbance, identifying which items of the HRRP have been completed, and which items are still outstanding. The annual reports will also include a summary of the restoration activities for the year, a discussion of whether success criteria were met, any remedial actions conducted and recommendations for remedial action, if warranted, that are planned for the upcoming year. Each annual report will be submitted within 90 days after completion of each year of restoration work.

Mitigation Measure BR-5 supersedes APM BIO-03 (Noxious and Invasive Weed Management Plan) because the APM does not include sufficient detail regarding weed prevention, and does not address control and monitoring to prevent invasive weeds from becoming established and spreading in Project disturbance areas or spreading to adjacent undisturbed habitat. Mitigation Measure BR-5 also provides additional performance standards to prevent new invasive species from being introduced to the Project area, and ensure that existing invasive species are detected and adequately controlled to prevent on-site or off-site habitat degradation.

BR-5 Prepare and Implement an Integrated Weed Management Plan. [Supersedes APM BIO-03.] SCE shall prepare and implement an Integrated Weed Management Plan (IWMP) describing the proposed methods of preventing or controlling project-related spread or introduction of weeds. The IWMP also must meet BLM's requirements for NEPA disclosure and analysis if herbicide use is proposed for the project. A Draft IWMP shall be submitted to the CPUC and BLM for review and approval at least 60 days prior to SCE's application for Notice to Proceed, and no pre-construction activities (e.g., for geotechnical borings, hazardous waste evaluations, etc.), construction, equipment or crew mobilization, or project-related ground-disturbing activity shall proceed until the IWMP is approved.

For the purpose of the IWMP, "weeds" shall include designated noxious weeds, as well as any other non-native weeds or pest plants identified on the weed lists of the California Department of Food and Agriculture, the California Invasive Plant Council, or identified by BLM as special concern. The IWMP will include the contents listed below. The IWMP will be implemented throughout project pre-construction, construction, and post-construction revegetation phases, including throughout implementation of the HRRP (Mitigation Measure BR-4). The IWMP will include the information defined in the following paragraphs.

Background. An assessment of the Proposed Project's potential to cause spread of invasive non-native weeds into new areas, or to introduce new non-native invasive weeds into the ROW. This section must list known and potential non-native and invasive weeds occurring on the ROW and in the project region, and identify threat rankings and potential consequences of project-related occurrence or spread for each species. This section must also identify control goals for each species (e.g., eradication, suppression, or containment) likely to be found within the Proposed Project area.

Pre-construction weed inventory. SCE shall inventory weeds in all areas (both within and outside the ROW) subject to project-related vegetation removal/disturbance, "drive and crush," and ground-disturbing activity. The weed inventory shall also include vehicle and equipment access routes within the ROW and all project staging and storage yards. Weed occurrences shall be mapped and described according to density and area covered.

Pre-construction weed treatment. Weed infestations identified in the pre-construction weed inventory shall be evaluated to identify potential for project-related spread and potential benefits (if any) of pre-construction treatment, considering the specific weeds, potential seed banks, or other issues. The IWMP will identify any infestations to be controlled or eradicated prior to project construction, or other site-specific weed management requirements (e.g., avoidance of soil or transport and site-specific vehicle washing where threat or spread potential is high). Control and follow-up monitoring of pre-construction weed treatment sites will follow methods identified in appropriate sections of the IWMP.

Prevention. The IWMP shall specify methods to minimize potential transport of new weed seeds onto the ROW, or from one section of the ROW to another. The ROW may be divided into “weed zones,” based on known or likely invasive weeds in any portion of the ROW. The IWMP will specify inspection procedures for construction materials and equipment entering the Proposed Project area. Vehicles and equipment may be inspected and cleaned at entry points to specified portions of the ROW, and before leaving work sites where weed occurrences must be contained locally. Construction equipment shall be cleaned of dirt and mud that could contain weed seeds, roots, or rhizomes. Equipment shall be inspected to ensure it is free of any dirt or mud that could contain weed seeds, and the tracks, outriggers, tires, and undercarriage will be carefully washed, with special attention being paid to axles, frame, cross members, motor mounts, underneath steps, running boards, and front bumper/brush guard assemblies. Other construction vehicles (e.g., pick-up trucks) that will be frequently entering and exiting the site will be inspected and washed on an as-needed basis. Tools such as chainsaws, hand clippers, pruners, etc., shall be cleaned of dirt and mud before entering project work areas.

All vehicles shall be washed off-site when possible. If off-site washing is infeasible, on-site cleaning stations will be set up at specified locations to clean equipment before it enters the work area. Wash stations will be located away from native habitat or special-status species occurrences. Wastewater from cleaning stations will not be allowed to run off the cleaning station site. When vehicles and equipment are washed, a daily log must be kept stating the location, date and time, types of equipment, methods used, and personnel present. The log shall contain the signature of the responsible crewmember. Written or electronic logs shall be available to BLM and CPUC monitors on request.

Erosion control materials (e.g., hay bales) must be certified free of weed seed before they are brought onto the site. The IWMP must prohibit on-site storage or disposal of mulch or green waste that may contain weed material. Mulch or green waste will be removed from the site in a covered vehicle to prevent seed dispersal and transported to a licensed landfill or composting facility.

The IWMP must specify guidelines for any soil, gravel, mulch, or fill material to be imported into the Proposed Project area, transported from site to site within the Proposed Project area, or transported from the Proposed Project area to an off-site location, to prevent the introduction or spread of weeds to or from the Proposed Project area.

Monitoring. The IWMP shall specify methods to survey for weeds during pre-construction, construction, and restoration phases; and shall specify qualifications of botanists responsible for weed monitoring and identification. It must include a monitoring schedule to ensure timely detection and immediate control of new weed infestations to prevent further spread. Surveying and monitoring for weed infestations shall occur at least two times per year through the close of the restoration phase, to coincide with the early detection period

for early season and late season weeds (i.e., species germinating in winter and flowering in late winter or spring, and species germinating later in the season and flowering in summer or fall). It also must include methods for marking invasive weeds on the ROW, and recording and communicating these locations to weed control staff. The map of weed locations (discussed above) shall be updated at least once a year. The monitoring section shall also describe methods for post-eradication monitoring to evaluate success of control efforts and any need for follow-up control.

Control. The IWMP must specify manual and chemical weed control methods to be employed. The IWMP shall include only weed control measures with a demonstrated record of success for target weeds, based on the best available information. The plan shall describe proposed methods for promptly scheduling and implementing control activity when any weed infestation is located (e.g., located on a project disturbance site), to ensure effective and timely weed control. Weed infestations must be controlled or eradicated upon discovery, and before they go to seed, to the extent feasible with the goal to prevent further spread. All proposed weed control methods must minimize the extent of any disturbance to native vegetation, limit ingress and egress to defined routes, and avoid damage from herbicide use or other control methods to any environmentally sensitive areas identified within or adjacent to the ROW.

New weed infestations shall be treated at a minimum of once annually until eradication, suppression, or containment goals are met. For eradication, when no new occurrences are observed for three consecutive years, the weed occurrence can be considered eradicated and weed control efforts may cease for the site.

Manual control shall specify well-timed removal of weeds or their seed heads with hand tools; seed heads and plants must be disposed of in accordance with guidelines from the San Bernardino County Agricultural Commissioner and Nevada Department of Agriculture, if such guidelines are available.

The chemical control section must include specific and detailed plans for any herbicide use. It must indicate where herbicides will be used, which herbicides will be used, and specify techniques to be used to avoid drift or residual toxicity to wildlife and native vegetation or special-status plants, consistent with BLM's *Vegetation Treatments Using Herbicides on BLM Lands in 17 Western States* (BLM, 2007) and *National Invasive Species Management Plan* (NISC, 2008). Only state and BLM-approved herbicides may be used. Herbicide treatment will be implemented by a Licensed Qualified Applicator. Herbicides shall not be applied during or within 24 hours of predicted rain. Only water-safe herbicides shall be used in riparian areas or within channels (engineered or not) where they could run off into downstream areas. Herbicides shall not be applied when wind velocities exceed six (6) mph. All herbicide applications will follow U.S. Environmental Protection Agency label instructions and will be in accordance with federal, state, and local laws and regulations.

Reporting schedule and contents. The IWMP shall specify the reporting schedule and contents of each report.

Mitigation Measure BR-6 (Minimize and mitigate impacts to special-status plants) supersedes APM BIO-02 and is needed to reduce potential impacts to special-status plant species to less than significant because (1) existing data are insufficient to determine presence or absence of many special-status plants within potential project disturbance areas, (2) APM BIO-2 does not specify the schedule, methods, or professional qualifications of biologists for future surveys to be completed prior to construction, and (3)

APM BIO-2 would not mitigate unavoidable impacts to special-status plants (e.g., through compensation, off-site compensation, salvage, or horticultural propagation and off-site introduction). Revegetation identified in APM BIO-2 does not specify measures to offset or replace special-status plant losses. Mitigation Measure BR-6 would avoid or mitigate potential impacts to special-status plants by (1) requiring seasonal pre-construction surveys to identify plants, (2) avoiding occurrences where possible, and (3) determining which impacts, if any, would be significant based on a threshold of ten-percent of the local occurrence, and (4) mitigating unavoidable impacts to the specific plant that is impacted through one or more of several methods identified in the measure.

BR-6 Minimize and mitigate impacts to special-status plants. [Supersedes APM BIO-02.]

Pre-construction survey. SCE shall conduct focused pre-construction surveys for federal- and state-listed and other special-status plants within suitable habitat. All special-status plant species (including listed threatened or endangered species, and CNPS California Rare Plant Rank (CRPR) 1 and 2 ranked species likely to be impacted by project activities shall be documented in pre-construction survey reports. Surveys shall be conducted by a qualified botanist during the appropriate season in all suitable habitat within 50 feet of disturbance areas. The field surveys and reporting must conform to current CDFW botanical field survey protocol (CDFG, 2018). Where any special-status plants may be discovered, the survey area will extend beyond the ROW to determine the extent of the local occurrence, to evaluate the significance of any project impacts. The reports will describe any conditions that may have prevented target species from being located or identified, even if they are present as dormant seed or below-ground rootstock. If pre-construction survey areas conducted in years of poor rainfall or following other extreme events (e.g., recent intense overgrazing or wildfire), then the project shall use data from 2016/2017 and 2019 surveys to define population area and maximum number of individuals (Note, the unusually high rainfall in 2017 and 2019 are likely to better define rare plant locations and have more accurate results than subsequent years with lower rainfall). For species not previously detected on surveys but for which have a high potential to occur, reference populations will be used to determine if the species is detectable for pre-construction surveys conducted in suitable habitat. Prior to initial ground disturbance at individual construction work areas, SCE shall submit pre-construction field survey reports along with maps showing locations of survey areas and special-status plants to the CPUC and BLM for review and approval in coordination with CDFW.

Native cactus and *Yucca*. Most native cactus and shrubby *Yucca* species (Joshua tree and Mojave yucca) can be successfully salvaged and transplanted, and yuccas often provide an important vertical component to wildlife habitat. Therefore, native cactus (excluding chollas in the genus *Cylindropuntia*) and yuccas (including Joshua trees, *Y. brevifolia*), shall be avoided or salvaged as follows:

SCE will prepare and implement a cacti and yucca salvage plan. The goal shall be maximum practicable survivorship of salvaged plants. The Plan will include at minimum: (a) species and locations of plants identified for salvage; (b) criteria for determining whether an individual plant is appropriate for salvage; (c) the appropriate season for salvage; (d) equipment and methods for collection, transport, and re-planting plants or seed banks, to retain intact soil conditions and maximize success; (e) a requirement to mark each plant to identify the north-facing side prior to transport, and replant it in the same orientation; (f) details regarding storage of plants or seed banks for each species; (g) location of the proposed recipient site, and detailed site preparation and plant introduction techniques for top soil storage, as applicable; (h) a description of the irrigation, weed control, and other maintenance activ-

ities; (i) success criteria, including specific timeframe for survivorship and reproduction of each species; and (j) a detailed monitoring program, commensurate with the Plan's goals.

Mitigation. SCE shall mitigate impacts to any state or federally listed plants or CRPR 1 or Nevada ranked S1, S2, or S3 species that may be located on the project disturbance areas or surrounding buffer areas through one or a combination of the following strategies. Additionally, impacts to CRPR 2 ranked plants occurring in California will be similarly mitigated.

Avoidance of special-status plants will be the preferred strategy wherever feasible. Where avoidance is not feasible, and the project would directly or indirectly affect more than 10 percent of a local occurrence,³ by either number of plants (shrubs and trees) or extent of occupied habitat (annuals or perennial herbs), SCE shall prepare and implement a mitigation plan to consist of off-site compensation, salvage, horticultural propagation / off-site introduction, or a combination of these.

- **Avoidance.** Work areas shall be located to avoid or minimize impacts to special-status plants to the greatest extent possible. Effective avoidance through project design shall include a buffer area surrounding each avoided occurrence, where no project activities will take place. The buffer area will be clearly staked, flagged, and signed for avoidance prior to the beginning of ground-disturbing activities, and maintained throughout the construction phase. At minimum, the buffer for shrub species shall be equal to twice the drip line (i.e., two times the distance from the trunk to the canopy edge) to protect and preserve the root systems. The buffer for herbaceous species shall be a minimum of 50 feet from the perimeter of the occupied habitat or the individual(s). However, for locations in the mountains, a larger buffer may need to be applied to shrub and herbaceous species if the construction monitors determine there is a risk of indirect effects from erosion or inundation. If a smaller buffer is necessary due to other project constraints, SCE will develop and implement site-specific monitoring and put other measures in place to avoid the take of the species, with the approval of the CPUC and BLM, in coordination with CDFW.
- **Off-site compensation.** SCE shall provide compensation lands consisting of habitat occupied by the impacted CRPR 1 or 2 ranked plant populations at a 1:1 ratio of acreage and number of plants for any occupied habitat directly impacted (whether temporary or permanent) by the project. Occupied habitat will be calculated on the project site and on the compensation lands as including each special-status plant occurrence and a surrounding 50-foot buffer area. If compensation is selected as a means of mitigating special-status plant impacts, it may be accomplished by purchasing credit in an established mitigation bank, acquiring conservation easements, or direct purchase and preservation of compensation lands. Compensation for these impacts may be "nested" or "layered" with compensation for habitat loss described in Mitigation Measure BR-8.
- **Salvage.** SCE shall consult with a qualified restoration ecologist or horticulturist regarding the feasibility and likely success of salvage efforts for each species. If salvage is deemed to be feasible, based on prior success with similar species, then SCE shall prepare and implement a Special-status Plant Salvage and Relocation Plan, to be reviewed and approved by the CPUC and BLM, in consultation with CDFW and USFWS, prior to direct or indirect disturbance of any occupied habitat. For special-status plants, excluding cacti and Yuccas

³ An occurrence for a plant is defined as any population or group of nearby populations located more than 0.25 miles from any other population (CDFW, 2009).

(see above), the goal shall be to improve existing populations or establish new populations. For cacti and yuccas, the goal shall be maximum practicable survivorship of salvaged plants. The Plan will include at minimum: (a) species and locations of plants identified for salvage; (b) criteria for determining whether an individual plant is appropriate for salvage; (c) the appropriate season for salvage; (d) equipment and methods for collection, transport, and re-planting plants or seed banks, to retain intact soil conditions and maximize success; (e) for shrubs, cacti, and yucca, a requirement to mark each plant to identify the north-facing side prior to transport, and replant it in the same orientation; (f) details regarding storage of plants or seed banks for each species; (g) location of the proposed recipient site, and detailed site preparation and plant introduction techniques for top soil storage, as applicable; (h) a description of the irrigation, weed control, and other maintenance activities; (i) success criteria, including specific timeframe for survivorship and reproduction of each species; and (j) a detailed monitoring program, commensurate with the Plan's goals.

Annual monitoring reports shall be submitted to CPUC and BLM for five years or until the relocation effort is deemed successful on agreement of SCE and the CPUC. Reports shall include, but not be limited to, details of plants salvaged, stored, and transplanted (salvage and transplanting locations, species, number, size, condition, etc.); adaptive management efforts implemented (date, location, type of treatment, results, etc.); and evaluation of success of transplantation.

- **Horticultural propagation and off-site introduction.** If salvage and relocation is not believed feasible for special-status plants, then SCE shall consult with a qualified entity to develop an appropriate experimental propagation and relocation strategy, based on the life history of the species affected. The Plan will include at minimum: (a) collection and salvage measures for plant materials (e.g., cuttings), seed, or seed banks, to maximize success likelihood; (b) details regarding storage of plant, plant materials, or seed banks; (c) location of the proposed propagation facility, and proposed methods; (d); time of year that the salvage and other practices will occur; (e) success criteria; and (f) a detailed monitoring program, commensurate with the Plan's goals.

BR-7 Ensure wildlife impact avoidance and minimization. SCE shall undertake the following measures during the construction and revegetation phases to avoid or minimize impacts to wildlife resources.

- **Minimize traffic impacts.** SCE will specify and enforce a maximum 15 mile per hour vehicle speed limit on access roads within the ROW and project vicinity. No project-related pedestrian or vehicle traffic will be permitted outside defined work site or access route boundaries.
- **Minimize lighting impacts.** Night lighting, when in use, shall be designed, installed, and maintained to prevent side casting of light towards surrounding fish or wildlife habitat.
- **Avoid use of toxic substances.** Soil bonding and weighting agents used for dust suppression on unpaved surfaces shall be non-toxic to wildlife and plants.
- **Minimize noise and vibration impacts.** To minimize disturbance to wildlife nesting or breeding activities in surrounding habitat, project-related helicopter use shall be avoided or managed to the extent feasible from January 1 to August 31. Unnecessary noise (e.g., blaring radios) shall be avoided.

- **Water.** Potable and non-potable water sources such as tanks, ponds, and pipes shall be covered or otherwise secured to prevent animals (including birds) from entering. Prevention methods may include storing all water within closed tanks, covering open storage ponds or tanks with 2-centimeter netting, or other means as applicable. Water applied to roads and construction areas for dust abatement shall use the minimal amount needed to meet safety and air quality standards. Water sources (e.g., hydrants, tanks, etc.) shall be checked periodically by biological monitors to ensure they are not creating open water sources by leaking or consistently overfilling trucks.
- **Worker guidelines.** All trash and food-related waste shall be contained in vehicles or covered trash containers and removed from the site regularly. Workers shall not feed wildlife or bring animals or pets to the project site with the exception of ADA-compliant service animals. Except for law enforcement personnel, no workers or visitors to the site shall bring firearms or weapons.
- **Wildlife netting or exclusion fencing.** SCE may install temporary netting or permanent screening or fencing around equipment, work areas, or project facilities to prevent wildlife exposure to hazards such as toxic materials or vehicle strikes or prevent birds from nesting on equipment or facilities. Bird deterrent netting will be maintained free of holes and will be deployed and secured on the equipment in a manner that prevents wildlife from becoming trapped inside the netted area or within the excess netting. The biological monitor will inspect netting (if installed) twice daily, at the beginning and close of each work day, with the exception of netting installed in established material yards, which will be inspected at least once daily. The biological monitor will inspect exclusion fence (if installed) weekly and will inform SCE of any needed repairs; SCE shall promptly repair any damage to the exclusion fencing. Temporary netting shall be removed and properly disposed of following the completion of project activities.
- **Wildlife entrapment.** Project-related excavations shall be secured to prevent wildlife entry and entrapment. Holes and trenches shall be backfilled, securely covered, or fenced. Excavations that cannot be fully secured shall incorporate appropriate wildlife ramp(s) at a slope of no more than a 3:1 ratio, or other means to allow trapped animals to escape. Biological monitors shall provide guidance to construction crews to ensure that wildlife ramps or other means are sufficient to allow trapped animals to escape. At the end of each work day, a biological monitor shall ensure that excavations have been secured or provided with appropriate means for wildlife escape.

All pipes or other construction materials or supplies that CPUC monitors determine to present a risk to wildlife will be covered or capped in storage or laydown areas. No pipes or tubing of the size and nature that may entrap wildlife will be left open either temporarily or permanently, except during use or installation. Any construction pipe, culvert, or other hollow materials will be inspected for wildlife before it is moved, buried, or capped.
- **Dead animals.** Dead animals (of non-special-status species) large enough to subsidize ravens found on unpaved project roads, work areas, or the ROW shall be reported to the appropriate local animal control agency within 24 hours, to minimize raven subsidies. A biological monitor shall safely move the carcass out of the road or work area as needed. Dead animals of special-status species found on unpaved project roads, work areas, or the ROW shall be reported to CDFW within one work day and the carcass handled as directed by CDFW.

- **Injured special-status wildlife.** SCE shall create and implement guidelines for dealing with injured or entrapped special-status wildlife found on or near project roads, work areas, or the ROW, and provide these guidelines to all biological monitors. If an animal is entrapped, a qualified biological monitor shall free the animal if feasible, or work with construction crews to free the animal, in compliance with applicable safety regulations and project requirements. If biological monitors cannot free the animal or the animal is too large or dangerous for monitors to handle, SCE shall contact and work with animal control, CDFW, or other qualified party to obtain assistance for the animal as soon as possible.

SCE shall ensure that one or more qualified biological monitors receive training in the safe and proper handling and transport of injured wildlife and are provided with the appropriate equipment. These trained and equipped monitors shall be available to capture and transport injured wildlife to a local wildlife rehabilitator or veterinarian as needed. If the injured animal is too large or dangerous for monitors to handle, or a trained and equipped monitor is not available, SCE shall contact and work with a local wildlife rehabilitator, animal control, CDFW, or other qualified party to obtain assistance for the animal as soon as possible. A list of qualified wildlife rehabilitators, veterinarians, and animal control agencies will be maintained to ensure a timely response to requests for support. SCE shall bear the costs of veterinary treatment and rehabilitation for any wildlife injured by project-related activities and any injured wildlife found on or near project roads, work areas, or the ROW, unless the injuries are clearly not project-related, as determined by a qualified biologist. Additionally, any entrapped or injured special-status species found on project roads (with the exception of public roads), work areas, or the ROW shall be reported to the appropriate resource agency within one work day.

- BR-8** **Compensate for desert tortoise habitat loss.** [Supersedes APM BIO-05.] SCE shall compensate for all desert tortoise habitat loss through off-site habitat acquisition and management, or through participation in an approved in-lieu fee compensatory mitigation bank, or other agency approved mitigation strategies. This mitigation measure will be applicable to all temporary and permanent project disturbance to natural habitat types, (i.e., all vegetation types identified in Table 5.4-2, excluding active agriculture, barren, and developed lands). This compensatory mitigation for desert tortoise will also mitigate for habitat impacts to other native wildlife species.

Habitat compensation shall be accomplished by acquisition of mitigation land or conservation easements or by providing funding for specific land acquisition, endowment, restoration, and management actions. SCE shall prepare a Habitat Compensation Plan to be reviewed and approved by the CPUC and BLM, in coordination with the USFWS and CDFW.

SCE shall acquire and protect, in perpetuity, compensation habitat to mitigate impacts to biological resources as detailed below. SCE shall be responsible for the acquisition, initial protection and or habitat improvement. SCE may convey title of the compensation lands to a public agency such as BLM, NPS, or CDFW or the lands may be held by a private conservation entity. If the land is conveyed to BLM, it shall be within a land use designation such as Area of Environmental Concern, wilderness, or similar designation consistent with long-term management for biological resource values and excluding incompatible land uses (e.g., energy development). If it is conveyed to CDFW, or retained under private ownership, it shall be covered by a conservation easement or other terms acceptable to CDFW. If there is any conflict between the requirements of this mitigation measure and requirements of any

resource agency permit (e.g., USFWS Biological Opinion or CDFW Incidental Take Permit), the more stringent requirement shall apply.

The acreages of compensation land shall be based upon final engineering calculation of impacted acreage for each resource and on ratios set forth in this measure, or a USFWS Biological Opinion, a CDFW Streambed Alteration Agreement, a CDFW Incidental Take Permit, or the Consistency Determination, whichever presents a higher ratio. Acreages will be adjusted as appropriate for other alternatives or future modifications during implementation.

Compensation shall be provided for impacts to the following resources, at the ratios specified below (acres acquired and preserved to acres impacted). These ratios reflect multiple biological resource values, including habitat suitability for special-status species.

Previously disturbed lands (agriculture, developed/disturbed) and open water: n/a (no habitat compensation required)

Undisturbed land, including suitable desert tortoise habitat outside designated critical habitat: 1:1

Suitable desert tortoise habitat within designated critical habitat: 5:1

The Habitat Compensation Plan must specify compensation acreage for each habitat type, based on final engineering. Final compensation requirements may be adjusted to account for any deviations in project disturbance, according to the as-built shapefiles aerial imagery.

Compensation Land Selection Criteria. Criteria for the acquisition, initial protection and habitat improvement, and long-term maintenance and management of compensation lands for impacts to biological resources shall include all of the following:

- Compensation lands will provide habitat value that is equal to or better than the quality and function of the habitat impacted by the project, taking into consideration soils, vegetation, topography, human-related disturbance, wildlife movement opportunity, proximity to other protected lands, management feasibility, and other habitat values, subject to review and approval by CPUC and BLM;
- Potential compensation sites where creosote rings are found will be prioritized where feasible, and where consistent with the other selection criteria;
- To the extent that proposed compensation habitat may have been degraded by previous uses or activities, the site quality and nature of degradation must support the expectation that it will regenerate naturally when disturbances are removed and SCE will receive appropriate ratio credits for restoration;
- Be near larger blocks of lands that are either already protected or planned for protection, or which could feasibly be protected long-term by a public resource agency or a non-governmental organization dedicated to habitat preservation;
- Not have a history of intensive recreational use or other disturbance that might cause future erosion or other habitat damage, and make habitat recovery and restoration infeasible;
- Not be characterized by high densities of invasive species, either on or immediately adjacent to the parcels under consideration, that might jeopardize habitat recovery and restoration;

- Not contain hazardous wastes that cannot be removed to the extent that the site could not provide suitable habitat;
- Have water and mineral rights included as part of the acquisition, unless the CPUC and BLM, in consultation with CDFW and USFWS, agree in writing to the acceptability of land without these rights.

Review and Approval of Compensation Lands Prior to Acquisition. SCE shall submit a Draft Habitat Compensation Plan for review and approval by the CPUC and BLM describing the parcel(s) intended for protection. This Plan will discuss the suitability of the proposed parcel(s) as compensation lands in relation to the selection criteria listed above.

Management Plan. If the compensation land is held by a private entity, SCE or approved third party shall prepare a management plan for the compensation lands in consultation with the entity that will be managing the lands. The goal of the management plan will be to support and enhance the long-term viability of the biological resources. The Management Plan must be submitted for review and approval to the CPUC and BLM, in consultation with CDFW and USFWS. If the land is conveyed to a public agency, SCE will coordinate with the agency as needed to identify management planning needs (if any).

Compensation Lands Acquisition Requirements. Compensation land parcels, management planning and funding mechanism, management entities, habitat protection and improvement measures, title conveyance, conservation easement language and easement holder, all will be subject to review and approval by CPUC and BLM in coordination with CDFW and USFWS.

BR-9 Conduct surveys and avoidance for special-status reptiles. [This measure incorporates and supersedes APM BIO-04].

- **Pre-activity Surveys.** No more than seven days prior to the onset of ground-disturbing activities, an agency-approved biologist — with experience monitoring and handling desert tortoise — will conduct a pre-activity survey in all work areas within potential desert tortoise, banded Gila monster, desert rosy boa, or Mojave fringe-toed lizard habitat, plus an approximately 300-foot buffer. If potentially suitable burrows, sand fields, or rock piles are found, they shall be checked for occupancy. All desert tortoise burrows within the pre-activity survey area (including desert tortoise pallets) must be flagged or marked using an alternate method with minimal potential risk of cuing predators, to be developed in coordination with CDFW so that they may be avoided during work activities. Proposed actions will avoid disturbing desert tortoise burrows to the extent possible. However, burrows may be excavated if they can't be avoided and would be impacted by construction activities. If a tortoise must be handled or a potential tortoise burrow must be excavated, the biologist shall proceed according to the Desert Tortoise (Mojave Population) Field Manual (USFWS, 2009) or any requirements of the USFWS and CDFW incidental take authorizations. No desert tortoise may be handled except under explicit authorization from USFWS and CDFW.
- **Monitoring.** The approved tortoise biologist shall be available on site to monitor any work areas for desert tortoise, banded Gila monster, desert rosy boa, and Mojave fringe-toed lizard as needed. The approved tortoise biologist shall also be responsible for performing surveys prior to Proposed Project activities in suitable habitat for all three species. The approved tortoise biologist will have the authority to halt all non-emergency actions (as

soon as safely possible) that may result in harm to desert tortoise, and will assist in the overall implementation of all adopted protection measures for special-status reptiles. As an alternative to full-time on-site monitoring, selected work areas (e.g., the series capacitors) may be enclosed by desert tortoise exclusion fencing and then covered by two complete 100 percent coverage clearance surveys. If exclusion fencing is installed, the agency-approved tortoise biologist shall monitor installation.

- **Desert Tortoise in Work Area.** In the event that a desert tortoise is encountered in the work area, all work shall cease and the approved biologist must be contacted. Work shall not recommence until the animal has voluntarily moved to a safe distance away from the work area unless incidental take permits have been obtained to allow handling. Desert tortoises may be moved by an agency-approved biologist as authorized by state and federal incidental take permits if necessary to move them out of harm's way. Encounters with special-status herpetofauna will be reported to an approved biologist. Encounters with desert tortoise will be documented and provided to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), BLM, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). In the event that a dead or injured desert tortoise is observed, the approved biologist shall notify SCE's herpetologist and report the incident to the CDFW, BLM, and USFWS.
- **Under Vehicle Checks.** Desert tortoises and other wildlife commonly seek shade during the hottest times of the day. All employees shall be required to check under their equipment or vehicles before they are moved. If special-status wildlife is encountered, the vehicle shall not be moved until the animal(s) have voluntarily moved to a safe distance away from the parked vehicle. Desert tortoises and special-status species may be moved by the approved biologist, if necessary, to move them out of harm's way.
- **Handling Desert Tortoise.** Only an agency-approved biologist may move or handle desert tortoises as authorized by state and federal incidental take permits. When a desert tortoise is moved, the approved biologist will be responsible for taking appropriate measures to ensure that the animal is not exposed to harmful temperature extremes. The approved biologist shall follow the appropriate protocols outlined in the Desert Tortoise (Mojave Population) Field Manual (USFWS, 2009) when handling desert tortoises or excavating their burrows as described in the state and federal take authorizations.
- **Excavation of Desert Tortoise Burrows.** Should it prove necessary to excavate a desert tortoise from its burrow to move it out of harm's way, excavation shall be done using hand tools, either by or under the direct supervision of an approved biologist. Excavation of desert tortoise burrows will occur no more than seven days before the onset of construction activities at any given site. All desert tortoises removed from burrows must be placed in an unoccupied burrow that is approximately the same size as the one from which it was removed. If an existing burrow is unavailable, the approved biologist shall construct or direct the construction of a burrow of similar shape, size, depth, and orientation as the original burrow following guidelines in the Desert Tortoise (Mojave Population) Field Manual (USFWS, 2009). To ensure their safety, desert tortoises moved during inactive periods must be monitored for at least two days after placement in the new burrows or until the end of the construction activity.

If desert tortoises need to be moved at a time of day when ambient temperatures could harm them (i.e., at temperatures lower than 40 degrees Fahrenheit (°F) or higher than 90°F), they must be held overnight in a clean cardboard box. These desert tortoises shall be kept in the care of the approved biologist under appropriate controlled temperatures

and released the following day when temperatures are favorable. All cardboard boxes shall be appropriately discarded after one use.

- **Vehicle Travel.** Motor vehicles shall be limited to maintained roads and designated routes. If additional routes are needed, they must first be surveyed and approved by the approved biologist.
- **Raven Management.** SCE shall prepare (for CPUC review and wildlife agency approval) and implement a Raven Management Plan (RMP) to minimize avian predation of desert tortoise for the Proposed Project. The purpose of the RMP is to utilize methods that deter raven depredation of juvenile desert tortoises, and other wildlife species. The RMP is not intended to eliminate or control raven populations, but will target offending ravens that have been found to prey upon desert tortoises. The RMP will incorporate an adaptive management strategy for immediate implementation following construction of the Proposed Project. The RMP will be evaluated after three years of implementation, or as needed, if avian predation becomes apparent. The following activities may be implemented as part of the RMP: (1) Common raven nest/power line monitoring, (2) Funding of offending raven control via contract with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and (3) Alternative control strategies developed in coordination with USFWS (e.g. egg-oiling, laser deterrents, etc.). Mutual and timely cooperation between SCE and the BLM, USFWS, and CDFW is central to effective implementation of the RMP.

BR-10 Prepare and implement a Nesting Bird Management Plan. [Supersedes APM BIO-06.] SCE shall prepare and implement a Nesting Bird Management Plan (NBMP) in coordination with CPUC, BLM, CDFW, and USFWS. The NBMP shall describe methods to minimize potential project effects to nesting birds and avoid any potential for unauthorized take. Where scheduling allows SCE will endeavor to conduct clearing of any vegetation, site preparation in open or barren areas, or other project-related activities that may adversely affect breeding birds outside the nesting season. Project-related disturbance including construction and pre-construction activities shall not proceed within 300 feet of active nests of common bird species or 500 feet of active nests of raptors or special-status bird species (except for golden eagle) until approval of the NBMP by CPUC and BLM in consultation with CDFW and USFWS.

NBMP Content. The NBMP shall include: (1) definitions of default nest avoidance buffers for each species or group of species, depending on characteristics and conservation status for each species and the nature of planned Project activities in the vicinity; (2) a notification procedure for buffer distance reductions should they become necessary; (4) a pre-construction survey protocol (surveys no longer than 7 days prior to starting work activity at any site); (5) a monitoring protocol, to be implemented until adjacent construction activities are completed or the nest is no longer active, including qualifications of monitors, monitoring schedule, and field methods, to ensure that any project-related effects to nesting birds will be minimized; and (6) a protocol for documenting and reporting any inadvertent contact with or effects to birds or nests. The NBMP will be applicable throughout the nesting season (beginning January 1 for raptors, February 1 for most other birds, and continuing through the end of August).

Golden eagles. SCE shall review all available USFWS data to identify known golden eagle nest sites or territories in the vicinity of the Project route. SCE shall either assume that known nest sites are occupied or at its discretion conduct nesting season surveys within a 1mile radius of the portions of the project area where suitable nesting habitat may exist and

where work will occur during the breeding season (December 1 through July 31). If a potentially occupied nest (based either on assumption or field data) is detected within 1 mile of the project, SCE shall implement a one-mile line-of-sight and one-half mile no line-of-sight buffer to ensure that project construction activities do not result in injury or disturbance to golden eagles.

Nest deterrents. The NBMP shall describe any proposed measures or deterrents to prevent or reduce bird nesting activity on project equipment or facilities, such as buoys, visual or auditory hazing devices, bird repellents, securing of materials, and netting of materials, vehicles, and equipment. It shall also include timing for installation of nest deterrents and field confirmation to prevent effects to any active nest; guidance for the contractor to install, maintain, and remove nest deterrents according to product specifications; and periodic monitoring of nest deterrents to ensure proper installation and functioning and prevent injury or entrapment of birds or other animals. In the event that an active nest is located on project facilities, materials or equipment, SCE will avoid disturbance or use of the facilities, materials or equipment (e.g., by red-tag) until the nest is no longer active.

Communication. The NBMP shall specify the responsibilities of construction monitors with regard to nests and nest issues and specify a direct communication protocol to ensure that nest information and potential adverse impacts to nesting birds can be promptly communicated from nest monitors to construction monitors, so that any needed actions can be taken immediately.

The NBMP shall specify a procedure to be implemented following accidental disturbance of nests, including wildlife rehabilitation options. It also shall describe any proposed measures, and applicable circumstances, to prevent take of precocial young of ground-nesting birds such as killdeer or quail. For example, chick fences may be used to prevent them from entering work areas and access roads. Finally, the NBMP will specify a procedure for removal of inactive nests, including verification that the nest is inactive and a notification/approval process.

Reporting. Throughout the construction phase of the project, nest locations, project activities in the vicinity of nests (including helicopter traces), and any adjustments to buffer areas shall be updated and available to CPUC monitors on a daily basis. All buffer reduction notifications and prompt notifications of nest-related non-compliance and corrective actions will be made via email to CPUC monitors. The draft NBMP shall include a proposed format for daily and weekly reporting (e.g., spreadsheet available online, tracking each nest). In addition, the NBMP shall specify the format and content of nest data to be provided in regular monitoring and compliance reports. At the end of each year's nest season, SCE will submit an annual NBMP report to the CPUC, BLM, CDFW, and USFWS. Specific contents and format of the annual report will be reviewed and approved by the CPUC and BLM in consultation with CDFW and USFWS.

BR-11 Conduct surveys and avoidance for burrowing owl. [Supersedes APM BIO-07.] Burrowing owl surveys shall be conducted in accordance with the most current CDFW guidelines in Appendix D of the Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation (CDFG, 2012; or updated guidelines as they become available) in all potential habitat, regardless whether or not the previous assessment identified burrows. SCE shall take measures to avoid impacts to any active burrowing owl burrow within or adjacent to a work area. The default buffer for a burrowing owl burrow is 300 feet for ground construction, and 300 feet horizontal and 200

feet vertical for helicopter construction. Effectiveness of the buffer area will be monitored, and adjustments will be made if necessary. The Nesting Bird Management Plan (Mitigation Measure BR-10) will specify a procedure for adjusting this buffer, if needed. Binocular surveys may be substituted for protocol field surveys on private lands adjacent to the project site only when SCE has made reasonable attempts to obtain permission to enter the property for survey work but was unable to obtain such permission.

If active burrowing owl burrows are located within project work areas, SCE may passively relocate the owls by preparing and implementing a Burrowing Owl Passive Relocation Plan, as described below. SCE shall prepare a draft Burrowing Owl Passive Relocation Plan for review and approval by CPUC and BLM in consultation with CDFW and USFWS prior to the start of any ground-disturbing activities. SCE may not initiate burrowing owl passive relocation prior to finalization of the Plan and approval by CPUC and BLM. No active relocation shall be permitted. No passive relocation of burrowing owls shall be permitted during breeding season, unless a qualified biologist verifies through non-invasive methods that an occupied burrow is not occupied by a mated pair, and only upon authorization by CDFW. The Plan shall include, but not be limited to, the following elements:

- **Assessment of Suitable Burrow Availability.** The Plan shall include an inventory of existing, suitable, and unoccupied burrow sites within 500 feet of the affected project work site. Suitable burrows will include inactive desert kit fox, ground squirrel, or desert tortoise burrows that are deep enough to provide suitable burrowing owl nesting sites, as determined by a qualified biologist. If two or more suitable and unoccupied burrows are present in the area for each burrowing owl that will be passively relocated, then no replacement burrows will need to be built.
- **Replacement Burrows.** For each burrowing owl that will be passively relocated, if fewer than two suitable unoccupied burrows are available within 500 feet of the affected project work site, then SCE shall construct at least two replacement burrows within 500 feet of the affected project work site. Burrow replacement sites shall be in areas of suitable habitat for burrowing owl nesting, and subject to minimal human disturbance and access. The Plan shall describe measures to ensure that burrow installation or improvements would not affect sensitive species habitat or any burrowing owls already present in the relocation area. The Plan shall provide guidelines for creation or enhancement of at least two natural or artificial burrows for each active burrow within the project disturbance area, including a discussion of timing of burrow improvements, specific location of burrow installation, and burrow design. Design of the artificial burrows shall be consistent with CDFW guidelines (CDFG, 2012; or more current guidance as it becomes available) and shall be approved by the CPUC, BLM, CDFW, and USFWS.
- **Methods.** Provide detailed methods and guidance for passive relocation of burrowing owls, outside the breeding season. An occupied burrow may not be disturbed during the nesting season (generally, but not limited to, February 1 to August 31), unless a qualified biologist determines, by non-invasive methods, that it is not occupied by a mated pair. Passive relocation would include installation of one-way doors on burrow entrances that would let owls out of the burrow but would not let them back in. Once owls have been passively relocated, burrows will be carefully excavated by hand and collapsed by, or under the direct supervision, of a qualified biologist.
- **Monitoring and Reporting.** Describe monitoring and management of the replacement burrow site(s) and provide a reporting plan. The objective shall be to manage the reloca-

tion area for the benefit of burrowing owls, with the specific goal of maintaining the functionality of the burrows for a minimum of two years. Monitoring reports shall be available to the CPUC and BLM on a weekly basis.

BR-12 Conduct surveys and avoidance for bats. SCE shall conduct surveys for roosting bats within 200 feet of project work areas within 14 days prior to any grading of rocky outcrops or removal of large trees (12 inches in diameter or greater at 4.5 feet above grade) with loose bark or other cavities, foliage, and palm fronds. Surveys shall be conducted during the breeding season (1 March to 31 July) and the non-breeding season. Surveys shall be performed by a qualified bat biologist (i.e., a biologist holding a CDFW collection permit and a Memorandum of Understanding or equivalent agreement with CDFW allowing the biologist to handle bats). The resume of the biologist shall be provided to the CPUC and BLM for concurrence in consultation with CDFW and USFWS prior to the biologist beginning field duties on the project. Surveys shall include a minimum of one day and one evening.

Any active bat roosts, including occupied day roosts, maternity roosts, and hibernacula, must be identified and clearly marked. An exclusion area will be established 165 feet from any active roost, and these areas will be avoided during construction activities. Ingress and egress along established routes will be permitted in those areas, and additional buffer reductions may be considered in coordination with the qualified bat biologist, CPUC, and CDFW. If active roosts are found, then SCE will either (1) delay construction activities at these sites until the roost is no longer active, or (2) conduct follow-up focused surveys to determine if the sites support special-status bat species. If the roost is occupied by common species, then work activities may proceed. SCE shall consult with a bat specialist in order to determine when the breeding cycle for the special-status bats is completed. SCE shall consult with CDFW regarding eviction of non-breeding bats.

SCE shall submit documentation providing pre-construction survey results and any avoidance of roosting and nursery sites to the CPUC and BLM for review and approval.

BR-13 Conduct surveys and avoidance for American badger, ringtail, and desert kit fox. SCE shall conduct pre-construction surveys for desert kit fox, ringtail, and American badger no more than 30 days prior to initiation of construction activities. Surveys shall be conducted in areas that contain habitat for these species and shall include project disturbance areas and access roads plus a 200-foot buffer surrounding these areas. SCE shall submit documentation providing pre-construction survey results to the CPUC and BLM for review and approval. If dens are detected, each den shall be classified as inactive, potentially active, active non-natal, or active natal.

Inactive dens located in project disturbance areas may be excavated by hand and backfilled to prevent reuse, only upon confirmation that they are inactive.

Active or potentially active dens shall be flagged and project activities, with exceptions as listed below, within 100 feet (non-natal dens) or 200 feet (natal dens, or any active den during the breeding season) shall be avoided. Ingress/egress of construction vehicles and equipment through buffers and low intensity activities such as inspections and BMP maintenance within buffers is allowed, provided a qualified biologist determines that these activities will not impact dens or denning animals. Buffers may be modified with concurrence of CPUC and BLM, in consultation with CDFW and USFWS. If active dens are found within project disturbance areas and avoidance is not possible, SCE shall take action as specified below, after notifying and obtaining concurrence from CPUC, BLM, and CDFW.

Active and potentially active non-natal dens. Outside the breeding season, any potentially active dens that would be directly impacted by construction activities shall be monitored by a qualified mammologist or biologist for three consecutive nights using a tracking medium (such as diatomaceous earth or fire clay) or infrared camera stations at the entrance. If no tracks are observed in the tracking medium or no photos of the target species are captured after three nights, the den may be excavated and backfilled by hand. If tracks are observed, the den may be progressively blocked with natural materials (rocks, dirt, sticks, and vegetation piled in front of the entrance) for the next three to five nights to discourage continued use. After verification that the den is no longer active, the den may be excavated and backfilled by hand.

Active natal dens. Active natal dens (any den with cubs or pups) or any den active during the breeding season will not be excavated or passively relocated. The cub or pup-rearing season is generally from January 15 through mid-September. A 200-foot no-disturbance buffer shall be maintained around all active natal dens. Discovery of an active natal den that could be impacted by the project shall be reported to the CPUC, BLM, and CDFW within 24 hours of the discovery along with a map of the den location and a copy of the survey results. A qualified biologist shall monitor the natal den until he or she determines that the pups have dispersed. Any disturbance to denning animals or activities that might disturb denning activities shall be prohibited within the buffer zone. Once the pups have dispersed, methods listed above for non-natal dens may be used to discourage den reuse. After verification that the den is unoccupied, it shall then be excavated by hand and backfilled to ensure that no animals are trapped in the den.

If canine distemper is reported in desert kit fox on the site or surrounding areas, then SCE shall coordinate with CPUC, BLM, and CDFW to identify appropriate actions prior to continuing implementation of this mitigation measure in respect to desert kit fox. Any observations of a kit fox that appears sick or any kit fox mortality shall be reported to CPUC, CDFW, and BLM within one work day.

In the event that passive relocation techniques fail, SCE shall contact the CPUC, BLM, and CDFW to explore other relocation options.

All den monitoring and excavation activities and passive relocations shall be documented and reported to the CDFW, BLM, and CPUC in weekly monitoring reports, and a written summary will be included in each annual monitoring report.

- b. Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, and regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?***

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION. Construction of the Proposed Project would not directly impact riparian habitat under the jurisdiction of the CDFW. Less than 0.1 acres of riparian habitat was observed within the BRSA, and Proposed Project activities would avoid these areas. As a result, no impacts to riparian habitat are anticipated.

Eleven sensitive natural communities occur within the BRSA (BTR Table 5.4-1, Sensitive Natural Communities). Proposed Project construction, including vegetation clearing or grading required for work areas and staging yards, would result in long-term or permanent impacts to 7.7 acres of sensitive natural

communities. These communities are ranked as S2 (native grassland) or S3 (all others, including Joshua tree woodland). The overall impacts to these communities would be relatively minor in the context of the surrounding land uses. The seven mitigation measures listed below would minimize this impact and offset it. In particular, Mitigation Measure BR-3 would minimize loss of vegetation and habitat, and Mitigation Measure BR-6 would require salvaging Joshua trees and cactus (including teddy-bear cholla), and Mitigation Measure BR-8 requires off-site compensation of all disturbed natural habitat. With implementation of the measures identified below, construction impacts to riparian habitat and sensitive natural communities would be less significant.

Operations and Maintenance

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. O&M activities could involve minor clearing of vegetation and grading in previously disturbed areas but would not create additional disturbance to riparian habitat or sensitive vegetation communities. Potential impacts during O&M would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

The full text of all measures is presented at the end of the analysis of checklist item (a) above.

- **BR-1. Conduct biological monitoring and reporting.**
- **BR-2. Prepare and implement a Worker Environmental Awareness Program (WEAP).**
- **BR-3. Minimize native vegetation and habitat loss.**
- **BR-4. Restore or revegetate temporary disturbance areas.**
- **BR-5. Prepare and implement an Integrated Weed Management Plan.**
- **BR-6. Minimize and mitigate impacts to special-status plants.**
- **BR-8. Compensate for habitat loss.**

c. Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) either individually or in combination with the known or probable impacts of other activities through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION. The Proposed Project would not affect wetlands as defined in the Clean Water Act. However, project construction would cause long-term or permanent direct effects to about 12 acres of streambeds, watercourses, or other hydrologic features that appear to meet jurisdictional criteria of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), CDFW, California Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), and Nevada Division of Environmental Protection (NDEP) (Table 5.4-3). Depending on the specific nature of these hydrologic features, the project's impacts may be permanent or long-term or, in some cases, seasonal hydrologic process may return the disturbed sites to their previous condition within one year, without need for follow-up restoration.

Table 5.4-3. Jurisdictional Hydrologic Features to Be Impacted by the Proposed Project

Feature Type	Temporary Impacts (acres)		Permanent Impacts (acres)	
	USACE, SWRCB, and NDEP	CDFW	USACE, SWRCB, and NDEP	CDFW
Linear Water Features	9.2	11.9	< 0.1	< 0.1
Wetlands	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	9.2	11.9	< 0.1	< 0.1

SCE identifies APM BIO-08, which specifies that SCE will obtain authorizations as required and develop habitat compensation measures as agreed to with the USACE, CDFW, RWQCB, and NDEP. Indirect impacts to aquatic resources could also result from spillage of hazardous materials used during construction, as well as erosion and sedimentation. These potential impacts would be avoided and minimized through implementation of the Proposed Project's Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plans (SWPPPs) as required by Mitigation Measure HWQ-1 (Implement an Erosion Control Plan). The SWPPPs would require that vehicles must be checked daily and maintained in accordance with manufacturer's specifications to minimize the potential for leaks, and refueling and maintenance of vehicles would occur at least 50 feet from the edge of any aquatic feature. As such, indirect impacts from the spillage of hazardous materials on aquatic resources would be less than significant. As noted in Section 5.9, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, SCE will prepare a Hazardous Materials Management Plan (HMMP) consistent with Mitigation Measure HH-1 (Prepare and implement a Hazardous Materials and Waste Management Plan) that addresses the safe handling, transport, use, and disposal of hazardous materials.

With implementation of APM BIO-08 and the requirements of Mitigation Measure HWQ-1 and HH-1 (from other sections of this document), potentially significant construction impacts to jurisdictional waters of the U.S., waters of California, and waters of Nevada would be mitigated to less than significant.

Operation and Maintenance

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. O&M activities are not expected to impact jurisdictional waters and drainages. In addition, if it is necessary to conduct future streambed alterations including dredge or fill activities within federally jurisdictional waters, or alterations of bed or bank to state jurisdictional waters, SCE must obtain authorization from the USACE, CDFW, RWQCB, or NDEP and will be subject to any permit conditions associated with that approval. Therefore, potential impacts to jurisdictional waters during O&M activities would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

- **HWQ-1: Implement an Erosion Control Plan.** (Full text in Section 5.10, Hydrology and Water Quality.) This measure requires SCE develop and submit an Erosion Control Plan prior to construction. The Erosion Control Plan may be part of the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and kept onsite and readily available on request. Grading Plans and evidence of having necessary permits are also required.
 - **HH-1: Prepare and implement a Hazardous Materials and Waste Management Plan.** (Full text in Section 5.9, Hazards and Hazardous Materials.) This measure requires SCE to identify: hazardous materials to be transported, used, and stored on site for the proposed construction activities; hazardous wastes generated onsite as a result of the proposed construction activities; and appropriate management procedures.
- d. Would the project interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of wildlife nursery sites?***

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. The project consists of upgrade and replacement of existing facilities; therefore, ecological connectivity conditions would be similar to existing conditions. Project construction activities would cause localized short-term hindrance of movement by resident or migratory wildlife due to temporary noise, lighting, dust, and human activity in the work areas. Neither initial construction nor

the operation and maintenance of completed facilities would interfere substantially with the long-term movement of native resident or migratory species because impacts would be temporary and localized. No project facilities or activities would cause blockages to fish passage in streams.

Because the project would not cause substantial increased barriers or hindrances to wildlife movement, its impacts would be less than significant, and no mitigation is recommended.

Operations and Maintenance

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. O&M activities would occur at established facility sites on a periodic basis. They would not interfere substantially with the movement of wildlife or impede use of wildlife nursery sites. O&M impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

e. Would the project conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION. The County of San Bernardino Development Code and City of Hesperia Code of Ordinances regulate removal of riparian vegetation and certain native desert plants including Joshua trees and creosote rings. No impacts to riparian plants are anticipated. Native desert vegetation, including Joshua trees and potentially including creosote rings are located within the proposed Project footprint. The Proposed Project would remove approximately 5.2 acres of Joshua tree woodland, including an unknown number of Joshua trees. These impacts, should they occur within the County or City jurisdiction, normally require discretionary permitting from the County or City, but local discretionary permits are preempted for projects under the jurisdiction of the CPUC. Impacts to Joshua trees and creosote rings would be mitigated through Mitigation Measures BR-6 and BR-8:

Other applicable local policies and ordinances identified in Section 5.4.1 (Regulatory Setting) are more general, and do not identify resource-specific or project-specific requirements.

With implementation of Mitigation Measures BR-6 and BR-8, potential conflicts with the policies and ordinances described above would be reduced to less than significant.

Operations and Maintenance

O&M activities are not expected to conflict with local policies or ordinances; any potential impact would be less than significant, and no additional mitigation is recommended.

Mitigation Measures

- **BR-6: Minimize and mitigate impacts to special-status plants.** This measure requires salvage of cactus and Joshua trees.
- **BR-8: Compensate for habitat loss.** This measure identifies lands containing creosote rings as priorities for habitat compensation.

f. Would the project conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Communities Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or State habitat conservation plan?

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. Portions of the Proposed Project footprint within Clark County would be located on lands within the Clark County MSHCP area. SCE's ROWs on BLM lands are within a BLM utility corridor, which is not regulated by the MSHCP. Project activities located on private lands or on BLM lands outside the ROWs (e.g., helicopter or staging sites) could fall within the MSHCP area. The total project disturbance area within Nevada is 131.7 acres, including 39.6 acres on BLM lands and 92.1 acres on private lands.

The Clark County MSHCP is funded through development fees and specifies general planning direction for the County and other participating agency permittees. The Project will be subject to local regulation in Nevada; by complying with the MSHCP, there will be no conflict.

Project activities located on BLM lands in California fall within the DRECP area and are subject to all applicable DRECP requirements, including the CMAs identified in the sections above. The DRECP is a BLM plan amendment, but is not a Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Communities Conservation Plan, or local, regional, or state conservation plan. The Project would not conflict with the DRECP and no impact would occur.

Operation and Maintenance

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. O&M activities associated with the Proposed Project would be subject to review and approval by BLM and Clark County Nevada. By complying with the DRECP and the Clark County MSHCP, there will be no conflict and adopted Habitat Conservation Plan or similar local, regional, or State habitat conservation plan.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

5.4.7 References

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5.5 Cultural Resources

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to §15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Significance criteria established by CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G.

5.5.1 Environmental Setting

Cultural resources reflect the history, diversity, and culture of the region and people who created the resources. They are unique in that they often are the only remaining evidence of activity that occurred in the past. Cultural resources can be natural or built, purposeful or accidental, physical or intangible. They encompass archaeological, traditional, and built environmental resources, including buildings, structures, objects, districts, and sites.

Information presented in this section was gathered from a review of 9 cultural resources reports prepared by ASM Affiliates for the Proposed Project and submitted to BLM and the CPUC (ASM 2018a-i).

The area of direct impacts to cultural resources under CEQA is identical to the area referred to by BLM as the Area of Potential Effect (APE). For purposes of the analysis of Cultural Resources under CEQA, this area is identified herein as the CEQA Area of Direct Impacts. It consists of all areas of ground disturbance under the Proposed Project plus a 50-meter buffer. The area out to 0.5-miles surrounding the CEQA Area of Direct Impacts is identified herein as the CEQA Area of Indirect Impacts (which is the same as BLM's indirect APE).

Cultural Resources staff synthesized records of previous projects and previously recorded resources and consulted archival and literary resources pertaining to the prehistory, ethnography, and history of the Proposed Project area and the 0.5-mile surrounding area. In addition, a pedestrian survey was conducted of 100 percent of the CEQA Area of Direct Impacts.

Prehistoric Background

The chronological framework most often used in the Mojave Desert divides the prehistoric period into 5 periods: Lake Mojave (11,500 - 7,770 years before present (BP)), Pinto (7,700 - 3,800 years BP), Gypsum (3,800 - 1,400 years BP), Saratoga Springs (1,400 - 700 years BP), and Shoshonean (700 BP to Contact). However, Mojave Desert cultural chronologies are highly varied due to the lack of reliable dates.

Lake Mojave Period (11,500-7,770 years BP). Lake Mojave archaeological assemblages include percussion-flaked cores and pressure-flaked bifaces, crescents, stemmed Lake Mojave and Silver Lake projectile points. Lake Mojave sites occur on flat areas, mesas, and terraces adjacent to larger washes and along the edges of pluvial lakes; i.e., well-watered locations where a variety of resources would have been available.

Pinto Period (7,700-3,800 years before present). This period has been traditionally defined based on the presence of Pinto points with characteristic upward-sloping shoulders and concave bases. In the Mojave region, Pinto sites are found in a wide variety of environmental settings suggesting a wide-ranging, and

generalized land-use pattern. Pinto-period sites contain milling slabs and other tools indicating an increase in the use of plants, specifically small seeds. Sites assigned to this time period are uncommon in the region, suggesting a sparse population.

Gypsum Period (3,800 -1,400 years BP). During this period the subsistence system appears to have broadened. A greater exploitation of hard seeds is inferred by a higher frequency of milling stones that often include portable manos and metates while the presence of mortars and pestles may indicate exploitation of mesquite beans. This intensification supported larger populations. In addition, large-game hunting resumed importance during this interval largely due to improving climatic conditions. Changes in subsistence strategies were accompanied by a shift from family-based social organization to larger, multifamily bands. Flaked stone assemblages include a higher frequency of microcrystalline raw material (often from non-local sources), a greater use of pressure flaking, and medium to large Elko, Humboldt, and Gypsum dart points.

Saratoga Springs period (1,400-700 years BP). The smaller Rose Spring and Eastgate points found in this period are generally considered to represent the onset of bow-and-arrow technology. The period is also characterized by more diversified toolkits and a narrowing in the spatial range of raw material sources, indicating declining foraging territories. Artifact assemblages may include a range of grinding equipment, ceramics (including extra-local trade items), and non-subsistence-related items such as ornaments and ritual objects. Several large Saratoga Springs-period sites with rich middens have been documented in the Mojave area which have been interpreted as village sites. Other localities in the Mojave appear to have had more mobile, loosely based settlement systems characterized by considerable mobility and heavy reliance on springs.

Shoshonean Period (700 years PB-Contact). This period is defined by the presence of Cottonwood and Desert Side-notched arrow points. It also includes various rough brownware ceramics, as well as small steatite and shell beads, and large, unshaped milling equipment. These assemblages are generally equated with the entry of Numic groups into the region. Beginning about AD 1850, inhabitants of the region were directly and indirectly affected by Euro-American incursions and by Euro-American technology, economy, and culture. This resulted in less mobile, but family-centered settlement patterns.

Ethnohistoric Background

Several present-day Native American groups occupy and regularly travel through the Mojave Desert of California and Nevada, as did ancestors of these groups. Native American groups having historical Tribal territories falling within the vicinity of the Proposed Project area include the Southern Paiute and Chemehuevi in the more eastern reaches of California and southern Nevada; the Mojave, whose subsistence activities extended well into the Mojave Desert, although the heart of their territory was the Colorado River; and the Desert Serrano (also known as Vanyumé) who ranged and occupied the central and western parts of the Proposed Project area including modern-day Baker, Barstow, and Victorville. See Section 5.18 Tribal Cultural Resources for more detailed information about these groups and the importance of prehistoric trail networks.

Historic Background

In California, the Historic Era generally is divided into three periods: the Spanish or Mission Period (1769 to 1821), the Mexican or Rancho Period (1821 to 1848), and the American Period (1848 to present). Although Europeans did pass through the Proposed Project area during the Mission and Mexican Periods, all of the historic resources identified in the Proposed Project area are associated with the American

Period. As such, the following discussion emphasizes the American Period. The history of the area relates to themes involving Transportation, Military, Mining, and Electrical Power for southern California.

Transportation

One of the historical themes developed for the Proposed Project area is the use of various transportation corridors through the Mojave Desert, from prehistoric times to the present. These trails, roads, highways, and railroads throughout the centuries have connected Nevada, Utah, Arizona, and New Mexico with the California Coast. These historic trails are better described as trail systems, rather than single trails. In archaeological literature, they are treated as separate cultural resources and are documented as coinciding in some areas; however, only a few segments of the trail systems have been formally documented on the ground. Some of the key transportation routes include: the Old Spanish Trail; the Mormon Road; the Mojave Trail/Mojave Road; the Arrowhead Trail Road; National Old Trails Highway/ U.S. Route 66; the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad (AT&SF); and the San Pedro, Los Angeles & Salt Lake Railroad (SP, LA & SL).

Military

Evidence of military training is present across the Mojave and Colorado deserts. George Patton's Desert Training Center/California-Arizona Maneuvers Area (DTC/C-AMA) and Operation Desert Strike have left many artifacts, features, and sites across the region.

Desert Training Center/California-Arizona Maneuver Area. In 1942, during World War II (WWII), General George S. Patton Jr. established the DTC/C-AMA in a sparsely populated region of southeastern California, Arizona, and Nevada. Its purpose was to prepare tank, infantry, and air units for the harsh conditions of North Africa, practicing maneuvers, developing tactics, and field-testing equipment. The installation was in operation for 2 years and covered 16,000 square miles. It was the first simulated theater of operations in the United States. Its location was chosen for its unforgiving desert heat, rugged terrain, available telephone communications system, and accessibility by established railroads and highways. Recent projects in the region have identified many DTC/C-AMA-related sites, artifacts and features. These resources were understood to be pieces of a larger historic district which represents an important piece of the military history of the nation. The DTC/C-AMA was the largest training facility and the only one of its kind in American military history, eventually encompassing more than 18,000 square miles. The tactical, strategic, and logistical doctrines developed and refined during the facility's life were applied overseas and undoubtedly helped to win WWII. DTC/C-AMA resource types include maneuver areas, divisional camps, small unit training areas, air facilities and crash sites, bivouacs, campsites, ranges, supply depots and railroad sidings, and hospitals and medical centers.

Desert Strike. One brief military training exercise, known as Desert Strike, took place in the desert maneuver area in May 1964. The U.S. Strike Command conducted the joint Army and Air Force field training exercise for the major combat organizations and their support units in employing tactical nuclear and conventional weapons. Army and Air Force troop units were trained in passive and active tactics as well as concepts and procedures for joint operations. This training maneuver took place on more than 13 million acres of public and private lands in the California, Nevada and Arizona deserts. From an archaeological perspective, the types of activities carried out during Desert Strike complicate the identification of earlier DTC/C-AMA sites since the Army often used surplus WWII munitions and rations in their subsequent training maneuvers.

Mining

The first confirmed gold discovery in San Bernardino County was at Salt Spring, along the Mormon Trail in 1849. A large amount of ore was discovered in the 1860s, primarily within several days of travel from 2 major transportation routes; the Mojave Road and the Colorado River. Ore was found in the Clark, Providence, New York, Whipple, Turtle, and Sacramento mountains. Mining remained active through WWII; although there was a decrease during the 1920s. An increase in gold prices in the 1930s caused many small mines to reactivate. With the onset of WWII, iron was extracted from the Providence Mountains, specifically from Vulcan Mine. Since then, gold, silver, and tungsten have been mined in smaller amounts. Silver was discovered first in the Providence Mountains in 1863 in the Macedonia Canyon area; significant silver deposits were also discovered at the Bonanza King Mine in 1880. With the decrease in silver prices, gold at Hidden Hill, Gold Valley, and Out West mining camps began to be mined in earnest. Immense iron ore deposits located in Foshay Pass were mined during WWII.

Electrical Power for Southern California

Southern California lacked sufficient electrical power to accommodate population growth and urban expansion at the beginning of the twentieth century. California power companies, having exploited hydrological sources within the state, soon explored options in other states for power production. Attention turned to the Colorado River where it was agreed that the river should be harnessed with a dam for the purposes of irrigation, drinking water, and power generation. Situated in a desolate desert environment southeast of Las Vegas, Black Canyon was selected as the site for the location of a massive concrete dam, initially known as Boulder Dam; the site was later renamed and is known today as Hoover Dam.

The Bureau of Power and Light and Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) entered into contract with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation in 1930 to purchase electrical power from Hoover Dam. LADWP began construction of the 270-mile Boulder Lines 1 and 2 in June 1933 and completed them in mid-1936. The project would set a standard for long-distance transmission through investments in research, development, and technological advances in the design and construction of towers, conductors, control mechanisms, and auxiliary equipment for the 270-mile system. Aside from the construction of widely spaced galvanized metal towers, an access road paralleling all 3 side-by-side lines was bladed and used for construction, maintenance, and operation purposes. By 1940, there were no less than 11 power transmission lines emanating out of Hoover Dam dedicated to providing southern California and Nevada with electrical power.

5.5.2 Regulatory Background

Numerous laws and regulations require federal, state, and local agencies to consider the effects a project may have on cultural resources and tribal cultural resources. These laws and regulations stipulate a process for compliance, define the responsibilities of the various agencies proposing the action, and prescribe the relationship among other involved agencies.

State and Local

California

California Register of Historical Resources. The CRHR (PRC §5024.1) is a listing of properties that are to be protected from substantial adverse change. It includes properties that are listed, or have been formally determined to be eligible for listing in the NRHP, State Historical Landmarks, and eligible Points of

Historical Interest under CEQA, cultural resources listed in, or determined to be eligible for listing in, the CRHR or a local register meet the CEQA definition of “historical resources” and must be given consideration in the CEQA process. Effects on historical resources may be considered impacts of the Proposed Project. Under the California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 11.5, properties listed on or formally determined to be eligible for listing in the NRHP are automatically eligible for listing in the CRHR. A resource is generally considered to be historically significant under CEQA if it meets the criteria for listing in the CRHR. These criteria are essentially the same as the eligibility criteria for the NRHP. In addition to being at least 50 years old, a resource must meet at least one (and may meet more than one) of the following four criteria:

- *Criterion 1, is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;*
- *Criterion 2, is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;*
- *Criterion 3, embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values; or*
- *Criterion 4, has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important to history or prehistory.*

In addition, historical resources must also possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

Unique Archaeological Resources. Additionally, CEQA states that it is the responsibility of the lead agency to determine whether the project will have a significant effect on “unique” archaeological resources. An archaeological artifact, object, or site can meet CEQA’s definition of a unique archaeological resource even if it does not qualify as a historical resource (PRC 21083.2[g]; 14 CCR 15064.5[c][3]). An archaeological artifact, object, or site is considered a unique archaeological resource if “it can be clearly demonstrated that, without merely adding to the current body of knowledge, there is a high probability that it meets any of the following criteria (PRC 21083.2[g]):

- Contains information needed to answer important scientific research questions and there is a demonstrable public interest in that information
- Has a special and particular quality such as being the oldest of its type or the best available example of its type
- Is directly associated with a scientifically recognized important prehistoric or historic event or person
- If it can be demonstrated that a project will cause damage to a unique archaeological resource, the lead agency may require that reasonable efforts be taken to preserve these resources in place or provide mitigation measures

California Health and Safety Code. Section 7050.5(b) of the California Health and Safety Code requires that in the event of discovery of any human remains in any location other than a dedicated cemetery, there shall be no further excavation or disturbance of the site or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent human remains until the County coroner has been notified. The coroner will determine whether or not the remains are subject to the provisions of §27491 of the Government Code or any other related provisions of law concerning investigation of the circumstances, manner and cause of any death, and the recommendations concerning the treatment and disposition of the human remains. The coroner shall make his or her determination within two working days from the time of notification.

California Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act. Section 8010 brands this chapter of the code as the California Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 2001. Section 8011 establishes the state repatriation policy. The Act:

- Ensures that a consistent state policy is followed with respect to handling of all California Indian human remains and cultural items, and that the state's repatriation policy is applied consistently with the provisions of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) (25 USC Section 3001 et seq.);
- Facilitate implementation of the provisions of NAGPRA with respect to publicly funded agencies and museums in California and encourages voluntary disclosure and return of remains and cultural items by agencies and museums;
- Provides a mechanism whereby lineal descendants and culturally affiliated California Indian tribes that file repatriation claims for human remains and cultural items under NAGPRA or under this chapter with California state agencies and museums may request assistance from the commission in ensuring that state agencies and museums are responding to those claims in a timely manner and in facilitating the resolution of disputes regarding those claims; and
- Provides a mechanism whereby California tribes that are not federally recognized may file claims with agencies and museums for repatriation of human remains and cultural items.

Public Resources Code (PRC), Section 5097.98(b) and (e) requires a landowner on whose property Native American human remains are found, to limit further development activity in the vicinity until he or she confers with the Native American Heritage Commission-identified Most Likely Descendants (MLD) to consider treatment options. In the absence of MLDs or of a treatment acceptable to all parties, the landowner is required to re-inter the remains elsewhere on the property in a location not subject to further disturbance. Section 5097.99 establishes as a felony the acquisition, possession, sale, or dissection with malice or wantonness Native American remains or funerary artifacts. Finally, Section 5097.991 establishes as state policy the repatriation of Native American remains and funerary artifacts.

Health and Safety Code (HSC), Section 7050 makes it a misdemeanor to mutilate, disinter, wantonly disturb, or willfully remove human remains found outside a cemetery and further requires a project owner to halt construction if human remains are discovered and to contact the county coroner.

Tribal Cultural Resources

Please see Section 5.18 Tribal Cultural Resources for the regulatory background regarding tribal cultural resources.

Nevada

Nevada Revised Statutes. The Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) are the current codified laws of the State of Nevada. Nevada addresses cultural resources resource protections under two chapters in Title 33 of the NRS: State Museums and Historic Preservation and Archeology.

State Museums (NRS, Title 33, Chapter 381):

NRS 381.195: Defines a prehistoric site as any archeological or paleontological site, ruin, deposit, fossilized footprints and other impressions, petroglyphs and pictographs, habitation caves, rock shelters, natural caves, burial ground or sites of religious or cultural importance to an Indian tribe.

NRS 381.197: Permit required to investigate, explore or excavate historic or prehistoric site; applicability of penalties. Except for action taken under an agreement with the Office of Historic Preservation of the State Department of Conservation and Natural Resources pursuant to NRS 383.430, and except as otherwise provided in this section, a person shall not investigate, explore or excavate an historic or prehistoric site on federal or state lands or remove any object therefrom unless the person is the holder of a valid and current permit issued pursuant to the provisions of NRS 381.195 to 381.227, inclusive. Conduct that would otherwise constitute a violation of this section is not a violation of this section if it is also a violation of NRS 383.435 (Added to NRS by 1959, 290; A 2005, 569; 2011, 2981).

Historic Preservation and Archeology (NRS, Title 33, Chapter 383):

NRS 383.011: Defines cultural resources as any objects, sites or information of historic, prehistoric, archeological, architectural, or paleontological significance. This was added to the Statutes of Nevada in 2015 under Senate Bill 20, Chapter 18 by the Committee on Natural Resources.

Local

The CPUC has sole and exclusive jurisdiction over the siting and design of the Proposed Project components located in the State of California. Pursuant to CPUC G.O. 131-D, Section XIV.B, “Local jurisdictions acting pursuant to local authority are preempted from regulating electric power line projects, distribution lines, substations, or electric facilities constructed by public utilities subject to the CPUC’s jurisdiction. However, in locating such projects, the public utilities shall consult with local agencies regarding land use matters.” Consequently, public utilities are directed to consider local regulations and consult with local agencies, but the county and cities’ regulations are not applicable as the county and cities do not have jurisdiction over the Proposed Project. For informational purposes, local regulations in California jurisdictions are provided in Appendix C. The Proposed Project is subject to local regulations in the State of Nevada.

Clark County General Plan – 2019 Historic Preservation Element

Goal 1 Encourage community efforts in Clark County that promote the identification and protection of historic resources and programs in Clark County, including recognition of sites on the State and National registers, as well as those designated by the County.

- Policy 1. Keep historically designated areas intact and preserve the distinctive historic, economic, cultural, paleontological, or archeological character of appropriate residential neighborhoods.
- Policy 2. Encourage adaptive reuse of historic buildings, whenever feasible.
- Policy 3. Ensure that all County owned historic facilities are not jeopardized by development projects, such as but not limited to facility expansions, remodels, or infrastructure improvements.

Goal 2 Promote cooperation between agencies and non-profit organizations to promote cultural resource protection.

- Policy 1. Explore opportunities for collaboration between Clark County, State, and local historic preservation nonprofit organizations.

Federal

Bureau of Land Management

National Historic Preservation Act. The principal federal law addressing cultural resources is the NHPA of 1966, as amended (54 United States Code [USC], Section 300101), and its implementing regulations (36 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR], Part 800), that primarily address compliance with Section 106 of the Act. Section 106 of the Act requires that federal agencies take into account the effect of any undertaking on historic properties, and to afford the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) a reasonable opportunity to comment. The implementing regulations describe the process for identifying and evaluating historic properties, for assessing the effects of federal actions on historic properties, and for consulting with interested parties, including the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), Indian tribes, local governments, and the public to develop measures that would avoid, reduce, or minimize adverse effects to historic properties. The term “historic properties” refers to cultural resources that are listed on, or meet specific criteria of eligibility for listing on, the National Register of Historic Places. These criteria consist of the quality of significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and:

- A. That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- B. That are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- C. That embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- D. That have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979. The ARPA (16 USC 470aa et seq.) and its implementing regulations found at Title 43 CFR Part 7 protects archaeological resources from vandalism and unauthorized collecting on public and Indian lands.

Requirements for responding to discoveries of Native American human remains and associated funerary objects on federal land are addressed under the NAGPRA (Public Law 101 601) and its implementing regulations found at Title 43 CFR Part 10. For those portions of the Proposed Project or alternative on public land, the BLM will comply with the law and regulations by determining lineal descendants and culturally affiliated Indian tribes and by carrying out appropriate treatment and disposition of any discovered remains, including transfer of custody.

American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978. The AIRFA (Title 42, U.S. Code, Section 1996) establishes policy for respect and protection of Native American religious practices. It seeks to correct federal policies and practices that could (a) deny access to sacred sites required in traditional religions, (b) prohibit use and possession of sacred objects necessary for religious ceremonies, and (c) intrude upon or interfere with religious ceremonies. The BLM complies with AIRFA by obtaining and considering the views of traditional religious practitioners as part of the NEPA compliance process.

Executive Order (EO) 13007. EO 13007 directs federal agencies to accommodate access to, and ceremonial use of, Indian sacred sites by Indian religious practitioners. It requires federal agencies to avoid adversely affecting the physical integrity of sacred sites to the extent practicable, permitted by law, and not clearly inconsistent with essential agency functions. EO 13007 reinforces the purposes expressed in

AIRFA. The BLM complies with EO 13007 by consulting with tribal governments and Indian religious practitioners as part of the NEPA compliance process.

The Antiquities Act of 1906 The Antiquities Act [16 United States Code (USC) 431–433] establishes criminal penalties for unauthorized destruction or appropriation of “any historic or prehistoric ruin or monument, or any object of antiquity” on federal land, and empowers the President to establish historical monuments and landmarks.

Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 The FLPMA is the BLM’s “organic act” that establishes the agencies multiple-use mandate. It establishes policy and goals to be followed in the administration of public lands under BLM jurisdiction. The intent of FLPMA is to protect and administer public lands within the framework of a program of multiple-use and sustained yield, and the maintenance of environmental quality. Particular emphasis is placed on the protection of the quality of scientific, scenic, historical, ecological, environmental, air and atmospheric, water resources and archaeological values.

National Park Service

All of the laws and regulations identified for the BLM apply to the NPS, except for the Federal Land Policy and Management Act.

5.5.3 Applicant Proposed Measures

SCE has identified APMs related to Cultural Resources and Tribal Cultural Resources:

APM CUL-01: Environmentally Sensitive Areas. [Superseded by Mitigation Measures CR-1 through CR-6.] Where operationally feasible, all National Register of Historic Places– (NRHP-) and California Register of Historical Resources– (CRHR-) eligible resources would be protected from direct impacts by Proposed Project redesign (i.e., relocation of the line, ancillary facilities, or temporary facilities or work areas). Avoidance mechanisms would include fencing off areas such as Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs) for the duration of the Proposed Project or as outlined in the Cultural Resources Management Plan (CRMP). If avoidance of NRHP- or CRHR-eligible resources is not feasible, SCE would prepare and submit a Historic Properties Treatment Plan (HPTP) to outline the treatment of cultural resources that cannot be avoided. The HPTP would be submitted to the appropriate agencies for review and approval. All treatment measures outlined in the HPTP would be implemented at least 30 days before the start of construction.

APM CUL-02: Cultural Resources Survey. SCE would perform surveys prior to construction for any Proposed Project areas not yet surveyed (e.g., new or modified staging areas, pull sites, or other work areas). Resources discovered during the surveys would be subject to APM CUL-03.

APM CUL-03: CRMP. [Superseded by Mitigation Measures CR-1 through CR-6.] SCE would prepare and submit for approval a CRMP to guide all cultural resource management activities during Proposed Project construction. Management of cultural resources would follow the standards and guidelines established by the NPS for implementing Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (“Archeology and Historic Preservation; Secretary of the Interior’s Standards and Guidelines,” 48 Federal Register 190 [29 September 1983], pp. 44716-44742). The CRMP would be submitted to the BLM for review and approval at least 30 days before the start of construction.

The CRMP would define and map all known or assumed eligible NRHP and CRHR properties in or within 100 feet of the Proposed Project’s Area of Potential Effect and would identify the cultural values that contribute to their NRHP and CRHR eligibility. A cultural resources protection plan would be included that details how NRHP- and CRHR-eligible properties would be avoided and protected during construction.

Measures would include, at a minimum, designation and marking of ESAs, archaeological monitoring, personnel training, and effectiveness reporting. The plan would detail the measures to be used; how, when, and where they would be implemented; and how protective measures and enforcement would be coordinated with construction personnel.

The CRMP would also define any additional areas that are considered to be of high sensitivity for the discovery of buried NRHP- and CRHR-eligible cultural resources, including burials, cremations, or sacred features. The CRMP would detail provisions for monitoring construction in these high-sensitivity areas. It would also detail procedures for halting construction; making appropriate notifications to agencies, officials, and Native Americans; and assessing NRHP and CRHR eligibility in the event that unknown cultural resources are discovered during construction. For all unanticipated cultural resource discoveries, the CRMP would detail the methods, the consultation procedures, and the timelines for assessing NRHP and CRHR eligibility, formulating a mitigation plan, and implementing treatment. Mitigation and treatment plans for unanticipated discoveries would be reviewed by the appropriate Native Americans and approved by the BLM, and the Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) prior to implementation.

The CRMP would include provisions for analysis of data in a regional context, reporting of results within one year of the completion of field studies, curation of artifacts (except from private land) and data (e.g., maps, field notes, archival materials, recordings, reports, photographs, and analysts' data) at a facility that is approved by the BLM, and dissemination of reports to local and State repositories, libraries, and interested professionals. The BLM would retain ownership of artifacts collected from BLM-managed lands. SCE would attempt to gain permission for artifacts from privately held land to be curated with the other project collections. The CRMP would specify that archaeologists and other discipline specialists conducting the studies must meet the Professional Qualifications Standards mandated by the OHP.

APM TCR-1: Tribal Monitoring (Allows for tribal monitors). **TCR-2: Tribal Engagement Plan.** (Requires a Tribal Engagement Plan) These APMs are identified in Section 5.18 Tribal Cultural Resources.

5.5.4 CEQA Significance Criteria

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR 15000 et seq.) provides guidance on assessing whether a project would have significant impacts on the environment. Consistent with Appendix G, the Proposed Project would have significant cultural resources impacts if it would:

- a. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to CCR §15064.5
- b. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to CCR §15064.5
- c. Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries

5.5.5 Methodology

The following section describes the methods of analysis, and results of record searches and pedestrian surveys for cultural resources.

Record Search

For the California portions of the project, records were primarily obtained from the South Central Coastal Information Center (SCCIC) and supplemented with information from the BLM, SCE, the BLM Government Land Office (GLO) website, other related internet searches, and local and regional libraries and museums

in an effort to obtain all available information on prehistoric and historic resources within the records search area. The records search found that 412 cultural resource projects have been conducted within a 1-mile radius of the Proposed Project. This record search area is also the CEQA Area of Indirect Impacts. Projects include various infrastructure improvement projects such as electrical transmission lines, natural gas pipelines, and fiber optic lines, as well as archaeological research projects and surveys undertaken by various federal agencies for resource planning and management. These projects resulted in the identification and documentation of 746 cultural resources within the 1-mile radius. Of those resources, 68 are within the CEQA Area of Direct Impacts (BLM's direct APE). Previously identified resources include prehistoric lithic procurement and quarry sites, lithic and ceramic artifact scatters, trails, rock shelters, rock features, and petroglyphs, whereas the historic period resources included railroads, roads, townsites, mining sites, military activity areas, and refuse scatters.

For the Nevada portions of the Proposed Project, records were primarily obtained through Nevada's online Cultural Resources Information System (NVCRIS) and then supplemented with information from the BLM Las Vegas Field Office, the BLM Government Land Office (GLO) website, through internet searches, and from local and regional libraries and museums. As a result of the records search, 111 cultural resource studies were identified that have been conducted within the record search area (CEQA Area of Indirect Impacts) with 3 of the previous studies passing through or encompassing portions of the Proposed Project area (CEQA Area of Direct Impacts).

Archaeological Inventory

Pedestrian surveys were conducted of the CEQA Area of Direct Impacts to inventory cultural resources. In California, the Class III cultural resource inventory of the CEQA Area of Direct Impacts covered a total of 2,503.5 acres. Management of the land is as follows: 840.8 acres BLM Barstow Field Office; 489.9 acres NPS (Mojave National Preserve); 326.6 acres BLM Needles Field office; and 846.2 acres are California state lands and privately owned. The archaeological inventory in California was conducted from August through September 2016 and from March 2017 through March 2018. The inventory identified 156 new archaeological sites, updated 41 previously identified archaeological sites, and documented 389 isolated finds. Additionally, 7 previously identified cultural resource sites reported to be located within the CEQA Area of Direct Impacts either could not be relocated, were destroyed by subsequent projects, or were misplotted. Of the identified archaeological sites, 40 are prehistoric in age, one is thought to be ethnohistoric in age, 127 are historic in age, and 28 are multi-component (having both prehistoric and historic components). Prehistoric sites include campsites, rock feature sites, a prehistoric trail with associated artifacts, lithic procurement sites, and artifact scatters.

In Nevada, the Class III cultural resource inventory for the CEQA Area of Direct Impacts covered a total of 1,263 acres. Management of the land is as follows: 871 acres BLM Southern Nevada District, Las Vegas Field Office; 18 acres Nevada state lands; 9 acres Bureau of Reclamation, Lower Colorado River Region; and 365 acres private ownership. Forty new archaeological sites, one previously identified site, and 89 isolated finds were identified and recorded. Additionally, six previously identified cultural resource sites reported to be located within the CEQA Area of Direct Impacts either could not be relocated or were destroyed by subsequent projects. Historic-era resources include mining sites associated with the Searchlight and Eldorado Mining Districts, refuse scatters associated with early mining, recreational activity, construction of the various utility lines, and military activity areas associated with Exercise Desert Strike. The prehistoric resources include a lithic scatter and quarry.

Built Environment Inventory

A built environment field inventory was conducted in California and Nevada in February 2017. In California, 14 built environment resources were previously recorded within the CEQA Areas of Direct and Indirect Impacts. Two additional resources were identified in the CEQA Areas of Direct and Indirect Impacts as part of this effort. These resources include roads, railroads, transmission lines, a substation, and an aqueduct.

In Nevada, 8 previously identified built environment resources are present in the in the CEQA Areas of Direct and Indirect Impacts. All of the resources are transmission line segments and include the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) Boulder Dam-Los Angeles transmission line, the Edison Company Boulder Dam-San Bernardino transmission line, SCE 220 kV North and South transmission lines, and the Davis-Nora McDowell transmission line, in addition to the Eldorado-Lugo, Eldorado-Mohave, and Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Lines. A targeted intensive-level survey in Nevada was conducted in February 2018. The 8 previously identified built environment resources were revisited and reevaluated.

Ethnographic Studies

Prior to the original construction of the SCE 500-kV line between the Eldorado Substation in Nevada and the Lugo Substation in Victorville, California extensive ethnographic interviews were conducted in order to identify potential impacts to resources important to tribes in the area. This study, entitled the *Allen-Warner Valley Energy System: Western Transmission System* (Bean et al. 1979), was directed by renowned ethnographer Lowell Bean and completed in 1979. The interviews were conducted with members of the following groups: Mojave, Las Vegas Paiute, Chemehuevi, Kawaiisu, Serrano, and Barstow Urban Native Americans. This study identified numerous sensitive resources in an area that today includes a broad area between Victorville and the Colorado River, including the course of the Mojave River, the Mojave Trails National Monument, the Mojave National Preserve.

Cultural Landscapes

Previous projects in the southern California desert have identified several cultural landscapes which include the Keruk/Xam Kwatcan/Dream Trail, the Salt Song Trail and the Pacific to Rio Grande Trails Landscape. Additional information about these previously identified landscapes is included in Section 5.18 (Tribal Cultural Resources).

Tribal Outreach

A request was submitted to the California Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) for a search of their Sacred Lands File (SLF), the results of which were received on January 3, 2017. The SLF search was found to be positive and recommended that the Ewiiapaayp Band of Kumeyaay Indians be contacted. The NAHC also provided a contact list of tribes that have cultural and traditional affiliation to the project area. It should be noted that the Proposed Project area does not extend onto the USGS 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle that was identified as sensitive. Additional information about tribal outreach associated with AB 52 consultation is included in Section 5.18 (Tribal Cultural Resources).

Tribal outreach resulted in the identification of a large cultural landscape, referred to here as the Mojave Trails Landscape, which AB 52 defines as one type of Tribal Cultural Resource. The CPUC considers that all of the prehistoric resources within the CEQA Areas of Direct and Indirect Impacts to be eligible for the CRHR under Criteria 1 as contributors to the Mojave Trails Landscape. All of these resources are also considered eligible as contributors to the Mojave Trails Landscape under Criteria 4 for their ability to yield

information important in history and prehistory. Additional information about Mojave Trails Landscape is included in Section 5.18 (Tribal Cultural Resources).

Resources Potentially Subject to Direct or Indirect Impacts

California Direct Impacts. In California, 11 historic-era resources (all of which are built environment resources), 1 ethnohistoric resource, 18 multi-component resources and 28 prehistoric resources within the CEQA Area of Direct Impacts have been determined or recommended eligible for the CRHR. During tribal consultation as part of AB 52, tribes identified the Mojave Trails Landscape a Tribal Cultural Resource (TCRs) with boundaries that overlap with the Proposed Project area. All ethnohistoric resources, prehistoric resources and the prehistoric components of multi-component resources within the CEQA Area of Direct Impacts (47) are considered contributors to these landscape TCRs. Therefore, the CPUC has determined all 47 of these resources eligible for the CRHR under Criteria 1 for their contribution to important events in the past and under Criteria 4 for their ability to yield information important in history and prehistory. Overall, 58 resources in California are potentially subject to direct impacts from the Proposed Project. However, these resources would be avoided and protected from damage during construction.

California Indirect Impacts. In California, 11 historic-era built environment resources and 319 prehistoric resources in CEQA Area of Indirect Impacts have been determined or recommended eligible for the CRHR. All prehistoric resources within the CEQA Area of Indirect Impacts (319) are considered contributors to the Mojave Trails Landscape mentioned above and are eligible for the CRHR. Research to identify resources that would be subject to indirect effects focused on built-environment resources and known prehistoric resources such as cultural landscapes that are especially sensitive to changes in setting through the introduction of modern industrial facilities. Because similar industrial infrastructure already exists within the viewshed of these resources, the contribution of the Proposed Project would be minor. As such, these resources will not be subject to impacts from the Project.

Nevada Direct Impacts. In Nevada, 9 historic-era resources (including 7 built environment resources), 2 multi-component resource and 1 prehistoric resource within the CEQA Area of Direct Impacts have been determined or recommended eligible for the CRHR. All prehistoric resources within the CEQA Area of Direct Impacts (3) are considered contributors to the Mojave Trails Landscape mentioned above and for purposes of the CEQA analysis; if they were in California, they would be considered eligible for the CRHR. Overall, 12 resources in Nevada are potentially subject to direct impacts from the Proposed Project. However, these resources would be avoided and protected from damage during construction.

Nevada Indirect Impacts. In Nevada, 7 historic-era built environment resources and 2 prehistoric resources in CEQA Area of indirect Impacts have been determined or recommended eligible for the CRHR. All prehistoric resources within the CEQA Area of indirect Impacts (50) are considered contributors to the Mojave Trails Landscape mentioned above and for purposes of the CEQA analysis; if they were in California, they would be considered eligible for the CRHR.

As in California, similar industrial infrastructure already exists within the viewshed of these resources, therefore the contribution of the Proposed Project would be minor. As such, these resources will not be subject to impacts from the Project.

Table 5.5-1, Eligible Resources in California Potentially Subject to Direct Impacts from the Proposed Project, and Table 5.5-2, Eligible Resources in Nevada Potentially Subject to Direct Impacts from the Proposed Project, provide additional details about these resources.

Table 5.5-1. Eligible Resources in California Potentially Subject to Direct Impacts from the Proposed Project

Number	Land Status	Age	Type/Name	CRHR Determination
P-36-032646/CA-SBR-32645H	NPS, Mojave National Preserve	Ethnohistoric/ Historic	Campsite	Eligible as contributor to Mojave Trails Landscape
P-36-002792/CA-SBR-792/H	BLM Barstow	Multicomponent	Prehistoric Lithic Procurement/ Historic Mine and Refuse Scatter	Prehistoric eligible as contributor to Mojave Trails Landscape
P-36-006512/CA-SBR-512/H	BLM Barstow	Multicomponent	Prehistoric Rock Features and Lithic Scatter/Historic Refuse Scatter	Prehistoric eligible as contributor to Mojave Trails Landscape
P-36-006942/CA-SBR-942/H	BLM Barstow	Multicomponent	Lithic Scatter/Historic Mining	Prehistoric eligible as contributor to Mojave Trails Landscape
P-36-009743/CA-SBR-743/H	BLM Barstow	Prehistoric	Prehistoric Lithic Scatter/ Historic Refuse Scatter	Eligible as contributor to Mojave Trails Landscape
P-36-014625/CA-SBR-13101H	BLM Barstow	Multicomponent	Prehistoric Lithic Scatter/ Historic Refuse Scatter	Prehistoric eligible as contributor to Mojave Trails Landscape
P-36-014627/CA-SBR-13103/H	BLM Barstow	Multicomponent	Prehistoric Lithic Scatter/ Historic Refuse Scatter	Prehistoric eligible as contributor to Mojave Trails Landscape
P-36-020872/CA-SBR-13449/H	BLM Barstow	Multicomponent	Prehistoric Lithic Scatter/ Historic Refuse Scatter	Prehistoric eligible as contributor to Mojave Trails Landscape
P-36-029793/CA-SBR-29793	BLM Barstow	Prehistoric	Lithic Scatter	Eligible as contributor to Mojave Trails Landscape
P-36-029800/CA-SBR-29800	BLM Barstow	Prehistoric	Lithic Scatter	Eligible Criteria 4 and as contributor to Mojave Trails Landscape
P-36-029801/CA-SBR-29801	BLM Barstow	Prehistoric	Lithic Scatter	Eligible as contributor to Mojave Trails Landscape
P-36-029802/CA-SBR-29802	BLM Barstow	Prehistoric	Rock Features	Eligible as contributor to Mojave Trails Landscape
P-36-029802/CA-SBR-29802	BLM Barstow	Prehistoric	Rock Features	Eligible Criteria D/4 and as contributor to Mojave Trails Landscape
P-36-029803/CA-SBR-29803	BLM Barstow	Multicomponent	Prehistoric Rock Features/ Historic Features and Refuse Scatter	Prehistoric Eligible Criteria 4 and as contributor to Mojave Trails Landscape, Historic Not Eligible
P-36-029803/CA-SBR-29803/H	BLM Barstow	Multicomponent	Prehistoric Rock Features/Historic Features and Refuse Scatter	Prehistoric eligible as contributor to Mojave Trails Landscape
P-36-032548/CA-SBR-32548	BLM Barstow	Prehistoric	Lithic Scatter	Eligible as contributor to Mojave Trails Landscape

Table 5.5-1. Eligible Resources in California Potentially Subject to Direct Impacts from the Proposed Project

Number	Land Status	Age	Type/Name	CRHR Determination
P-36-032549/CA-SBR-32549/H	BLM Barstow	Multicomponent	Prehistoric Lithic Scatter/Historic Refuse Scatter	Prehistoric eligible as contributor to Mojave Trails Landscape
P-36-032550/CA-SBR-32550/H	BLM Barstow	Multicomponent	Prehistoric Lithic Scatter/Historic Refuse Scatter	Prehistoric eligible as contributor to Mojave Trails Landscape
P-36-032556/CA-SBR-32556	BLM Barstow	Prehistoric	Lithic Scatter	Eligible as contributor to Mojave Trails Landscape
P-36-032565/CA-SBR-32565/H	BLM Barstow	Multicomponent	Prehistoric Lithic Scatter/Historic Features and Refuse Scatter	Prehistoric eligible as contributor to Mojave Trails Landscape
P-36-032583/CA-SBR-32583	BLM Barstow	Prehistoric	Lithic Scatter	Eligible as contributor to Mojave Trails Landscape
P-36-032584/CA-SBR-32584	BLM Barstow	Prehistoric	Lithic Scatter	Eligible as contributor to Mojave Trails Landscape
P-36-032599/CA-SBR-32599	BLM Barstow	Prehistoric	Lithic Scatter	Eligible as contributor to Mojave Trails Landscape
P-36-032624/CA-SBR-32624	BLM Barstow	Prehistoric	Lithic Scatter	Eligible as contributor to Mojave Trails Landscape
P-36-000181/CA-SBR-181/H	BLM Barstow/ Privately Owned	Multicomponent	Prehistoric Campsite Historic Refuse Scatter	Eligible as contributor to Mojave Trails Landscape
P-36-001505/CA-SBR-505/H	BLM Barstow/ Privately Owned	Multicomponent	Prehistoric Quarry/Historic Mining Area	Eligible as contributor to Mojave Trails Landscape
P-36-032653/CA-SBR-32653	BLM Needles	Prehistoric	Lithic Scatter	Eligible as contributor to Mojave Trails Landscape
P-36-032654/CA-SBR-32654	BLM Needles	Prehistoric	Lithic Scatter	Eligible as contributor to Mojave Trails Landscape
P-36-002910/CA-SBR-2910H	CA Multiple Jurisdictions	Historic	Route 66	Eligible Criteria 1 and 3
P-36-004276/CA-SBR-4276H	CA Multiple Jurisdictions	Historic	Coxey Road/Van Dusen Road	Eligible Criteria 1
P-36-006693/CA-SBR-6693H	CA Multiple Jurisdictions	Historic	Atlantic & Pacific; Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe; Burlington Northern; BNSF Railroad	Eligible Criteria 1
P-36-014875/CA-SBR-13114H	CA Multiple Jurisdictions	Historic	SCE Hector 12kV Transmission Line	Unknown
P-36-014876/CA-SBR-13115H	CA Multiple Jurisdictions	Historic	SCE 220 kV North Transmission Line	Eligible Criteria 1 and 3
P-36-014877/CA-SBR-13116H	CA Multiple Jurisdictions	Historic	SCE 220 kV South Transmission Line	Eligible Criteria 1 and 3

Table 5.5-1. Eligible Resources in California Potentially Subject to Direct Impacts from the Proposed Project

Number	Land Status	Age	Type/Name	CRHR Determination
P-36-014878/CA-SBR-13117H	CA Multiple Jurisdictions	Historic	Pisgah Substation/Pisgah Triangle	Eligible Criteria 1 and 3
P-36-021351	CA Multiple Jurisdictions	Historic	California Aqueduct	Eligible Criteria 1 and 3
P-36-027752	CA Multiple Jurisdictions	Historic	Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV	Eligible Criteria 1 and 3
P-36-027757	CA Multiple Jurisdictions	Historic	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV	Eligible Criteria 1 and 3
P-36-014067/CA-SBR-12923	CA Privately Owned	Prehistoric	Thermal Feature	Eligible as contributor to Mojave Trails Landscape
P-36-027023/CA-SBR-17039	CA Privately Owned	Prehistoric	Lithic Scatter	Eligible as contributor to Mojave Trails Landscape
P-36-029799/CA-SBR-29799	CA Privately Owned	Prehistoric	Lithic Scatter	Eligible as contributor to Mojave Trails Landscape
P-36-029800/CA-SBR-29800	CA Privately Owned	Prehistoric	Lithic Scatter	Eligible as contributor to Mojave Trails Landscape
P-36-032686/CA-SBR-32686	CA Privately Owned	Prehistoric	Lithic Scatter	Eligible as contributor to Mojave Trails Landscape
P-36-021355/CA-SBR-13714	California State	Prehistoric	Lithic Scatter	Eligible as contributor to Mojave Trails Landscape
ELM-LD-07	NPS, Mojave National Preserve	Prehistoric	Rock Feature	Eligible Criteria D/4, and as contributor to Mojave Trails Landscape
P-36-005182/CA-SBR-5182	NPS, Mojave National Preserve	Prehistoric	Trail and Ceramic Scatter	Eligible as contributor to Mojave Trails Landscape
P-36-025096/CA-SBR-10648	NPS, Mojave National Preserve	Prehistoric	Artifact Scatter	Eligible and as contributor to Mojave Trails Landscape
P-36-032632/CA-SBR-32632/H	NPS, Mojave National Preserve	Multicomponent	Prehistoric Lithic Scatter/ Historic Refuse Scatter	Prehistoric eligible as contributor to Mojave Trails Landscape
P-36-032637/CA-SBR-32637	NPS, Mojave National Preserve	Prehistoric	Rock Feature	Eligible Criteria 4 and as contributor to Mojave Trails Landscape
P-36-032638/CA-SBR-32638/H	NPS, Mojave National Preserve	Multicomponent	Prehistoric Lithic Scatter/ Historic Refuse Scatter	Prehistoric eligible as contributor to Mojave Trails Landscape
P-36-032640/CA-SBR-32640	NPS, Mojave National Preserve	Prehistoric	Lithic Scatter	Eligible as contributor to Mojave Trails Landscape
P-36-032641/CA-SBR-32641/H	NPS, Mojave National Preserve	Multicomponent	Prehistoric Lithic Scatter/ Historic Refuse Scatter and Road	Prehistoric eligible as contributor to Mojave Trails Landscape

Table 5.5-1. Eligible Resources in California Potentially Subject to Direct Impacts from the Proposed Project

Number	Land Status	Age	Type/Name	CRHR Determination
P-36-032644/CA-SBR-32644/H	NPS, Mojave National Preserve	Multicomponent	Prehistoric Lithic Scatter/ Historic Refuse Scatter and Feature	Prehistoric eligible as contributor to Mojave Trails Landscape
P-36-032634/CA-SBR-32634	NPS, Mojave National Preserve	Prehistoric	Rock Ring	Eligible as contributor to Mojave Trails Landscape
P-36-005182/CA-SBR-5182	NPS, Mojave National Preserve	Prehistoric	Trail and Ceramic Scatter	Eligible Criteria 4, and as contributor to Mojave Trails Landscape
P-36-032647/CA-SBR-32647	NPS, Mojave National Preserve	Prehistoric	Lithic Scatter	Eligible as contributor to Mojave Trails Landscape

Table 5.5-2. Eligible Resources in Nevada Potentially Subject to Direct Impacts from the Proposed Project

Number	Land Status	Age	Type/Name	CRHR Determination
26CK6238/ 26CK6237	NV Multiple Jurisdictions	Historic	Los Angeles Department of Water and Power Boulder Dam–Los Angeles Transmission Line (Boulder No. 1, No.2 and No. 3)	Eligible Criteria 1 and 3
26CK6249	NV Multiple Jurisdictions	Historic	SCE 220kV North Transmission Line	Eligible Criteria 1 and 3
26CK6250	NV Multiple Jurisdictions	Historic	SCE 220kV South Transmission Line	Eligible Criteria 1 and 3
26ck9229	NV Multiple Jurisdictions	Historic	Edison Company Boulder Dam–San Bernardino 115 kV Electrical Transmission Line	Eligible Criteria 1 and 3
53-9365/ 26CK10524/ JK-135	NV	Historic	Historic Military Activity Area	Eligible Criteria 1 and 4
53-9388/ 26CK10545/ SJM-10	NV	Historic	Historic Mining Site	Eligible Criteria 4
P-36-027752	NV Multiple Jurisdictions	Historic	Eldorado-Lugo 500kV Transmission Line	Eligible Criteria 1 and 3
Pending	NV Multiple Jurisdictions	Historic	Eldorado-Mohave 500kV	Eligible Criteria 1 and 3
53-9392/ 26CK10549	BLM Las Vegas	Multicomponent	Prehistoric ceramic concentration/ Historic Mining Site	Prehistoric eligible as contributor to Mojave Trails Landscape
53-9392/ 26CK10549/ SJM-19	NV	Multicomponent	Historic Mining Site	Prehistoric Eligible Criteria 4 and as contributor to Mojave Trails Landscape, Historic not eligible
53-9370/ 26CK10527	NV Privately Owned	Prehistoric	Prehistoric Lithic Procurement Area	Eligible and as contributor to Mojave Trails Landscape

5.5.6 Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

a. Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to CCR §15064.5?

The CEQA Guidelines define historical resources to include:

- A resource listed in, or determined to be eligible by, the State Historical Resources Commission for listing in the CRHR;
- A resource listed in a local register of historical resources or identified as significant in a historical resource survey meeting the requirements of section 5024.1(g) of the Public Resources Code; or
- Any object, building, structure, site, area, place, record, or manuscript which a lead agency determines to be historically significant or significant in the architectural, engineering, scientific, economic, agricultural, educational, social, political, military, or cultural annals of California, provided the agency's determination is supported by substantial evidence in light of the whole record. (14 CCR 15064.5(a).)

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION. **Direct Impacts:** In the California portion of the Proposed Project Area, the Mojave Trails Landscape and 58 additional resources are either eligible or potentially eligible (i.e., unevaluated) for the CRHR and potentially subject to direct impacts from the Proposed Project. In the Nevada portion of the Proposed Project area, the Mojave Trails Landscape and 12 additional resources in would be considered either eligible or potentially eligible (i.e., unevaluated) for the CRHR had they been in California.

The Proposed Project would include implementation of three APMs for the protection of Cultural Resources and two APMs for Tribal Cultural Resources (see Section 5.18). APM CUL-01 (Environmentally Sensitive Areas) states that where operationally feasible, eligible resources would be protected by redesign. It is not clear who would establish the feasibility of implementing protection. As well, this APM did not reflect the benefit of tribal consultation. Therefore, the APM does not reflect the specific avoidance approaches and does not identify the need for and intensity of monitoring that were identified and agreed upon during CPUC's AB 52 consultation with Native American tribes. APM CUL-03 identifies the need for and content of a CRMP. However, the APM is not fully explanatory of performance standards, staff qualifications, staff duties and responsibilities, and other information needed to ensure that cultural resources are adequately protected. This analysis recommends a range of mitigation to establish performance standards that were not specified in SCE's APMs. Where appropriate, mitigation measures incorporate and expand on the information and approaches provided in the APMs.

Direct effects to resources identified during construction would be addressed by the implementation of Mitigation Measures CR-1 through CR-6, which would reduce impacts to these resources to a less than significant level. Therefore, Mitigation Measures CR-1 through CR-6 supersede the APMs CUL-01 (Environmentally Sensitive Areas) and CUL-03 (CRMP). APM CUL-02 would not be superseded.

In particular, the mitigation measures would provide more detail to: specify the qualifications of cultural resources staff (Mitigation Measure CR-1); provide for cultural resources environmental awareness training (CR-2); tailor the requirements of the CRMP to the needs of the CEQA lead agency as well as BLM (CR-3); revise the inadvertent discovery procedures to those agreed upon during AB 52 consultation (CR-4); revise and add the monitoring and avoidance intensity and techniques to reflect those that were agreed upon during AB 52 consultation (CR-5); and specify the contents of monitoring reports (CR-6).

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. Indirect Impacts: A portion of the Mojave Trails Landscape and 319 contributing resources in the California portion of the Proposed Project area and 50 contributing resources in the Nevada portion of the Proposed Project area are either eligible or potentially eligible (i.e., unevaluated) for the CRHR or for purposes of the CEQA analysis; if they were in California, they would be considered eligible for the CRHR and potentially subject to indirect impacts from the Proposed project. In addition, 11 built environment resources in California and 7 built environment resources in Nevada eligible for the CRHR or for purposes of the CEQA analysis are potential subject to indirect effects from the Proposed project.

Proposed Project activities would be clearly visible from these sensitive resources. However, the visual changes would be of a similar nature and scale as existing visible facilities. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource. As such these resources are not subject to indirect effects from the Proposed Project and no mitigation is necessary.

Operations and Maintenance

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. O&M activities would occur in previously disturbed locations. Disturbance that would lead to cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource is not anticipated to occur during routine O&M activities. Therefore, the impact is expected to be less than significant during O&M.

Mitigation Measures

Implementation of Mitigation Measures CR-1 through CR-6 would evaluate and protect known and unanticipated discoveries of historical resources, thereby reducing this impact to less than significant.

CR-1 Retain a Cultural Resources Specialist. Prior to the start of construction, a project Cultural Resources Specialist (CRS) whose training and background conforms to the U.S. Secretary of Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards, as published in Title 36, Code of Federal Regulations, part 61 (36 C.F.R., part 61) shall be retained by SCE to supervise monitoring of construction excavations and to prepare a Cultural Resources Management Plan (CRMP) for the approved project. Their qualifications shall be appropriate to the needs of the project, specifically an archaeologist with demonstrated prior experience in the southern California desert and previous experience working with Southern California Tribal Nations. A copy of their qualifications shall be provided to the CPUC for review and approval. The project Cultural Resources Specialist shall use the services of Cultural Resources Monitors, tribal monitors and Field Crew as needed, to assist in mitigation, monitoring, and curation activities, as outlined in the CRMP. A copy of all proposed cultural staff qualifications shall be provided to the CPUC for review and approval prior to beginning work.

CR-2 Cultural resources environmental awareness training. Project personnel, including cultural resources monitors and tribal monitors, shall receive training that includes sensitivity training provided through participating tribes in video format regarding the appropriate work practices necessary to effectively implement the APMs and mitigation measures related to cultural resources and tribal cultural resources, including human remains. Training shall be required for all personnel before they begin work on a project site and repeated as needed for all new personnel before they begin work on the Project. This training program shall be submitted to the CPUC for approval at least 30 days before the start of construction and include procedures to be followed upon the discovery or suspected discovery of archaeological materials, tribal cultural resources, and human remains, consistent with the procedures

set forth in the CRMP. This training may be integrated with a broader Worker Environmental Awareness Training program. Documentation of the training will be provided to the BLM and CPUC. The CPUC will provide documentation to the consulting tribes.

CR-3 Prepare and implement a Cultural Resources Management Plan. Prior to the beginning of construction, SCE shall submit at least 90 days before construction a Cultural Resources Management Plan (CRMP) for the project to the BLM and CPUC for review. The CPUC will submit the CRMP to representatives of consulting tribes for a 30-day review and comment period prior to approving the CRMP. The CPUC will in good faith consider any comments received from consulting tribes and incorporate such comments into the CRMP as deemed feasible. A single plan document that meets the requirements of both BLM and CPUC is acceptable. The CRMP shall be implemented under the direction of the SCE and the project Cultural Resources Specialist. The CRMP shall be prepared at the sole expense of the project proponent and shall meet all regulatory requirements. At a minimum the CRMP must address the following:

- The duties of the project Cultural Resources Specialist and associated staff shall be fully explained, including oversight/management, monitoring, and reporting duties with respect to known cultural resources and tribal cultural resources as well as site evaluation, data collection, and reporting for any newly identified resources discovered during project activities. The professional standards and ethical guidelines for all cultural resource personnel will be clearly outlined in the CRMP.
- No collection of artifacts is authorized or planned for this project. If an unanticipated discovery requires evaluation via excavation and artifact collection, the retention/disposal, and permanent and temporary curation policies shall be specified. The decision-making process for identifying which artifacts are curated or reburied, where they are reburied and the individuals, including tribal participants, making these decisions shall be described. These policies shall apply to cultural resources materials and documentation resulting from evaluation and treatment of cultural resources and tribal cultural resources discovered during project activities.
- The CRMP shall define and map all known prehistoric and historic resources eligible to the NRHP and CRHR within 100 feet of proposed work areas. How these resources will be avoided and protected during construction will be described. Avoidance measures to be used will be described, including where and when they will be implemented. How avoidance measures and enforcement of Environment Sensitive Areas (ESAs) will be coordinated with construction personnel will be included.
- The implementation sequence and the estimated time frames needed to accomplish all project-related tasks (i.e., evaluation of new resources resulting in work stoppage, time to complete reports, etc.) during the project activities and any post-project analysis phases of the project, if necessary, shall be specified. The intensity of monitoring proposed for each resource that may be impacted by project activities shall be outlined in the CRMP.
- Person(s) expected to perform each monitoring and, if necessary, treatment task, their responsibilities, and the reporting relationships between project construction management and the monitoring and treatment team shall be outlined in the CRMP.
- Tribal Monitors shall be retained to monitor ground disturbing activities within 100 feet of prehistoric and protohistoric resources. Tribal Monitors shall be retained for data recovery within prehistoric and protohistoric resources identified for data recovery. The ELM Project

area spans multiple Tribal areas. The Tribe affiliated with a specific area will be considered first to provide Tribal Monitors. If multiple Tribes or Tribal Organizations are affiliated with a specific area, Tribal Monitors will be selected on a rotating basis. The CRMP will describe the roles and responsibilities of the monitors. Tribal monitors will be compensated. All impact-avoidance measures (such as the presence of monitors) to prohibit or otherwise restrict access to sensitive resource areas that are to be avoided during ground disturbance, construction, and/or operation shall be described. Areas where these measures are to be implemented shall be identified. The description shall address how these measures would be implemented prior to the start of ground disturbance and how long they would be needed to protect the resources from project-related impacts.

- The commitment to record resources on Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) 523 forms, to map, and to photograph all newly identified cultural resources over 50 years of age shall be stated. Participating tribes may offer their perspective regarding the newly identified cultural resource. Comments by tribes may be documented on the DPR 523c, parts A13 (Interpretation) and A14 (Remarks).
- The commitment to curate all artifacts retained as a result of any archaeological investigations in accordance with the appropriate requirements and the California State Historical Resources Commission's Guidelines for the Curation of Archaeological Collections, into a retrievable storage collection in a public repository, museum, or reburial at the request of tribal representatives shall be stated. The different curation policies for archaeological material collected on BLM land as opposed to private or state land, shall be clearly articulated.
- The commitment of SCE to pay all curation or reburial fees for artifacts recovered and for related documentation produced during cultural resources investigations conducted for the project shall be stated. Should consulting tribes request that artifacts not be reburied, the CRMP shall identify a curation facility that could accept cultural resources materials resulting from project cultural resources investigations on private or state land. Tribal monitors shall be present for any reburials.
- A final report shall be prepared presenting the results of the monitoring efforts. The contents, format, and review and approval process of the final report shall meet appropriate federal, state, and local guidelines.

CR-4 Inadvertent discovery of cultural or tribal cultural resources. If previously undiscovered resources are identified during project activities all activities within 100 feet (30 meters) of the resource shall halt. The onsite construction supervisor and SCE shall be notified. SCE will notify the CPUC and BLM of the discovery. The CSLC will also be notified if the discovery is on state land. The monitoring team shall flag-off the area. SCE and its cultural resource specialist will coordinate with the CPUC, BLM, NPS, CSLC, and tribal representatives as appropriate, on avoidance measures.

If the resource cannot be avoided, methods of resource evaluation, and methods of mitigation will be discussed with all appropriate parties. Work may be temporarily diverted to activities that are outside of 100 feet (30 meters) of the discovered or suspected resource. The resource shall be evaluated to determine whether it is eligible for the NRHP, CRHR, a unique archaeological resource, a tribal cultural resource, or part of a larger culturally sensitive landscape area or traditional cultural property. If the resource is determined not to be significant, work may recommence in the area. If the resource is determined significant

work shall remain halted within 100 feet (30 meters) of the area of the find, SCE shall consult with the BLM, CPUC, CSLC and representatives of the consulting tribes as appropriate regarding methods to ensure that no adverse effect and no substantial adverse change would occur to the significance of the resource. Preservation in place (i.e., avoidance) is the preferred method of mitigation for impacts to cultural resources. Other methods of mitigation, described below, shall only be used if it is determined the method would provide equivalent or superior mitigation of the impacts to the resource. The alternative methods of mitigation may include data recovery and documentation of the information contained in the resource to answer questions about local prehistory or history. The methods and results of the evaluation or data recovery work at an archaeological find shall be documented in a professional-level technical report to be filed with the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS). Work in the area may commence upon completion of treatment, as approved by the BLM, ~~and CPUC,~~ and CSLC when appropriate.

If data recovery of resources is necessary, additional archaeologists shall perform the excavation while the monitoring team(s) continues to monitor construction. Additionally, the tribes shall be offered the opportunity to monitor data recovery efforts at prehistoric sites in addition to construction efforts, under the same contract terms. This opportunity shall be additionally be extended to tribes that consulted on this project, but for which a tribal monitor was not provided for construction efforts.

CR-5 Avoidance of cultural and tribal cultural resources. When project work is planned within 100 feet of a known prehistoric-era cultural resource or a tribal cultural resource, or any resources that are eligible for the CRHR and/or NRHP, avoidance areas shall be established and monitors shall be present as outlined in the CRMP. ESAs shall be established with a 50 foot buffer around each resource prior to project activities, except where the 50-foot buffer would encroach on a work area, in which event the ESA buffer shall be the near edge of the identified work area. Monitoring teams shall include one qualified cultural resources monitor and one Native American monitor at prehistoric sites. ESAs shall be established by a qualified cultural resources monitor. The timing and intensity of the monitoring may vary according to the type of resource and the nature of the work planned and shall be determined in consultation with consulting tribes, as appropriate.

CR-6 Prepare monitoring reports. Upon completion of cultural resources and tribal cultural resources monitoring, SCE shall prepare a single report that summarize the monitoring efforts and the results, analyses, and conclusions of the monitoring program. Individual volumes per land ownership will be included and provide additional details. Copies of the report shall be submitted to both the CPUC and BLM within 60 days of the close of construction. Thereafter, consistent with individual agency policy, each agency will disseminate to the consulting tribes the report applicable to land under that agency's jurisdiction. Draft reports under CPUC jurisdiction will be submitted to consulting tribes for a 30-day review and comment period concurrent with agency review. If no new resources were discovered during construction, a letter report shall be submitted to the CPUC and BLM summarizing monitoring efforts. If resources were identified during construction, the reports shall be consistent with the California Archaeological Resources Management Reports (ARMR) and commensurate with the nature and significance of the identified resource(s). If artifacts are collected, they shall be curated at a recognized curation facility unless consulting tribes request that the Native American artifacts be reburied on site. Documentation associated with any newly identified resources shall be filled with the CHRIS, if appropriate.

b. Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to CCR §15064.5?

An archaeological artifact, object, or site is considered a unique archaeological resource if “it can be clearly demonstrated that, without merely adding to the current body of knowledge, there is a high probability that it meets any of the following criteria (PRC 21083.2[g]):

- Contains information needed to answer important scientific research questions and there is a demonstrable public interest in that information.
- Has a special and particular quality such as being the oldest of its type or the best available example of its type.
- Is directly associated with a scientifically recognized important prehistoric or historic event or person.”
- If it can be demonstrated that a project will cause damage to a unique archaeological resource, the lead agency may require that reasonable efforts be taken to preserve these resources in place or provide mitigation measures.

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION. No unique archaeological resources have been identified in the project area, however, previously unknown buried archaeological resources could be discovered and damaged, or destroyed, during ground disturbing work. This would cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of the archaeological resources. Damage or destruction of a buried archaeological resource would constitute a significant impact absent mitigation. Implementation of Mitigation Measures CR-1 through CR-7 described above would evaluate and protect unanticipated discoveries of unique archaeological resources, thereby reducing this impact to less than significant.

Operations and Maintenance

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. O&M activities would occur in previously disturbed locations. No ground disturbance that would lead to cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource is not anticipated to occur during routine O&M activities. Therefore, the impact is less than significant during O&M.

Mitigation Measures

- CR-1 Retain a Cultural Resources Specialist.**
- CR-2 Cultural resources environmental awareness training.**
- CR-3 Prepare and implement Cultural Resources Management Plan.**
- CR-4 Inadvertent discovery of cultural or tribal cultural resources.**
- CR-5 Avoidance of cultural and tribal cultural resources.**
- CR-6 Prepare monitoring reports.**

c. Would the project disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION. There is no indication that human remains are present within the Proposed Project area. Background archival research failed to find any potential for human remains (e.g., existence of formal cemeteries). However, it is possible that previously unknown human remains could

be discovered and damaged or destroyed during ground disturbance, which would constitute a significant impact. Because SCE's APMs for cultural resources do not address the potential to disturb human remains, this analysis recommends mitigation to avoid this impact.

Implementation of Mitigation Measure CR-7 (Treatment of human remains on state owned land or private property) and Mitigation Measure CR-8 (Treatment of human remains on federal land), require evaluation, protection, and appropriate disposition of human remains, which would reduce this impact to less than significant.

Operations and Maintenance

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. O&M activities would occur in previously disturbed locations. Ground disturbance that would lead to the discovery of human remains is not anticipated to be required during O&M activities. Therefore, the impact is less than significant during routine O&M.

Mitigation Measures

CR-7 Inadvertent discovery of human remains on state owned land or private property. In the event that human remains or suspected human remains are identified, SCE shall comply with California law (Heath and Safety Code Section 7050.5; PRC Sections 5097.94, 5097.98, and 5097.99). The area shall be flagged off and all project activities within 200 feet (60 meters) of the find shall immediately cease. The CPUC-approved Cultural Resources Specialist and SCE shall be immediately notified. SCE shall immediately contact the Medical Examiner at the County Coroner's office, BLM, CPUC as well as representatives of consulting tribes. The CSLC will be notified if the remains are identified on state land. The Medical Examiner has two (2) working days to examine the remains. If the Medical Examiner believes the remains are Native American, they shall notify the California Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) within 24 hours. If the remains are not believed to be Native American, the appropriate local law enforcement agency will be notified.

The NAHC will immediately notify the person or tribe it believes to be the most likely descendant (MLD) of the remains, and the MLD has 48 hours to make recommendations to the landowner or representative for the respectful treatment or disposition of the human remains and any associated grave goods. If the MLD does not make recommendations within 48 hours, the remains shall be reinterred in the location they were discovered and the area of the property shall be secured from further disturbance. If there are disputes between the landowner and the MLD, the NAHC shall mediate the dispute and attempt to find a solution. If the mediation fails to provide measures acceptable to the landowner, the landowner or their representative shall reinter the remains and associated grave goods and funerary objects in an area of the property secure from further disturbance. The location of any reburial of Native American human remains shall not be disclosed to the public and shall not be governed by public disclosure requirements of the California Public Records Act, Cal. Govt. Code § 6250 et seq., unless otherwise required by law. The Medical Examiner shall withhold public disclosure of information related to such reburial pursuant to the specific exemption set forth in California Government Code Section 6254(r).

CR-8 Inadvertent discovery of human remains on federal land. If potential human remains are discovered during any Project activity on lands administered by federal agencies, all activities within 200 feet that will cease immediately. SCE will take appropriate steps to secure and protect human remains and any funerary objects from further disturbance. SCE will notify the

BLM and the County Coroner (California Health and Safety Code 7050.5(b)) immediately. If the remains are determined to be Native American or if Native American cultural items pursuant to the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) are uncovered, the remains shall be treated in accordance with the provisions of NAGPRA (43 CFR 10) and the Archaeological Resources Protection Act (43 CFR 7). SCE shall assist and support the federal agency, as appropriate, in all required NAGPRA and Section 106 actions, government-to-government and consultations with Native Americans, agencies, and consulting parties as requested by the federal agency. SCE shall comply with and implement all required actions and studies that result from such consultations.

5.5.7 References

NOTE: To protect the integrity of cultural resources, the reports below are not available to the general public. The reports can be made available to qualified resource professionals with approval from BLM and CPUC.

- ASM (ASM Affiliates Inc.). 2018a. Volume I: Project Overview and Management Recommendations. Class III Cultural Resources Inventory for the Eldorado-Lugo-Mohave Series Capacitor Project, San Bernardino County, California. Prepared for Southern California Edison. Submitted to United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, California Desert District Office.
- _____. 2018b. Volume II: Findings, Lands Administered by BLM Barstow Field Office. Class III Cultural Resources Inventory for the Eldorado-Lugo-Mohave Series Capacitor Project, San Bernardino County, California. Prepared for Southern California Edison. Submitted to United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, California Desert District Office.
- _____. 2018c. Volume III: Findings, Lands Administered by NPS, Mojave National Preserve. Class III Cultural Resources Inventory for the Eldorado-Lugo-Mohave Series Capacitor Project, San Bernardino County, California. Prepared for Southern California Edison. Submitted to United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, California Desert District Office.
- _____. 2018d. Volume IV: Findings, Lands Administered by BLM Needles Field Office. Class III Cultural Resources Inventory for the Eldorado-Lugo-Mohave Series Capacitor Project, San Bernardino County, California. Prepared for Southern California Edison. Submitted to United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, California Desert District Office.
- _____. 2018e. Volume V: Findings, State of California and Privately Owned Lands. Class III Cultural Resources Inventory for the Eldorado-Lugo-Mohave Series Capacitor Project, San Bernardino County, California. Prepared for Southern California Edison. Submitted to United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, California Desert District Office.
- _____. 2018f. Class III Cultural Resources Inventory for the Eldorado-Lugo-Mohave Series Capacitor Project, Clark County, Nevada. Prepared for Southern California Edison. Submitted to United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, California Desert District Office.
- _____. 2018g. Historic Resource (Built Environment) Assessment Report for the Eldorado-Lugo-Mohave Capacitor Project, San Bernardino County, California. Prepared for Southern California Edison. Submitted to United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, California Desert District Office.
- _____. 2018h. Historical Resource (Built Environment) Assessment Report for the Eldorado-Lugo-Mohave Capacitor Project, Clark County, Nevada. Prepared for Southern California Edison. Submitted to United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, California Desert District Office.

- _____. 2018i. Ethnographic and Ethnohistoric Overview for the Eldorado-Lugo-Mohave Series Capacitor Project and the Lugo-Victorville 500 kV Transmission Line Special Protection Scheme Project, San Bernardino County, California, and Clark County, Nevada. Prepared for Southern California Edison. Submitted to United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, California Desert District Office.
- Bean, Lowell Bean; Evans, Michael J.; Hopa, Ngapare K.; Massey, Lee Gooding; Rothenberg, Diane; Stoffle, Richard W.; Vane, Sylvia Brakke; Weinman-Roberts, Lois; Young, Jackson
- 1979 Allen-Warner Valley Energy System: Western Transmission System - Ethnographic and Historical Resources. Report submitted to Southern California Edison Company. Menlo Park, California December 15, 1979.

5.6 Energy

ENERGY

Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Significance criteria established by CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G.

5.6.1 Environmental Setting

The Proposed Project would involve modifying SCE's existing facilities that are used to deliver electrical power to California's end users of electricity. The southern California bulk electric power transmission system includes the high-voltage transmission facilities of SCE and San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E), with major interconnections to systems of Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E), Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) and Arizona Public Service (APS). Because the Proposed Project would modify SCE's transmission facilities that are in a parallel configuration with LADWP-owned facilities, an objective of the Proposed Project is to reduce SCE's power flow into the LADWP transmission system (see Section 4.2.2, Project Objectives; SCE, 2019); accordingly, this section summarizes some data on energy consumption for customers served by LADWP.

Most of the SCE load is located within the Los Angeles basin. About 15 million people in central, coastal and southern California, excluding the City of Los Angeles and certain other cities, are served by the SCE transmission system. The gross load growth forecast for SCE is about 159 megawatts (MW) on average per year; although the demand is forecast to decline an average of 130 MW per year after consideration of gains in energy efficiency and increasing deployment of new solar resources near the load (CAISO, 2019).

The energy sources that make up the mix of power supplied to SCE and LADWP customers, relative to the 2017 California power mix, are summarized in Table 5.6-1, which shows the data from each utility-specific Power Content Label (CEC, 2018a).

Table 5.6-1. Energy Sources of Electricity Supplied to Customers (Power Content)

Energy Resources	SCE	LADWP	2017 California-wide Power Mix
Eligible Renewable	32%	30%	29%
Biomass & biowaste	0%	1%	2%
Geothermal	8%	4%	4%
Eligible hydroelectric	1%	4%	3%
Solar	13%	11%	10%
Wind	10%	10%	10%
Coal	0%	18%	4%
Large Hydroelectric	8%	4%	15%
Natural Gas	20%	31%	34%
Nuclear	6%	10%	9%
Other	0%	0%	<1%
Unspecified sources of power *	34%	7%	9%
Total	100%	100%	100%

* "Unspecified sources of power" means electricity from transactions that are not traceable to specific generation sources.
Source: CEC 2017 Power Content Label, Version: July 2018.

For recent years up to 2017, the average annual electricity consumption served to SCE customers is approximately 85.6 million megawatt-hours (MWh) or 85,550 million kilowatt-hours (kWh). The SCE-owned transmission system serves not only customers in the SCE service area but the load of other cities and entities that obtain transmission service through SCE's system. Table 5.6-2 shows the baseline electricity consumption by the SCE and LADWP loads over the prior five years, separated by customer classes.

Table 5.6-2. Electricity Consumption for Load Served by SCE and LADWP (million MWh per year)

Sector	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Average (5-year)
Load Served by SCE						
Ag & Water Pump	3.286	3.598	3.446	3.304	2.975	3.32
Commercial Building	33.241	34.119	32.691	32.081	31.925	32.81
Commercial Other	4.536	4.548	4.305	4.272	4.283	4.39
Industry	12.385	12.648	13.144	13.194	13.094	12.89
Mining & Construction	1.923	1.992	2.470	2.431	2.411	2.25
Residential	29.803	30.027	29.267	28.521	28.975	29.32
Streetlight	0.485	0.487	0.639	0.636	0.628	0.57
SCE Total Usage	85.658	87.418	85.962	84.440	84.292	85.55
Load Served by LADWP						
Ag & Water Pump	0.096	0.036	0.041	0.029	0.020	0.04
Commercial Building	10.076	11.460	11.418	11.627	11.121	11.14
Commercial Other	1.403	1.075	1.014	0.948	0.922	1.07
Industry	2.426	2.309	2.264	2.318	2.195	2.30
Mining & Construction	0.279	0.251	0.195	0.214	0.280	0.24
Residential	8.227	8.179	8.275	8.230	8.223	8.23
Streetlight	0.138	0.145	0.130	0.129	0.133	0.13
LADWP Total Usage	22.645	23.455	23.336	23.495	22.893	23.16

Note: Usage expressed in millions of MWh (one million MWh equals one terawatt-hour or TWh).

Source: CEC, 2019a; Electricity Consumption by Entity.

5.6.2 Regulatory Background

State and Local

California

Energy Action Plan and Loading Order. California has mandated and implemented aggressive energy-use reduction programs for electricity and other resources. In 2003, California's first Energy Action Plan (EAP) established a high-level, coherent approach to meeting California's electricity and natural gas needs and set forth the "loading order" to address California's future energy needs. The "loading order" established that the state, in meeting its energy needs, would invest first in energy efficiency and demand-side resources, followed by renewable resources, and only then in clean conventional electricity supply (CPUC, 2008). Since that time, the CPUC and California Energy Commission (CEC) have overseen the plans, policies, and programs for prioritizing the preferred resources, including energy efficiency and renewable energy.

California's Renewables Portfolio Standard (RPS). Electric utilities in California must procure a minimum quantity of the electricity sales from eligible renewable energy resources as specified by RPS require-

ments. The most-recent update to the RPS targets was set forth in 2018 with the “100 Percent Clean Energy Act of 2018” [Senate Bill 100 (SB 100)], which establishes the policy that eligible renewable energy resources and zero-carbon resources supply 100 percent of retail sales of electricity to California end-use customers by December 31, 2045. SB 100 requires the CPUC and CEC to ensure that implementation of this policy does not cause or contribute to greenhouse gas emissions increases elsewhere in the western grid.

Integrated Resource Planning. An Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) is an electricity system planning document that lays out the energy resource needs, policy goals, physical and operational constraints, and the general priorities or proposed resource choices of an electric utility, including customer-side preferred resources. Through Senate Bill 350 (De León, Chapter 547, Statutes of 2015) (SB 350), the CPUC requires each electric load serving entity to develop an IRP that takes a 10-year look-ahead for overall electric system reliability, local reliability needs, and flexibility needs to allow the electricity sector to contribute to California’s economy-wide greenhouse gas emissions reductions goals. Similarly, publicly owned utilities (POU) must also adopt IRPs subject to a review by the CEC for consistency with statewide guidelines. The CPUC approved SCE’s 2017-2018 IRP on April 25, 2019 (D.19-04-040).

California’s Integrated Energy Policy Report (IEPR). Senate Bill 1389 (Bowen, Chapter 568, Statutes of 2002) requires the CEC to prepare a biennial integrated energy policy report that assesses major energy trends and issues facing the state’s electricity, natural gas, and transportation fuel sectors and provides policy recommendations to conserve resources; protect the environment; ensure reliable, secure, and diverse energy supplies; enhance the state’s economy; and protect public health and safety (Public Resources Code §25301[a]). The 2017 IEPR (CEC, 2018b) focused on implementing SB 350, including implementing integrated resource plans (IRPs) for California’s electricity sector and achieving 2030 RPS and greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals. The 2017 IEPR identifies early planning steps taken in response to the 2030 goals, including the Renewable Energy Transmission Initiative 2.0 (RETI 2.0) process. The RETI 2.0 final report provided a non-regulatory review of where potential new renewable energy generation could be developed and what transmission may be needed to deliver this energy to California’s load centers (CEC, 2017).

CAISO Transmission Plan. The annual CAISO Transmission Plan is developed through a broad stakeholder process and coordination with the CPUC and CEC to provide a comprehensive evaluation of the CAISO transmission grid, which includes facilities owned by SCE, to address grid reliability requirements, identify upgrades needed to successfully meet California’s policy goals, and explore projects that can bring economic benefits to consumers (CAISO, 2019). The CAISO relies on renewable resource portfolios developed by the CPUC when it evaluates the transmission to support California’s renewable energy policies.

State CEQA Guidelines. The California Natural Resources Agency adopted certain amendments to the State CEQA Guidelines effective in 2019, to change how CEQA Lead Agencies consider the environmental impacts of energy use. CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(b) and Appendix F require analysis of a project’s energy use, in order to assure that energy implications are considered in project decisions. CEQA requires a discussion of the potential environmental effects of energy resources used by projects, with particular emphasis on avoiding or reducing the “wasteful, inefficient, and unnecessary consumption of energy” (see Public Resources Code section 21100(b)(3)).

Nevada

Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS). Nevada has codified a Renewable Portfolio Standard in NRS 704.7801, which establishes the percentage of electricity sold by Nevada’s electric utility companies to retail cus-

tomers that must come from renewable sources. Electric utilities are required to generate, acquire or save with portfolio energy systems or energy efficiency measures, a certain percentage of electricity annually. The Nevada energy portfolio requirements would not apply to the Proposed Project because the project would primarily serve California end-users of electricity.

Local

San Bernardino County, Renewable Energy and Conservation Element (RECE). The County General Plan includes the RECE that establishes policies generally prohibiting “utility-oriented” renewable energy project development on sites that adversely impact “the quality of life or economic development opportunities in existing unincorporated communities” (RE Policy 4.10). However, County RECE policies would not apply to the Proposed Project because the project is not a renewable energy generation project.

Federal

No federal regulations concerning wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources were identified that are relevant to the Proposed Project.

5.6.3 Applicant Proposed Measures

The Proposed Project does not include any APMs related to Energy.

5.6.4 CEQA Significance Criteria

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR 15000 et seq.) provides guidance on assessing whether a project would have significant impacts on the environment. Consistent with Appendix G, the Proposed Project would have significant energy impacts if it would:

- a. Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation*
- b. Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency*

5.6.5 Methodology

All construction- and operation-related activities would involve use of energy-consuming equipment and processes. This analysis presents a qualitative discussion of the Proposed Project’s energy use for all phases and components. As set forth in the State CEQA Guidelines, Appendix F: Energy Conservation, the goal of conserving energy implies the wise and efficient use of energy including:

- Decreasing overall per capita energy consumption;
- Decreasing reliance on fossil fuels such as coal, natural gas and oil; and
- Increasing reliance on renewable energy sources.

Lead agency actions that are consistent with these goals would not likely cause an energy-related impact. The energy impact analysis emphasizes avoiding or reducing inefficient, wasteful and unnecessary consumption of energy resources, and whether the project would result in a potentially significant environmental impact due to inefficient, wasteful, and unnecessary consumption of energy.

Examples of energy conservation measures that may be relevant to addressing energy are provided in Appendix F: Energy Conservation, within the CEQA Guidelines.

5.6.6 Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

a. Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?

SCE's Proposed Project would upgrade electric transmission on existing 500 kV lines and install communication facilities in San Bernardino County, California and Clark County, Nevada. The upgraded transmission system would increase the amount of electrical power delivered into SCE's load centers, particularly from generators in the Southwestern U.S. and California's Ivanpah Valley. The communication facilities would enhance communication among substations (SCE, 2018).

Consideration of the energy implications of a project may include a review of the following types of topics that relate to the Project Description [See CEQA Guidelines Appendix F: Energy Conservation (II)(A)]:

- Energy consuming equipment and processes which will be used during construction, operation and/or removal of the project. If appropriate, this discussion should consider the energy intensiveness of materials and equipment required for the project.
- Total energy requirements of the project by fuel type and end use.
- Energy conservation equipment and design features.
- Identification of energy supplies that would serve the project.
- Total estimated daily vehicle trips to be generated by the project and the additional energy consumed per trip by mode.

These topics are discussed separately for construction and operations, as follows.

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. Construction activity associated with the Proposed Project would require the consumption of fossil fuel resources, for example diesel fuel, gasoline, and aviation fuel, to power the construction equipment, construction vehicles, and helicopters. Additionally, construction would require the manufacture and delivery of new equipment and materials, which would require energy use. Based on their composition, some of the equipment and materials to be removed as part of the project would be salvageable and recyclable.

The short-term use of fuels by equipment, motor vehicle trips, and helicopters during construction would be necessary to install the facilities. The total energy requirements during construction are not quantified within the Project Description. However, this can be estimated in terms of the volumes of diesel, gasoline, and aviation fuel, by reviewing the products of combustion of these fuels (e.g., the quantities of greenhouse gases would be directly proportional to the volumes of fuels used). Based on the anticipated quantities of carbon dioxide emissions (as defined in Section 5.8, Greenhouse Gas Emissions), approximately 441,000 gallons of diesel, 379,000 gallons of gasoline, and 579,000 gallons of aviation fuel would need to be used over the construction duration of approximately 15 months. To put these volumes into perspective, data from the California Energy Commission indicates that California's refineries normally produce around 2.5 million barrels per week of diesel (CEC, 2019b) or roughly 15 million gallons each day. This means the total diesel fuel volume used during construction of the Proposed Project (0.441 million gallons) would represent less than 3 percent of California's daily diesel production volume (15 million gallons).

Energy conservation features are not specifically defined within the SCE's APMs. However, certain features of the proposed construction practices would serve to avoid wasteful, inefficient, and unnecessary consumption of energy, as follows. Energy use during construction would be reduced by steps taken to limit the idling of equipment (APM-AIR-03), properly maintain the equipment (APM-AIR-04), encourage carpooling (APM-AIR-05), limit helicopter operations (APM-NOI-01), or reduce temporary traffic delays (consistent with the California Joint Utility Traffic Control Manual), and these efforts would help to ensure the efficient use of fuels during construction.

Operation and Maintenance

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. Maintenance and normal operations, including inspections of the Proposed Project components, would require use of fossil fuels (diesel and gasoline) for motor vehicle trips and occasional use of off-road equipment. The Proposed Project would also install emergency-use, standby generators that would consume small volumes of propane. Use of these fuels would be necessary for normal O&M activities including periodic inspections, equipment testing, and propane fuel deliveries. However, no new full-time staffing or induced population growth would occur, because no new crews would be added by the project and maintenance would be incorporated with existing maintenance programs.

The Proposed Project would increase power flow through the existing 500 kV transmission lines. The primary energy implication of the proposed installation of new mid-line series capacitors and additional electric facilities at the substations would be to increase the system's capacity to transfer electrical power. For example, on the Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line, the capacity entitlement of SCE would increase from 530 MW to 1,548 MW (see Section 4.2.1). The overall capacity increase would increase SCE's ability to provide transmission service to generators in Nevada and Arizona. This would help alleviate existing deliverability constraints that presently limit California's access to renewable resources seeking to interconnect to the transmission system. The proposed series capacitors and fiber optic repeater facilities would also consume a relatively small amount of power, although these losses would be negligible in relation to the proposed capacity increase of the 500 kV transmission system. The Proposed Project would not increase the nominal voltage of the three 500 kV transmission lines.

The objectives of the upgraded facilities center on delivering renewable energy to California's end-users of electricity. One objective is to reduce SCE's power flow into the portions of the LADWP transmission system that are in a parallel configuration with SCE's system. The Proposed Project would increase series compensation on SCE's lines and have the effect of reducing the potential for overloads on LADWP's system (SCE, 2019).

Increasing the power flow from eligible renewable energy resources could replace an equal amount of energy that would otherwise be produced by competing resources in the Southwestern U.S., such as those fueled by natural gas or by unspecified sources of power (see Table 5.6-1). SCE identifies numerous planned renewable generating projects in Table 2-1 of its Proponent's Environmental Assessment (PEA), and SCE states that the Proposed Project will enable deliverability for projects planning to interconnect to the eastern portion of the SCE system and systems in Nevada owned and operated by GridLiance West Transco (GWT) and Valley Electric Association (VEA) (SCE, 2019). By increasing the existing system's capacity to transfer electrical power, the Proposed Project would improve the efficiency of the system's ability to deliver electricity to California's end users.

The energy used by the Proposed Project would not be wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary in light of the transmission system capacity increase and the ability to provide increased access to renewable energy. No potentially significant environmental impact would occur due to the direct or indirect energy consumption of the Proposed Project.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

b. Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. The Proposed Project, including the direct and indirect use of energy during construction, would upgrade facilities that would improve California’s ability to supply renewable energy to end-use customers and to achieve statewide renewable energy goals. The Proposed Project would increase the ability of California to access and deliver power from conventional or renewable energy generators in the Southwestern U.S. and would increase SCE’s ability to make energy resources deliverable to end users (SCE, 2018; SCE, 2019).

Pursuant to CPUC requirements under SB 350, SCE filed its 2017-2018 Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) on August 1, 2018, and an update submitted October 22, 2018, that was approved by the CPUC on April 25, 2019 (D.19-04-040). The major elements of the Proposed Project, the mid-line series capacitors for the existing Eldorado-Lugo and Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Lines, were approved in the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 cycles, respectively, of the CAISO Transmission Plan (CAISO, 2013; CAISO, 2014). With the prior CAISO approvals, the mid-line series capacitors became approved elements for providing deliverability of renewable resources, consistent with California’s RPS policies. Later, the RETI 2.0 Transmission Technical Input Group identified these features of the Proposed Project as being “on-going” and “underway” in support of the development of additional renewable resources and to deliver renewable resources to California (CEC, 2016). While the upgraded transmission capabilities provided by the Proposed Project pre-date the analyses conducted by SCE for the CPUC-approved 2017-2018 IRP, because they continue to be listed as previously-approved projects for the CAISO Transmission Plan (CAISO, 2019), the Proposed Project would be consistent with these plans and studies to accommodate greater access to renewable resources.

The Proposed Project would not conflict with any state or local plan for prioritizing the preferred resources, including energy efficiency and renewable energy. This impact would be less than significant, and no mitigation is required.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

5.6.7 References

- CAISO (California Independent System Operator). 2019. Board-Approved 2018-2019 Transmission Plan. March 29.
- CEC (California Energy Commission). 2019a. Electricity Consumption by Entity. <http://www.ecdms.energy.ca.gov/elecbyutil.aspx>.
- _____. 2019b. Petroleum Watch, Monthly Report for April, 2019. https://www.energy.ca.gov/almanac/petroleum_data/petroleum_watch/2019_Petroleum_Watch/.
- _____. 2018a. Annual Power Content Labels for 2017. Version: July 2018. https://www.energy.ca.gov/pcl/labels/2017_index.html.
- _____. 2018b. *2017 Integrated Energy Policy Report*. California Energy Commission. Publication Number: CEC-100-2017-001-CMF. February.
- _____. 2017. Renewable Energy Transmission Initiative 2.0 Plenary Report – Final Report. February.

_____. 2016. *Transmission Capability and Requirements Report*, Transmission Technical Input Group. Renewable Energy Transmission Initiative 2.0. October.

CPUC (California Public Utilities Commission). 2008. Energy Action Plan, 2008 Update. February. <http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/eaps/>.

SCE (Southern California Edison). 2019. Amended Application for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity Regarding the Eldorado-Lugo-Mohave Series Capacitor Project. April 19.

_____. 2018. Eldorado-Lugo-Mohave Series Capacitor Project: Proponent's Environmental Assessment (PEA). Volumes 1 through 8. April.

5.7 Geology and Soils

GEOLOGY AND SOILS

Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iv) Landslides?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Be located on geologic units or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Be located on expansive soil, as defined in the 2016 California Building Code (CBC), ¹ creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

1 - The CEQA Checklist refers to "Table 18 1 B of the Uniform Building Code (1994)," but this is now obsolete. The 2016 California Building Code is based on the International Building Code (2015). The current CBC was effective January 1, 2017. It is updated every three years.

5.7.1 Environmental Setting

Geologic Setting

The study area for geology and soils was defined as the Proposed Project and areas immediately adjacent to the Proposed Project, except for the study area related to seismically induced ground shaking issues, which includes significant regional active and potentially active faults within 30 miles of the Proposed Project.

Regional Geologic Setting

The Proposed Project is located in the Mojave Desert, which occupies a significant portion of Southern California and parts of Nevada, Arizona, and Utah. The Mojave Desert occupies roughly 54,000 square miles in a typical Basin and Range topography, with isolated mountain ranges separated by expanses of desert plains. It is bound on the northwest by the Tehachapi Mountains and the Garlock Fault and to the west by the San Andreas fault and the San Gabriel and San Bernardino mountain ranges, the northeastern, eastern, and southern boundaries are less distinct. It has an interior enclosed drainage and many playas. The Mojave region exhibits a wide variety of geomorphic landforms which represent the varying erosional, depositional, and tectonic processes the area is undergoing, including: volcanic features such

as basaltic flows and cones; erosional and depositional features such as pediments, alluvial fans, playas, badlands, desert pavement; and tectonic (faulting) features such as scarps, offset streams, sags, and sag ponds. The physiography of the project area is dominated by prominent northwest-southeast trending faults and generally northwest-southeast trending mountain ranges.

Local Geology

The Proposed Project generally traverses alluvial plains, alluvial fans and pediments, badlands, hills, and the foothills of numerous mountain ranges, including the San Bernardino, Ord, Granite, Rodman, Cady, Bristol, Newberry, and Highland Mountains. Most of the Proposed Project components and work and staging areas are underlain by Pliocene- to Holocene-age and Quaternary-age alluvium, with lesser amounts of Tertiary sedimentary rocks, Tertiary to Mesozoic volcanic rocks, Tertiary, Mesozoic, and pre-Cambrian granitic rocks, and Paleozoic to pre-Cambrian metamorphic and metasedimentary rocks (CGS, 2018; USGS, 1978). General descriptions of the geologic materials, listed chronologically, underlying Proposed Project components and work areas are summarized in Table 5.7-1. Geologic units underlying the Proposed Project are presented in Figure 5.7-1, Geologic Formations in the Proposed Project Area, at the end of this section.

Table 5.7-1. Geologic Units Underlying Proposed Project Components and Work Areas

Geologic Unit	Age	Description and Source
California		
Q – alluvium	Pliocene to Holocene	Alluvium, lake, playa, and terrace deposits; unconsolidated and semi-consolidated. Mostly non-marine but includes marine deposits near the coast.
Qrv – tephrite (basanite)	Holocene	Recent (Holocene) volcanic flow rocks; minor pyroclastic deposits
QPc – sandstone	Miocene to Pleistocene	Pleistocene and/or Pliocene sandstone, shale, and gravel deposits
Tc – conglomerate	Paleocene to Pliocene	Undivided Tertiary sandstone, shale, conglomerate, breccia, and ancient lake deposits.
Tv – rhyolite	Tertiary	Tertiary volcanic flow rocks; minor pyroclastic deposits.
Tvp – rhyolite	Tertiary	Tertiary pyroclastic and volcanic mudflow deposits.
Mc – sandstone	Oligocene to Pleistocene	Sandstone, shale, conglomerate, and fanglomerate; in part Pliocene and Oligocene.
gr ^{Mz} – granodiorite	Permian to Tertiary; most Mesozoic	Mesozoic granite, quartz monzonite, granodiorite, and quartz diorite
Mzv – felsic volcanic rock	Triassic to Cretaceous	Undivided Mesozoic volcanic and metavolcanic rocks. Andesite and rhyolite flow rocks, greenstone, volcanic breccia and other pyroclastic rocks; in part strongly metamorphosed. Includes volcanic rocks of Franciscan Complex: basaltic pillow lava, diabase, greenstone, and minor pyroclastic rocks.
Pz – limestone	Late Proterozoic to Jurassic	Undivided Paleozoic metasedimentary rocks. Includes slate, sandstone, shale, chert, conglomerate, limestone, dolomite, marble, phyllite, schist, hornfels, and quartzite.
gr ^{pC} – granite	Pre-Cambrian	Precambrian granite, syenite, anorthosite, and gabbroic rocks in the San Gabriel Mountains; also, various Precambrian plutonic rocks elsewhere in southeastern California.
pC – gneiss (Early Proterozoic to Miocene)	Pre-Cambrian	Conglomerate, shale, sandstone, limestone, dolomite, marble, gneiss, hornfels, and quartzite; may be Paleozoic in part.

Table 5.7-1. Geologic Units Underlying Proposed Project Components and Work Areas

Geologic Unit	Age	Description and Source
Nevada		
Qa – alluvium	Quaternary	Undifferentiated alluvial deposits, unconsolidated, locally includes beach and sand dune deposits.
QToa – older alluvium	Miocene to Quaternary	Older alluvial deposits, unconsolidated, coarse-detrital
Ti – alkali-granite (alaskite)	Early to Middle Miocene	Tertiary intrusive rocks, aphanitic, porphyritic, and coarsely granular granitic rocks, granodiorite, monzonite, quartz monzonite, alaskitic granite, quartz diorite, dacite, and rhyodacite in the places where they are shown separately on county maps.
Tt3 – rhyolite	Middle to Late Miocene	Welded and non-welded silicic ash flow tuff, rhyolite; locally includes thin units of air-fall tuff and sedimentary rock
Ta3 – andesite	Middle to Late Miocene	Andesite and related rocks of intermediate composition; includes dacite; flows and breccias
Ygr – granite	Pre-Cambrian (Middle Proterozoic)	Porphyritic rapakivi granite; mostly porphyritic biotite granite with large microcline phenocrysts, with local fine-grained border phases and aplite. Associated pegmatite and quartz veins are rare. This unit forms large plutons (1450 ±25 Ma)

Source: Modified from SCE, 2018. Response to Comment 50D, Attachment F – Geologic Unit Descriptions; USGS, 1978. Geologic Map of Nevada; and CGS, 2018a. Online Geologic Map of California (2010)

Geologic formations at and in the vicinity of the Eldorado, Lugo, Mohave, McCullough, and Pisgah Substations, the Newberry Springs and Ludlow Series Capacitors, and the Barstow, Kelbaker, and Lanfair fiber optic repeater sites consist of Pliocene to Holocene and Quaternary alluvial deposits.

Project specific geotechnical studies for the new Newberry Springs and Ludlow Series Capacitors and modifications to the Mohave Substation were reviewed (Wood, 2018a, 2018b, and 2018c). The reports indicated the following geologic conditions were encountered in the geotechnical borings at the sites.

Newberry Springs Series Capacitor. The site is underlain by alluvial deposits consisting predominantly of poorly graded sand with variable amounts of gravel and cobbles, local boulders may be present as well (Wood, 2018c). Groundwater was not encountered to the maximum depth drilled of 51.5 feet below-ground-surface (bgs).

Ludlow Series Capacitor. The site is underlain by alluvial deposits consisting predominantly of poorly graded sand with variable amounts of gravel and cobbles, local boulders may be present as well (Wood, 2018b). Groundwater was not encountered to the maximum depth drilled of 51.5 feet bgs.

Mohave Substation. The Mohave Substation is underlain by alluvial deposits consisting predominantly of poorly graded sand with local variable amounts of gravel (Wood, 2018a). Material consisting of fat clay and sandy silt were encountered between 35 feet and 45 to 50 feet. Groundwater was not encountered to the maximum depth drilled of 51.5 feet below the existing grade.

Soils

Soils within the Proposed Project area reflect the underlying rock type, the extent of weathering of the rock, the degree of slope, and the degree of human modification. The National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Soil Survey Geographic (SSURGO) Soil Web Survey was reviewed to identify soil units and characteristics underlying the Proposed Project (NRCS, 2018). The Proposed Project crosses numerous SSURGO soil surveys; however, SSURGO soil data were not available for several areas of the Proposed Project: along the existing Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line between Mile 34 and Mile 150, along the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line between Mile 34 and Mile 165, at both the Newberry

Springs and Ludlow Series Capacitor sites, the Kelbaker Fiber Optic Repeater site, and the Lanfair Fiber Optic Repeater site. In areas where no SSURGO data were available, national level STATSGO soil data for California and Nevada were used (NRCS, 2016; SCE, 2018).

Numerous soil units, associations, and complexes are mapped as underlying the Proposed Project components. The mapped soil units underlying existing transmission facilities in the Proposed Project area consist primarily of soils that are part of the Arizo series, Cajon series, Tewell series, Arrastre series, the Gullied Land–Haploxeralfs association, and the Cushenbury–Crafton–Rock Outcrop complex (SCE, 2018). The Proposed Project is also underlain by four miscellaneous areas, pits, riverwash, rock outcrop, and urban land. Riverwash consists of barren active river gravel and alluvial areas. Rock outcrops consist of exposures of bare bedrock other than lava flows. Pits consists of areas quarried or excavated for rock used in road building or construction, and urban land is land that is mostly covered by streets, parking lots, buildings, and other impervious structures. Miscellaneous areas have been identified by the NRCS as having little or no natural soil or soil development and are not discussed further in this section. Summaries of the significant characteristics of the soils underlying the Proposed Project are presented in Table 5.7-2, Soils in the Proposed Project Area.

Table 5.7-2. Soils in the Proposed Project Area

Soil Type ³	Slope	Permeability	Susceptibility to Erosion by Water ¹	Susceptibility to Erosion by Wind ²	Approx. Length of Proposed Project Crossed by Soil Type (miles)
Arizo Association	0 to 4	High	Low	Low to High	4.4
Arizo Gravelly Loamy Sand	2 to 9	Very High	Low	High	0.7
Arizo-Peskah-Crosgrain Association	2 to 4	Very High	Low to Moderate	Low	3.7
Arrastre–Rock Outcrop Complex	30 to 50	High	Moderate	Moderate to High	7.2
Avawatz–Oak Glen Association, Gently Sloping	2 to 9	High	Moderate	Moderate to High	1.6
Bluepoint-Arizo Association	0 to 4	High	Low to Moderate	Low to High	0.3
Bryman-Cajon Association, Rolling	9 to 15	High	Low to Moderate	High	2.4
Burntshack-Hypoint Association	4 to 15	—	Low to Moderate	High	4.1
Cajon Gravelly Sand	2 to 15	High	Low	High	5.5
Cajon Sand	0 to 2	High	Low	High	3.9
Cajon Sand	2 to 9	—	Low	High	7.2
Cajon Sand	9 to 15	High	Low	High	<0.1
Cajon-Arizo (S1143)	2 to 5	High	Low to Moderate	Moderate to High	61.6
Cajon-Bitterwater-Bitter-Badland (S1128)	2 to 8	High	Low to Moderate	Low to Moderate	3.6
Cajon-Wasco, Cool Complex	2 to 9	High	Low to Moderate	High	3.9
Carrizo Association	2 to 8	Very High	Low	Moderate to High	0.4
Carrwash-Riverbend Association	2 to 8	High	Low	Low to Moderate	2.5
Crosgrain Extremely Gravelly Loam	4 to 15	Moderately High	Low	Low	0.6
Crosgrain Very Stony Loam	8 to 30	Very Low	Low to Moderate	Low	0.7
Crosgrain-Tenwell Association	4 to 15	High	Low to Moderate	Low to Moderate	1.3
Cushenbury-Crafton–Rock Outcrop Complex	15 to 30	High	Moderate	Moderate to High	9.3
Dalvord–Rock Outcrop Association	8 to 30	—	Low	Low	4.6
Filaree-Seanna Association	4 to 15	High	Low to Moderate	Low to Moderate	3.0

Table 5.7-2. Soils in the Proposed Project Area

Soil Type ³	Slope	Permeability	Susceptibility to Erosion by Water ¹	Susceptibility to Erosion by Wind ²	Approx. Length of Proposed Project Crossed by Soil Type (miles)
Goldroad–Rock Outcrop Association	30 to 75	—	Low	Low	4.6
Gullied Land–Haploxeralfs Association	2 to 9	Very Low	—	—	9.8
Haleburu Association	15 to 30	High	Low	Low	1.0
Haleburu Extremely Gravelly Sandy Loam	4 to 15	High	Low	Low	0.2
Haleburu, Extremely Cobbly–Hiddensun Association	0 to 0	—	Low	Low to Moderate	0.7
Haleburu-Nipton Association, Dry	4 to 15	High	Low	Low	1.5
Haplargids-Calciorthids Complex	15 to 50	Very Low	—	—	0.5
Helendale Loamy Sand	0 to 2	High	Low to Moderate	High	1.5
Helendale Loamy Sand	2 to 5	High	Low to Moderate	High	1.7
Hesperia Loamy Fine Sand	2 to 5	High	Moderate	High	1.1
Hypoint Gravelly Sandy Loam	0 to 4	High	Low to Moderate	Moderate	3.0
Hypoint-Gravesumit Association	8 to 30	—	Low to Moderate	Low	2.5
Kidwell-Tenwell Association	2 to 4	High	Low to Moderate	Low to Moderate	5.8
Kimberlina Gravelly Sandy Loam, Cool	2 to 5	High	Low to Moderate	Moderate	1.5
Kimberlina Loamy Fine Sand, Cool	0 to 2	High	Moderate	High	1.1
Lanip-Kidwell Association	2 to 4	High	Low to Moderate	Low to Moderate	9.0
Lavic Loamy Fine Sand	0 to 5	High	Moderate	High	0.5
Lovelace Loamy Sand	5 to 9	High	Low to Moderate	High	0.1
Newera Association	0 to 0	—	Low	Low	2.3
Newera–Rock Outcrop Association	0 to 0	—	Low	Low to Moderate	0.4
Nickel-Bitter-Arizo (S1142)	8 to 15	Moderately High	Low	Low to High	20.9
Nipton-Highland–Rock Outcrop Association	15 to 50	Moderately High	Low	Low	0.1
Nolena–Rock Outcrop Association	30 to 75	Very Low	Low	Low	1.0
Pahrump-Wodavar-Vegastorm Association	4 to 15	Moderately High	Moderate to High	Low to Moderate	0.4
Peskah-Crosgrain Association	2 to 8	High	Low	Low	1.4
Pits	0 to 3	—	—	—	0.2
Riverbend-Carrwash Association	2 to 8	High	Low	Low to Moderate	2.8
Riverwash	0 to 2	Very Low	—	—	0.8
Rock Outcrop–Lithic Torriorthents (S1130)	2 to 15	High	Moderate	Low to High	3.5
Rock Outcrop–Lithic Torriorthents Complex	15 to 50	Very Low	—	—	3.4
Rositas-Carrizo (S1137)	0 to 5	High	Low to Moderate	Low to High	20.9
Seanna-Goldroad–Rock Outcrop Association	30 to 50	High	Low	Low	5.3
Skyhaven-Rillito-Mead-McCullough-Ireteba-Bluepoint (S1144)	0 to 2	Moderately Low	Low to Moderate	Low to High	2.9
Tenwell Very Gravelly Sandy Loam	0 to 2	High	Moderate	Low to Moderate	1.8
Tenwell-Crosgrain Association	4 to 15	Moderately High	Low to Moderate	Low to Moderate	1.2
Tenwell-Lanip Association	2 to 8	High	Low to Moderate	Moderate to High	1.4

Table 5.7-2. Soils in the Proposed Project Area

Soil Type ³	Slope	Permeability	Susceptibility to Erosion by Water ¹	Susceptibility to Erosion by Wind ²	Approx. Length of Proposed Project Crossed by Soil Type (miles)
Tenwell-Shamock Association	2 to 4	High	Low to Moderate	Moderate to High	5.1
Tonopah-Arizo Association	2 to 8	High	Low	Low to High	2.3
Trigger-Rock Outcrop-Calvista (S1134)	15 to 30	High	Low to Moderate	Low to High	18.9
Upspring-Sparkhule-Rock Outcrop (S1127)	15 to 30	High	Low to Moderate	Low to High	8.1
Urban Land-Riverbend-Huevi Association	2 to 15	—	Low	Low to Moderate	0.5
Wasco Sandy Loam, Cool	0 to 2	High	Moderate	Moderate to High	3.5
Wasco Sandy Loam, Cool	2 to 5	High	Moderate	Moderate to High	1.7
Wasco-Helendale-Bryman (S1032)	2 to 5	High	Moderate	Moderate to High	7.2
Wasco-Rosamond-Cajon (S1024)	0 to 2	High	Moderate	Low to High	9.0

Sources: Modified from SCE, 2018. Response to Comment Q50F, Attachment G – Revised Soil Data; and NRCS, 2016 and 2018.

1 - Based on NRCS Erosion factor Kw (used by the NRCS in the Universal Soil Loss Equation), which indicates the susceptibility of the whole soil to sheet and rill erosion.

2 - Based on NRCS soil wind erodibility groups; groups are based on the susceptibility of a soil to wind erosion.

3 - Loam – A soil material that has approximately equal percentages of clay, silt, and sand particles.

— = No Data Available.

The properties of soil that influence erosion by water (rainfall and runoff) are ones that affect the infiltration capacity of a soil, and those that affect the resistance of a soil to detachment and being carried away by falling or flowing water. Sheet erosion occurs when water runs over a large uniform area picking up and distributing soil particles. Rill erosion occurs as concentrated surface runoff begins to remove soil along concentrated zones with numerous small, but conspicuous, water channels or tiny rivulets. Susceptibility to sheet and rill erosion from water for soils underlying the Proposed Project ranges from low to moderate. Soils containing high percentages of fine sands and silt and that are low in density are generally the most susceptible to wind erosion. As the clay and organic matter content of these soils increases, the potential for erosion decreases. Susceptibility of soils to wind erosion generally ranges from low to high within the project area (NRCS, 2016 and 2018). Significant ground disturbance of approximately 375.4 acres of land would occur, with total permanent land disturbance at approximately 7.0 acres and approximately 368.5 acres of temporary disturbance. The temporary ground disturbance includes 112.3 acres of previously disturbed land and 256.1 acres of undisturbed land that would be restored after construction (SCE, 2018). Proposed Project ground disturbance will loosen soils making them more susceptible to erosion.

Expansive soils are characterized by their ability to undergo significant volume change (shrink and swell) due to variation in soil moisture content. Changes in soil moisture could result from a number of factors, including rainfall, landscape irrigation, utility leakage, and/or perched groundwater. Expansive soils are typically very fine grained with a high to very high percentage of clay. Soils with moderate to high shrink-swell potential would be classified as expansive soils. Most of the soils underlying the Proposed Project components are sandy in nature and not generally susceptible to expansion. The shrink-swell characteristics of the soils underlying the new series capacitors and fiber optic repeater sites are all classified as low by the NRCS (SCE, 2018). Additionally, the geotechnical studies conducted at the Newberry Springs and Ludlow Series Capacitor sites and the Mohave Substation confirm non-expansive soil at these sites (Wood, 2018a, 2018b, and 2018c).

Collapsible soils are low density, fine-grained, predominantly granular usually containing fine sand and silt that may collapse or rapidly settle due to rearrangement of the soil particles when they become saturated under relatively low loads. Collapsible soils are soils susceptible to large volumetric changes when they become saturated. Conditions in the arid and semi-arid climate of the Proposed Project favor the formation of collapsible soils. Based on the laboratory test results from the site-specific geotechnical studies, the soils at the Mohave Substation possess slight collapse potential, and the soils at the Newberry Springs and Ludlow Series Capacitor sites have moderate to high collapse potential (Wood, 2018a, 2018b, and 2018c). Collapsible soils are quite sensitive to either a rise in the groundwater table or increased surface water infiltration.

Slope Stability

Important factors that affect the slope stability of an area include the steepness of the slope, the relative strength of the underlying rock material, and the thickness and cohesion of the overlying colluvium. The steeper the slope and/or the less strong the rock, the more likely the area is susceptible to landslides. The steeper the slope and the thicker the colluvium, the more likely the area is susceptible to debris flows. Another indication of unstable slopes is the presence of old or recent landslides or debris flows. The term landslide includes a wide range of ground movements, such as rock falls, deep failure of slopes, and shallow debris flows. Although gravity acting on an over-steepened slope is the primary reason for a landslide, other contributing factors include: over-steepened slopes due to erosion or undercutting; increased saturation of weak rock and soil slopes may trigger movement; earthquake ground shaking may trigger landslides; or excess weight above or on the slope from accumulated rain, snow, rock or ore stockpiles, or from man-made structures could cause slopes to fail.

The locations where new and modified Proposed Project components will be installed are located along alluvial fans, pediments, and gently sloping terrain. Slope stability issues are not expected to occur at these sites. A review of the County of San Bernardino Hazard Maps indicates that there are some limited areas of mapped existing landslides between 1,000 and 3,700 feet of the Eldorado-Lugo and Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Lines; however, proposed work in these locations will be limited to the installation of optical ground wire on existing structures and no modifications will be made to the existing towers and no new structures are being constructed in this area (SCE, 2018). Lugo Substation is located approximately 20,000 feet north of an area mapped on the County of San Bernardino Hazard Maps as having a low-moderate landslide susceptibility (SCE, 2018). All projects areas with new structures are located in flat terrain with very low landslide hazard.

Subsidence

Land subsidence can occur in valleys containing aquifer systems that are, in part, made up of fine-grained sediments and that have undergone extensive groundwater development. As the groundwater is withdrawn, the pore-fluid pressure in the sediments decreases allowing the weight of the overlying sediment to permanently compact or compress the fine-grained units. This effect is most pronounced in younger, unconsolidated sediments. Land subsidence is generally characterized by a broad zone of deformation where differential settlements are small. Subsidence within the Mojave Desert area is generally found in the vicinity of dry lakebeds due to groundwater extraction. Approximate depth to groundwater in the vicinity of the Proposed project ranges from approximately 37 to 73 feet below ground surface (bgs) along the Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line from Pisgah Substation to Mohave Substation and greater than 180 feet bgs for the remainder of the Proposed Project (SCE, 2018).

Land subsidence studies conducted by the USGS for a portion of the Mojave Desert for the period 2004 to 2009 indicate that subsidence has occurred at several locations within the study area, including at

Lucerne Lake and Troy Lake, both located in the Proposed Project vicinity (USGS, 2018c). The area of subsidence at Lucerne Lake is located just southeast of the Proposed Project; however, none of the Proposed Project components are located within the subsidence area. The Troy Lake subsidence area is located approximately 8 miles east of the Newberry Springs Series Capacitor site.

Seismicity and Faulting

The Proposed Project area is located in a geologically complex and seismically active region which includes northwest-southeast trending faults, mountain ranges, and valleys. The seismicity of the Project area is dominated by the intersection of the north-northwest trending San Andreas fault system and the east-west trending Transverse Ranges fault system. Both systems are responding to strain produced by the relative motions of the Pacific and North American Tectonic Plates. This strain is relieved by right-lateral strike-slip faulting on the San Andreas and related faults, and by vertical, reverse-slip or left-lateral strike-slip displacement on faults in the Transverse Ranges. The effects of this strain and deformation include mountain building, basin development, deformation of Quaternary marine terraces, widespread regional uplift, and generation of earthquakes. Both the Transverse Ranges and Coast Ranges areas are characterized by numerous geologically young faults. These faults can be classified as historically active, active, potentially active, or inactive, based on the following criteria (CGS, 1999):

- Faults that have generated earthquakes accompanied by surface rupture during historic time (approximately the last 200 years) and faults that exhibit aseismic fault creep are defined as Historically Active.
- Faults that show geologic evidence of movement within Holocene time (approximately the last 11,000 years) are defined as Active.
- Faults that show geologic evidence of movement during the Quaternary time (approximately the last 1.6 million years) are defined as Potentially Active.
- Faults that show direct geologic evidence of inactivity during all of Quaternary time or longer are classified as Inactive.

Although it is difficult to quantify the probability that an earthquake will occur on a specific fault, this classification is based on the assumption that if a fault has moved during the Holocene epoch, it is likely to produce earthquakes in the future. Blind thrust faults which do not intersect the ground surface are not classified as active or potentially active in the same manner as faults that are present at the earth's surface. Activity classification of blind thrust faults is predominantly based on geologic data from deep oil wells, geophysical profiles, historic earthquakes, and microseismic activity along the fault.

The Project area will be subject to ground shaking associated with earthquakes on faults of the San Andreas, Garlock, Eastern California Shear Zone, and Transverse Ranges fault systems. Active faults of the San Andreas system are predominantly strike-slip faults accommodating translational movement. Active reverse or thrust faults in the Transverse Ranges include blind thrust faults responsible for the 1987 Whittier Narrows Earthquake and 1994 Northridge Earthquake, and the range-front faults responsible for uplift of the San Gabriel and San Bernardino Mountains. The Transverse Ranges fault system consists primarily of blind, reverse, and thrust faults accommodating tectonic compressional stresses in the region. Blind faults have no surface expression and have been located using subsurface geologic and geophysical methods. This combination of translational and compressional stresses gives rise to diffuse seismicity across the region.

The significant faults in the Proposed Project area are faults of the Eastern California Shear Zone (ECSZ) and the San Andreas fault zone. The Eastern California Shear Zone is a region of active, predominantly strike-slip, deformation east of the San Andreas fault that extends from the southern Mojave Desert along

the east side of the Sierra Nevada and into western Nevada. The Eastern California Shear Zone accommodates approximately 20 to 25 percent of relative plate motion between the Pacific and North America plates and is bounded on the east by the diffuse extensional deformation of the Basin and Range region and in the Mojave area by the San Andreas fault zone on the west. Local faults of the ECSZ include the Lenwood-Lockhart, the Helendale-South Lockhart, the Calico-Hidalgo fault zone, the Pisgah-Bullion fault zone, the Hector Mine (Lavic Lake) fault zone, and the Camp Rock-Emerson-Copper Mtn. fault zone. The San Andreas fault zone is a 680-mile active right-lateral strike-slip complex of faults that has been responsible for many of the damaging earthquakes in southern California in historical times. The San Andreas Fault Zone is the longest active fault in California and represents the boundary between the Pacific and North American plates. Historically, both the ECSZ and the San Andreas fault zone have produced significant earthquakes that have caused surface rupture and damage in the project region.

Since periodic earthquakes accompanied by surface displacement can be expected to continue in the study area through the lifetime of the Proposed Project, the effects of strong ground shaking and fault rupture are of primary concern to safe and reliable operation Proposed Project. Active faults that represent a significant seismic threat to the Proposed Project are listed in Table 5.7-3. Data presented in this table include closest distance to Project components, estimated earthquake magnitude, and type of fault. Figure 5.7-2 shows locations of significant active faults in the Proposed Project area and surrounding region.

Fault Rupture

Fault rupture is the surface displacement that occurs when movement on a fault deep within the earth breaks through to the surface. Fault rupture and displacement almost always follows preexisting faults, which are zones of weakness; however, not all earthquakes result in surface rupture (i.e., earthquakes that occur on blind thrusts do not result in surface fault rupture). Rupture may occur suddenly during an earthquake or slowly in the form of fault creep. In addition to damage caused by ground shaking from an earthquake, fault rupture is damaging to buildings and other structures due to the differential displacement and deformation of the ground surface that occurs from offset/ground displacement across the fault. In California, Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zones have been defined by the California Geological Survey along active faults with the potential for surface rupture. However, not all active faults have been zoned, as the criteria specifies that a fault must be shown to be “sufficiently active” and “well defined” by detailed site-specific geologic explorations in order to determine whether an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Hazard Zone can be established with associated building setbacks. Many known active faults are not sufficiently “well defined” at the surface to qualify to be Alquist-Priolo zoned but could still cause significant surface fault rupturing. Although the Project will not be subject to the regulations and guidelines related to the Alquist-Priolo Special Studies Zones Act because there will be no occupied structures constructed in the Earthquake Fault Zones as part of this Project, the presence of these mapped zones indicates significant potential for fault rupture in the areas the Project crosses the “zones.”

The Proposed Project crosses numerous active and potentially active faults, including several with mapped Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zones: the Helendale-South Lockhart, the Lenwood-Lockhart, the Camp Rock-Emerson-Copper Mountain, the Calico-Hidalgo, the Pisgah-Bullion, and the Hector Mine (Lavic Lake) fault (CGS, 2018b, USGS and CGS, 2006). However, none of the Proposed Project new or modified components are within any of these Alquist-Priolo zones. Additionally, no other mapped active or potentially active faults cross or are in close proximity to the Proposed Project new or modified components. The Alquist-Priolo zoned Hector Mine (Lavic Lake) fault zone is the closest active fault zone to the mid-line series capacitor sites, located approximately 1.7 miles west of the Newberry Springs Series Capacitor site.

Table 5.7-3. Significant Active and Potentially Active Faults in the Vicinity of the Proposed Project

Fault Zone or Fault (Fault Section)	Active or Potentially Active	Distance and Direction from Nearest New or Modified Project Structure ¹	Nearest New or Modified Project Structure	Maximum Estimated Earthquake Magnitude ²	Fault Type	Dip Direction	Most Recent Deformation	Slip Rate (mm/year)
CALIFORNIA								
Hector Mine (Lavic Lake) fault zone	Active	1.7 miles west	Newberry Springs series capacitor	—	Right Lateral Strike Slip	90° (V)	Historic (<150 years)	0.2–1.0
Cleghorn fault zone	Potentially Active	3.7 miles southwest	Lugo Substation	6.8	Left Lateral Strike Slip	85°	Late Quaternary (<130 ka)	1.0–5.0
Pisgah-Bullion fault zone	Active	4.3 miles southwest	Ludlow series capacitor	7.3	Right Lateral Strike Slip,	90° (V)	Holocene (<15 ka)	0.2–1.0
Helendale–South Lockhart fault zone	Active	5.0 miles southwest	Barstow fiber optic repeater	7.4	Right Lateral Strike Slip	90°(V)	Late Quaternary (<130 ka)	0.2–1.0
Cady fault	Potentially Active	7.1 miles north	Newberry Springs series capacitor	7.2	Left Lateral Oblique	—	Undifferentiated Quaternary (<1.6 Ma)	Unspecified
North Frontal thrust system (Western Section)	Active	7.1 miles east	Lugo Substation	7.2	Thrust	30° to 35° S	Late Quaternary (<130 ka)	0.2–1.0
San Andreas fault zone (San Bernardino Mountains)	Active	7.5 miles southwest	Lugo Substation	6.9	Right Lateral Strike Slip,	35°N to 90° (V)	Holocene (<15 ka)	< 5.0
Lenwood-Lockhart fault zone	Active	8.2 miles east	Barstow fiber optic repeater	7.5	Right Lateral Strike Slip	90°(V)	Holocene (<15 ka)	0.2–1.0
Rodman fault	Potentially Active	9.0 miles east	Ludlow series capacitor	—	Right Lateral Strike Slip	—	undifferentiated Quaternary (<1.6 Ma)	Unspecified
Ludlow fault	Potentially Active	8.5 miles southwest	Newberry Springs series capacitor	—	Right Lateral Strike Slip	—	undifferentiated Quaternary (<1.6 Ma)	Unspecified
San Andreas fault zone (Mojave Section)	Active	9.1 miles southwest	Lugo Substation	7.3	Right Lateral Strike Slip	90° (V)	Historic (<150 years)	< 5.0
San Jacinto fault zone (San Bernardino Section)	Active	9.4 miles southwest	Lugo Substation	7.1	Right Lateral Strike Slip	NE; SW	Holocene (<15 ka)	< 5.0
Calico-Hidalgo fault zone	Active	10.6 miles southwest	Ludlow series capacitor	7.4	Right Lateral Strike Slip,	90° (V), locally 50° to 70° NE	Holocene (<15 ka)	0.2–1.0
Arrastre Canyon Narrows fault	Potentially Active	11.9 miles east	Lugo Substation	—	—	—	Late Quaternary (<130 ka)	Unspecified
Bowen Ranch fault	Potentially Active	11.9 miles east	Lugo Substation	—	—	—	Late Quaternary (<130 ka)	Unspecified
San Gabriel fault zone	Potentially Active	12.9 miles southwest	Lugo Substation	7.3	Right Lateral Strike Slip,	55° to 75° N	undifferentiated Quaternary (<1.6 Ma)	0.2–1.0

Table 5.7-3. Significant Active and Potentially Active Faults in the Vicinity of the Proposed Project

Fault Zone or Fault (Fault Section)	Active or Potentially Active	Distance and Direction from Nearest New or Modified Project Structure ¹	Nearest New or Modified Project Structure	Maximum Estimated Earthquake Magnitude ²	Fault Type	Dip Direction	Most Recent Deformation	Slip Rate (mm/year)
North Frontal thrust system (Eastern Section)	Active	13.3 miles southeast	Barstow fiber optic repeater	7.0	Reverse	10° to 50° S	Holocene (<15 ka)	0.2–1.0
Sierra Madre fault zone (Cucamonga Section)	Active	13.4 miles southwest	Lugo Substation	7.2	Thrust	43° to 60° N	Holocene (<15 ka)	0.2–1.0
Johnson Valley fault zone (Northern Johnson Valley Section)	Active	13.8 miles east	Barstow fiber optic repeater	6.9	Right Lateral Strike Slip,	90° (V)	Holocene (<15 ka)	0.2–1.0
Manix fault	Active	14.8 miles northwest	Newberry Springs series capacitor	—	Left Lateral Strike Slip	—	Historic (<150 years)	Unspecified
Camp Rock-Emerson-Copper Mountain fault	Active	15.4 miles northeast	Barstow fiber optic repeater	7.1	Right Lateral Strike Slip	90° (V)	Historic (<150 years)	0.2–1.0
Santa Ana fault	Potentially Active	15.8 miles southeast	Lugo Substation	6.9	Thrust	—	undifferentiated Quaternary (<1.6 Ma)	Unspecified
Harper fault zone	Potentially Active	22.4 miles northwest	Barstow fiber optic repeater	7.1	Right Lateral Strike Slip,	90° (V)	Late Quaternary (<130 ka)	Unspecified
Red Pass fault	Active	24.1 miles northwest	Newberry Springs series capacitor	—	Right Lateral Strike Slip	SW; NE	Holocene (<15 ka)	Unspecified
San Gorgonio Mountain fault	Potentially Active	28.6 miles southeast	Barstow fiber optic repeater	—	Right Lateral Thrust	—	Late Quaternary (<130 ka)	Unspecified
Johnson Valley fault zone (Southern Johnson Valley Section)	Active	29.1 miles southwest	Ludlow series capacitor	—	Right Lateral Strike Slip	70° W. to 90° (V)	Historic (<150 years)	0.2–1.0
NEVADA								
Black Hills fault	Active	6.8 miles northwest	Eldorado Substation	6.8	Normal	SE	Holocene (<15 ka)	< 0.2
Frenchman Mountain fault	Potentially Active	21.2 miles north	Eldorado Substation	6.6	Normal	35° to 60°W	Late Quaternary (<130 ka)	< 0.2

Source: Modified from SCE, 2018, Attachment H: USGS Earthquake Hazards Program Fault Data table; and USGS 2018a

1 - Fault distances and parameters obtained from USGS Earthquake Hazards Program, 2008 National Seismic Hazard Maps – Source Parameters website (USGS, 2018a) and CGS Quaternary Fault and Fold Database of the United States, (USGS & CGS, 2006).

2 - Maximum Estimated Earthquake Magnitude – the maximum earthquake that appears capable of occurring under the presently known tectonic framework, magnitude listed is “Ellsworth-B” magnitude from the USGS Earthquake Hazards Program, 2008 National Seismic Hazard Maps – Source Parameters website (USGS, 2018a) unless otherwise noted.

Strong Ground Shaking

An earthquake is classified by the amount of energy released, which traditionally has been quantified using the Richter scale. Recently, seismologists have begun using a Moment Magnitude (M) scale because it provides a more accurate measurement of the size of major earthquakes. For earthquakes of less than M 7.0, the Moment and Richter Magnitude scales are nearly identical. For earthquake magnitudes greater than M 7.0, readings on the Moment Magnitude scale are slightly greater than a corresponding Richter Magnitude.

The intensity of the seismic shaking, or strong ground motion, during an earthquake is dependent on the distance between the Project area and the epicenter of the earthquake, the magnitude of the earthquake, and the geologic conditions underlying and surrounding the Project area. Earthquakes occurring on faults closest to the Project area would most likely generate the largest ground motion.

The intensity of earthquake-induced ground motions can be described using peak site accelerations (PGAs), represented as a fraction of the acceleration of gravity (g). Peak ground acceleration is the maximum acceleration experienced by a particle on the Earth's surface during the course of an earthquake, and the units of acceleration are most commonly measured in terms of fractions of g, the acceleration due to gravity (980 cm/sec²). SCE used the CGS Probabilistic Seismic Hazards Ground Motion Interpolator website to estimate PGAs at the Proposed Project site (SCE, 2018). The interpolator uses data from the 2008 Probabilistic Seismic Hazard Assessment Maps (PSHA) to interpolate peak ground accelerations with a 2 percent probability of exceedance in 50 years (return interval of 2,475 years for a maximum considered earthquake (SCE, 2018). The PSHA maps indicate PGAs of 0.583g and 0.784g at the Pisgah and Lugo Substations, respectively. PGAs along the existing Eldorado-Lugo and Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Lines range from 0.113g to 0.784g, with the high values near the western end of the alignment. Low PGA values ranging from 0.113g to 0.193g of mapped in the vicinity of Mohave Substation and the Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line. The Ludlow and Newberry Series Capacitor sites are mapped with PGAs of 0.557g and 0.577g, respectively; PGAs at the Barstow, Kelbaker, and Lanfair Fiber Optic Repeaters are 0.468g, 0.206g, and 0.118g respectively (SCE, 2018). Proposed Project components near to and west of the Kelbaker Fiber Optic Repeater site can expect to experience moderate to severe ground shaking in the event of a large local or regional earthquake.

A review of historic earthquake activity from 1900 to 2018 indicates that 99 earthquakes of magnitude M4.5 or greater have occurred within 30 miles of the Proposed Project, with 15 of these greater than M6.0 (USGS, 2018b). This includes three significant earthquakes, the 1952 M7.5 Kern County Earthquake, the 1992 M7.3 Landers Earthquake, and the 1999 M7.1 Hector Mine Earthquake. The Kern County earthquake of 1952 caused immense and widespread damage and resulted in the loss of 12 lives and at least \$60 million in damage. The 1992 Landers Earthquake had total rupture length of 53 miles, and the faults offsets of 6 to 18 feet. It caused relatively little damage for its size due to its remote location, most of the damage occurred to transportation infrastructure and power lines. The 1999 Hector Mine Earthquake surface rupture was located entirely within the boundaries of the Twentynine Palms Marine Corps Base and crossed neither paved roads nor structures and caused very little damage (SCEDC, 2018). Many of the smaller earthquakes in the area have been aftershocks of these large events.

The 1999 Hector Mine Earthquake is the closest of these large earthquake to the Proposed Project, located approximately 13.3 miles south of the Ludlow Series Capacitor site (USGS, 2018b).

Liquefaction

Liquefaction is the phenomenon in which saturated granular sediments temporarily lose their shear strength during periods of earthquake-induced strong ground shaking. The susceptibility of a site to liquefaction is a function of the depth, density, and water content of the granular sediments and the magnitude and frequency of earthquakes in the surrounding region. Saturated, unconsolidated silts, sands, and silty sands within 50 feet of the ground surface are most susceptible to liquefaction. Liquefaction-related phenomena include lateral spreading, ground oscillation, flow failures, loss of bearing strength, subsidence, and buoyancy effects (Youd and Perkins, 1978). In addition, densification of the soil resulting in vertical settlement of the ground can also occur.

In order to determine liquefaction susceptibility of a region, three major factors must be analyzed. These include: (a) the density and textural characteristics of the alluvial sediments; (b) the intensity and duration of ground shaking; and (c) the depth to groundwater.

Most of the alluvial deposits underlying the new Proposed Project components are not generally expected to be liquefiable due to deep groundwater levels in the project area, generally greater than 180 feet bgs. However, there are locations within the Project area where shallow groundwater, less than 50 feet bgs, occurs. Based on limited historic groundwater data from the Department of Water Resources (DWR) online Water Data library and the USGS National Water Information System online mapper (USGS, 2018d), scattered areas with groundwater levels of 37 to 73 feet below ground surface (bgs) occurs in along the project alignments; however, groundwater is greater than 100 feet bgs for most of the Proposed Project (DWR, 2018, USGS, 2018c). Historic groundwater levels near the Barstow Repeater site are approximately 42 to 47 feet bgs, greater than 600 feet bgs near the Lanfair Repeater site, and greater than 300 feet bgs in the area near the Kelbaker Repeater site (DWR, 2018, USGS, 2018c). Due to groundwater levels of less than 50 feet bgs there is a potential that liquefiable sediments may be present at the Barstow Fiber Optic Repeater site.

No groundwater level data is available in the DWR and USGS databases for the area near the Newberry Springs and Ludlow Series Capacitor sites; however, the site-specific geotechnical studies for these sites indicates that groundwater is greater than 51 feet bgs (Wood, 2018b and 2018c). Groundwater levels at the Mohave Substation were measured at greater than 51 feet bgs during the geotechnical study for that site (Wood, 2018a) and the USGS website indicates that groundwater is greater than 180 feet bgs (USGS, 2018d). Estimated groundwater levels, based on the DWR and USGS websites, at the other substations are greater than 450 feet near Lugo Substation, and greater than 250 feet near the Eldorado Substation.

Seismically Induced Landslides

Other forms of seismically induced ground failures which may affect the Project area include ground cracking, and seismically induced landslides. Landslides triggered by earthquakes have been a significant cause of earthquake damage; in southern California, large earthquakes such as the 1971 San Fernando and 1994 Northridge earthquakes triggered landslides that were responsible for destroying or damaging numerous structures, blocking major transportation corridors, and damaging life-line infrastructure. Areas that are most susceptible to earthquake-induced landslides are steep slopes in poorly cemented or highly fractured rocks, areas underlain by loose, weak soils, and areas on or adjacent to existing landslide deposits. As noted above, the Proposed Project components are located within areas of gentle slopes and generally flat terrane flat with no existing landslides mapped in these areas, therefore seismically induced landslides are not likely to impact the Proposed Project.

Paleontological Setting

The following section describes the existing conditions and the results from literature searches, record searches, and field surveys for paleontological resources. This discussion is based on a report prepared by Rincon unless otherwise noted (Rincon, 2018).

Resources

Paleontological Locality Search. Formal locality searches of the paleontological collections of the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County (LACM), the San Bernardino County Museum (SBCM), the Nevada State Museum (NSM), and the Las Vegas Natural History Museum (LVNHM) were conducted. Locality data was requested for the entire extent of the United States Geological Survey (USGS) quadrangles that encompass the area of direct impact.

Paleontological Literature Review. A literature search of peer-reviewed scientific journals and other publications relevant to the paleontology of the geologic units found within the Proposed Project work areas was conducted. Literature searches included all fossil types (vertebrate, invertebrate, plant, micro-fossils, and trace) previously documented in the geologic units in the Proposed Project area or similar units nearby.

Geologic Map Review. A review of published geologic maps for the entire area of direct impact was conducted to identify the geology of the Proposed Project area and compile a stratigraphic inventory for the work areas. Map information was supplemented with more current geologic research on biostratigraphy and radio-isotopic dating for the region, where available.

Paleontological Field Survey. Rincon paleontologists conducted a field survey to identify surface exposures of geologic units that could contain fossils, survey those exposures for fossils, and record any new fossil localities, if encountered.

Qualified paleontologists conducted a pedestrian paleontological field survey of all work areas where the mapped geologic units have a PFYC classification of High (Class 4), Very High (Class 5), Unknown (Class U), or SVP rating of high or undetermined. Work areas with low to no paleontological resource potential (PFYC classification of PFYC 2 or lower) were generally subject to a windshield survey; however, in those areas where there were bedrock exposures in the immediate vicinity (i.e., within 500 meters), the survey included a pedestrian component to examine exposures for fossils and evaluate lithology.

Results

Fossil Localities. No records of previously record fossil localities were found within any of the proposed work areas, or within the overall area of direct impact. However, geologic units mapped within the Proposed Project work areas do have fossil records from the broader region and throughout California. Fossil locality searches were conducted for all USGS quadrangle maps on which the area of direct impact was projected.

Paleontological Sensitivity Assessment. Groups of geologic units of similar age and with similar lithology are discussed below, but a detailed description for each of the 50 mapped units within the area of direct impact is not provided. Each unit has been evaluated for paleontological sensitivity according to both the BLM PFYC and SVP criteria. Those units with high or undetermined sensitivity are listed in Table 5.7-4, High or Undetermined Paleontological Sensitivity for Mapped Units within the Project Area, provides specific information on each of the 50 uniquely mapped units including associated lithology and age. In addition, each unit has been evaluated for paleontological sensitivity according to both the BLM PFYC and SVP criteria.

Table 5.7-4. High or Undetermined Paleontological Sensitivity for Mapped Units within the Project Area.

Unit Category	Unit	Unit Age	Lithologic Description	Paleontological Sensitivity at Surface	
				BLM PFYC	SVP
Cenozoic volcanic rocks	Quaternary hillslope – plutonic rocks	Holocene to Pleistocene	Felsic plutonic and hillslope deposits	U–Unknown	Undetermined
Cenozoic volcanic rocks	Quaternary hillslope – volcanic rocks	Holocene to Pleistocene	Felsic volcanic rocks and hillslope deposits	U–Unknown	Undetermined
Cenozoic volcanic rocks	Quaternary hillslope – mafic volcanic rocks	Holocene to Pleistocene	Hillslope deposits overlying mafic volcanic bedrock	U–Unknown	Undetermined
Quaternary sediments	Quaternary hillslope	Holocene to Pleistocene	Partly consolidated hillslope deposits	U–Unknown	Undetermined
Quaternary sediments	Quaternary pediment and plutonic rocks	Holocene to Pleistocene	Veneered pediment and felsic plutonic grus	U–Unknown	Undetermined
Quaternary sediments	Intermediate colluvial deposits/mafic volcanic rocks	Pleistocene	Colluvial and hillslope deposits	4a–High	High
Quaternary sediments	Quaternary alluvial fan	middle to late Pleistocene	Intermediate alluvial fan	4a–High	High
Quaternary sediments	Quaternary alluvial fan	middle to late Pleistocene	Intermediate grus fan	4a–High	High
Quaternary sediments	Quaternary older valley sediments	Pleistocene	Quaternary fanglomerate and gravel, weakly consolidated, mostly unstratified	4a–High	High
Quaternary sediments	Quaternary older alluvium	Pleistocene	Quaternary alluvium, massive to crudely bedded	4a–High	High
Quaternary sediments	Intermediate older alluvium	Early to middle Pleistocene	Alluvial fan sand	4a–High	High
Quaternary sediments	Quaternary older gravel	Pleistocene	Quaternary gravel, rounded cobbles	4a–High	High
Quaternary sediments	Quaternary alluvial fan	Early to middle Pleistocene	Very old alluvial fan	4a–High	High
Paleogene to Neogene sediments	Paleogene to Neogene (Tertiary) sediments	Pliocene to Paleocene	Undivided, nonmarine sediments	U–Unknown	Undetermined
Paleogene to Neogene sediments	Crowder Formation	Miocene	Arkosic sandstone, conglomerate, and paleosols	5a–Very High	High
Paleogene to Neogene sediments	Paleogene to Neogene (Tertiary) sandstone (may include undifferentiated Barstow Formation in certain localities)	Miocene	Nonmarine sandstone	4a–High	High

Quaternary Sediments (Pleistocene to Holocene)

- *Late to Middle Holocene Alluvium and Surficial Sediments.* Holocene sediments comprise much of the surface sediments underlying the Proposed Project work areas. These sediments contain gravel, sand, silt, and clay deposited in river channels and active washes (e.g., the modern Mojave River). Surficial deposits in the Mojave Desert are typically unconsolidated and commonly form thin (i.e., less than 2 meters [approximately 5 feet]) to very thick (i.e., tens of meters) deposits, depending on depositional setting (e.g., thin flood-plain silty clays versus thicker terrace and levee sands). Holocene sediments typ-

ically do not contain significant fossils where they are too young, as defined by the BLM PFYC as less than 10,000 years old and by the SVP as less than 5,000 years old; however, they may be shallowly underlain by early Holocene (11,700–8,200 years old) or Pleistocene (2.58 Ma to 11,700 years old) sediments that are old enough to contain fossils. Middle to late Holocene units are considered to have Low (PFYC Class 2, SVP Low) paleontological sensitivity.

- *Early Holocene to Pleistocene Alluvium and Surficial Sediments.* Early Holocene to Pleistocene alluvium and other surface sediments are composed of a similar lithology of gravels, sands, silts, and clays as the younger Holocene surficial deposits, but are more consolidated, deeply incised, and thicker. Early Holocene to Pleistocene sediments can also potentially contain fossils, as they are predominantly older than 5,000 to 10,000 radiocarbon years, thresholds defined by the SVP (2010) and BLM (2016), respectively. These units are considered to have Low (PFYC Class 2, SVP Low) paleontological sensitivity at the surface; however, sensitivity may increase with depth. Where sediments are comprised mostly armored piedmont and grus-weathering plutonic rocks, paleontological sensitivity is considered to be Unknown (PFYC Class U) or Undetermined (SVP).
- *Pleistocene Alluvium and Surficial Sediments.* Pleistocene deposits are found throughout the Proposed Project area but are not as extensively mapped at the surface as Holocene deposits. Pleistocene alluvium and surficial units comprise alluvial fan and older river-channel deposits of conglomerate, gravels, sands, and silts. These deposits tend to be weakly to moderately consolidated and may be incised, indicative of their pre-Holocene age. Because of the Pleistocene age and terrestrial depositional setting of these deposits, a relatively high potential of uncovering fossil resources is present, especially large vertebrate mammals. These units have a High (PFYC Class 4, SVP High) paleontological sensitivity.

Cenozoic Sedimentary Rock, Paleogene to Neogene (formerly, Tertiary)

Pliocene and older sediments occur at only a few work areas, mainly within the Mojave National Preserve. These units are composed of generally poorly sorted coarse alluvial gravel and sand (aeolian in part). In general, these sediments lack soil development and are in a deeply dissected terrain with little or no remnant depositional geomorphology. These units have a high potential to yield fossils due to their age; however, their coarse lithology with common boulders and cobble clasts indicate high-energy alluvial and fluvial depositional environments that are typically not conducive to fossil preservation due to damage or transportation of biological material. These units are generally assigned an Unknown (PFYC Class U) or Undetermined (SVP) paleontological sensitivity where the unit is unnamed and lithology is unspecified, and are assigned a high (PFYC Class 4 or PFYC 5, SVP High) paleontological sensitivity where the unit is formally named and well-documented in the scientific literature (e.g., the Miocene Crowder Formation).

Miocene sedimentary rocks mapped in the Project area include a small outcrop of unnamed sandstone east of the Pisgah Crater and the Crowder Formation. The Crowder Formation is a coarse-grained sandstone, conglomerate, and paleosol unit that occurs approximately 2 miles southeast of the Lugo Substation. The Crowder Formation is well-known for producing abundant vertebrate fossils, especially micro-mammals (e.g., rodents) from the clay-rich paleosol layers that formed between the sandstone and conglomerate strata. Crowder Formation fossils have been mainly recovered during bulk sample processing of the paleosols.

Cenozoic Volcanic and Volcaniclastic Rocks

Miocene to Oligocene volcanic and volcaniclastic rocks within the Proposed Project area include volcanic air-fall tuff, basalt breccia fanglomerate, and mud flows. These volcanic units were deposited throughout a period of intense volcanic activity during crustal extension in the central part of the

Mojave Desert province. Although igneous rocks typically have low to no paleontological sensitivity, volcanoclastic air-fall tuffs can potentially contain fossils due to their mixing with clastic sediments during the depositional processes following volcanic eruption. Typically, these units have Unknown (BLM PFYC Class U) or Undetermined (SVP) potential. The crystalline volcanic lava flow rocks in the Proposed Project area do not contain fossils due to the extremely high heat during solidification from molten rock. As such, these units have Very Low (BLM PFYC Class 1) or No (SVP) potential to yield fossils of any kind.

Mesozoic to Precambrian Igneous and Metamorphic Rocks

Mesozoic to Precambrian igneous and metamorphic rocks are intermittently exposed at outcrops throughout the Proposed Project area. These rock units comprise fine- to coarse-grained granites, monzonites, schists, gneisses, and marbles. These units are part of the ancient basement rocks and have Very Low (BLM PFYC Class 1) or No (SVP) potential to yield fossils of any kind.

5.7.2 Regulatory Background

State and Local

California

California Building Code. The Proposed Project is subject to the applicable sections of Title 24, Part 2 of the CBC, which is administered by the California Building Standards Commission. Under State law, all building standards must be centralized in Title 24 to be enforceable. The CBC contains necessary California amendments, which are based on the American Society of Civil Engineers/Structural Engineering Institute (ASCE/SEI) Standard. The ASCE/SEI Standard provides requirements for general structural design and includes means for determining earthquake loads, as well as other loads for inclusion into building codes. The provisions of the CBC apply to the construction, alteration, movement, replacement, and demolition of every building or structure, or any appurtenances connected or attached to such buildings or structures, throughout California. Chapter 16 of the CBC contains specific requirements for seismic safety. Chapter 18 of the CBC regulates excavation, foundations, and retaining walls. Chapter 33 of the CBC contains specific requirements pertaining to site demolition, excavation, and construction to protect people and property from hazards associated with excavation cave-ins and falling debris or construction materials. Chapter 70 of the CBC regulates grading activities, including drainage and erosion. Construction activities are subject to occupational safety standards for excavation, shoring, and trenching, as specified in the State of California Division of Occupational Safety and Health (commonly called Cal/OSHA) regulations (Title 8 of the CCR) and in Section A33 of the CBC.

Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act. The Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act of 1972, Public Resources Code (PRC) Sections 2621–2630 (formerly the Special Studies Zoning Act) regulates development and construction of buildings intended for human occupancy to avoid the hazard of surface fault rupture. While this Act does not specifically regulate oil field components not intended for human occupancy; it does help define areas where fault rupture, and thus related damage, is most likely to occur. This Act groups faults into categories of active, potentially active, and inactive. Historic and Holocene age faults are considered active, Late Quaternary and Quaternary age faults are considered potentially active, and pre-Quaternary age faults are considered inactive. These classifications are qualified by the conditions that a fault must be shown to be “sufficiently active” and “well defined” by detailed site-specific geologic explorations in order to determine whether building setbacks should be established. Cities and counties affected by the zones must regulate certain development “projects” within the zones. They must withhold development permits for sites within the zones until geologic investigations demonstrate that the sites are not threatened by surface displacement from future faulting.

Seismic Hazards Mapping Act. The Seismic Hazards Mapping Act (the Act) of 1990 (PRC, Chapter 7.8, Division 2, Sections 2690–2699.) is to reduce the threat to public health and safety and to minimize the loss of life and property by identifying and mitigating seismic hazards. The Act directs the California Department of Conservation, Division of Mines and Geology [now called California Geological Survey (CGS)] to delineate Seismic Hazard Zones or Zones of Required Investigation. Zones of Required Investigation referred to as “Seismic Hazard Zones” in CCR Section 3722, are areas shown on Seismic Hazard Zone Maps where site investigations are required to determine the need for mitigation of potential liquefaction and/or earthquake-induced landslide ground displacements. A geotechnical investigation of the site must be conducted, and appropriate mitigation measures incorporated into the project design, before development permits may be granted. Cities, counties, and State agencies are directed to use seismic hazard zone maps developed by CGS in their land-use planning and permitting processes. The Act requires that site-specific geotechnical investigations be performed prior to permitting most urban development projects within seismic hazard zones. However, to date, seismic hazard mapping has not been completed by the State Geologist for the project area. Therefore, this act does not apply to the Proposed Project.

California Environmental Quality Act. CEQA requires that public agencies and private interests identify the potential environmental consequences of their proposed projects on any object or site of significance to the scientific annals of California (Division I, California Public Resources Code [PRC] Section 5020.1 [b]). Appendix G in Section 15023 provides an Environmental Checklist of questions (PRC 15023, Appendix G) that includes the following: Would the project directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?

CEQA does not define unique paleontological resources or sites. However, the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology (SVP) has provided guidance specifically designed to support state and federal environmental review. The SVP broadly defines significant paleontological resources (SVP, 2010) as fossils and fossiliferous deposits consisting of identifiable vertebrate fossils, large or small, uncommon invertebrate, plant, and trace fossils, and other data that provide taphonomic, taxonomic, phylogenetic, paleoecologic, stratigraphic, and/or biochronologic information. Paleontological resources are considered to be older than recorded human history and/or older than middle Holocene (i.e., older than about 5,000 radiocarbon years).

Significant paleontological resources are determined to be fossils or assemblages of fossils that are unique, unusual, rare, diagnostically important, or are common but have the potential to provide valuable scientific information for evaluating evolutionary patterns and processes, or which could improve our understanding of paleochronology, paleoecology, paleophylogeography, or depositional histories. New or unique specimens can provide new insights into evolutionary history; however, additional specimens of even well represented lineages can be equally important for studying evolutionary pattern and process, evolutionary rates, and paleophylogeography. Even unidentifiable material can provide useful data for dating geologic units if radiocarbon dating is possible. As such, common fossils (especially vertebrates) may be scientifically important, and therefore considered significant.

Public Resources Code Section 5097.5. Section 5097.5 of the California Public Code Section states that no person shall knowingly and willfully excavate upon, or remove, destroy, injure or deface any historic or prehistoric ruins, burial grounds, archaeological or vertebrate paleontological site, including fossilized footprints, inscriptions made by human agency, or any other archaeological, paleontological or historical feature, situated on public lands, except with the express permission of the public agency having jurisdiction over such lands. Violation of this section is a misdemeanor.

As used in this section, public lands are lands owned by, or under the jurisdiction of, the state, or any city, county, district, authority, or public corporation, or any agency thereof. Consequently, local project

proponents, are required to comply with PRC 5097.5 for their own activities, including construction and maintenance, as well as for permit actions (e.g., encroachment permits) undertaken by others.

Nevada

Nevada Building Code (NBC). The provisions of Nevada Building Code apply to the construction, alteration, relocation, enlargement, replacement, repair, equipment, use and occupancy, location, maintenance, removal and demolition of every building or structure or any appurtenances connected or attached to such buildings or structures. The Nevada Building Code is based on the IBC. Chapter 16 of the NBC contains requirements for structural design, including for wind and seismic loads. Chapter 18 of the NBC regulates excavation, foundations, and retaining walls. Chapter 33 of the NBC contains specific requirements pertaining to safety during site demolition, excavation, and construction to protect people and property from hazards associated with excavation cave-ins and falling debris or construction materials.

Nevada Revised Statutes. The Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) are the current codified laws of the State of Nevada. Nevada Revised Statutes Section 704.865 provides that “A person, other than a local government, shall not commence to construct a utility facility in the State without first having obtained a permit therefore from the Commission. The replacement of an existing facility with a like facility, as determined by the Commission, does not constitute construction of a utility facility.” The Public Utilities Commission of Nevada is the Lead Agency for compliance with the Nevada Utility Environmental Protection Act.

Nevada addresses paleontological resource protections under two chapters in Title 33 of their NRS; State Museums and Historic Preservation and Archeology:

(NRS, Title 33, Chapter 381): State Museums:

- **NRS 381.195:** Defines a prehistoric site as any archeological or paleontological site, ruin, deposit, fossilized footprints and other impressions, petroglyphs and pictographs, habitation caves, rock shelters, natural caves, burial ground or sites of religious or cultural importance to an Indian tribe.
- **NRS 381.197:** Permit required to investigate, explore or excavate historic or prehistoric site; applicability of penalties. Except for action taken under an agreement with the Office of Historic Preservation of the State Department of Conservation and Natural Resources pursuant to NRS 383.430, and except as otherwise provided in this section, a person shall not investigate, explore or excavate an historic or prehistoric site on federal or state lands or remove any object therefrom unless the person is the holder of a valid and current permit issued pursuant to the provisions of NRS 381.195 to 381.227, inclusive. Conduct that would otherwise constitute a violation of this section is not a violation of this section if it is also a violation of NRS 383.435. (Added to NRS by 1959, 290; A 2005, 569; 2011, 2981)

(NRS, Title 33, Chapter 383): Historic Preservation and Archeology

- **NRS 383.011:** Defines cultural resources as any objects, sites or information of historic, prehistoric, archeological, architectural, or paleontological significance. This was added to the Statutes of Nevada in 2015 under Senate Bill 20, Chapter 18 by the Committee on Natural Resources.

Local

The CPUC has sole and exclusive jurisdiction over the siting and design of the Proposed Project components located in the State of California. Pursuant to CPUC G.O. 131-D, Section XIV.B, “Local jurisdictions acting pursuant to local authority are preempted from regulating electric power line projects, distribution lines, substations, or electric facilities constructed by public utilities subject to the CPUC’s juris-

diction. However, in locating such projects, the public utilities shall consult with local agencies regarding land use matters.” Consequently, public utilities are directed to consider local regulations and consult with local agencies, but the county and cities’ regulations are not applicable as the county and cities do not have jurisdiction over the Proposed Project. For informational purposes, local regulations in California jurisdictions are provided in Appendix C. The Proposed Project is subject to local regulations in the State of Nevada.

Clark County Comprehensive Plan. The Safety Element of the Clark County Comprehensive Plan contains the following policies to address geologic and seismic hazards:

- **Natural and Man-made Hazards Policy 1:** *Minimize public exposure to natural and man-made hazards*
- **Natural and Man-made Hazards Policy 2:** *Ensure that land use plans and development regulations consider natural and man-made hazards and mitigation programs*
- **Natural and Man-made Hazards Policy 3:** *Provide public facilities and services to protect against natural and man-made hazards*
- **Natural and Man-made Hazards Policy 4:** *Support educational programs to inform the community about natural and man-made hazards*
- **Natural and Man-made Hazards Policy 5:** *Coordinate with local, regional, state and federal governments and the private sector to provide protection against natural and man-made hazards*

Clark County Building Code. The 2012 NBC which is based on the 2012 IBC has been adopted by Clark County.

South County Land Use Plan. The South County Land Use Plan does not contain any specific goals or policies that are relevant to the Proposed Project.

Laughlin Land Use Plan. The Laughlin Land Use Plan does not contain any specific goals or policies that are relevant to the Proposed Project.

Boulder City Master Plan. The Boulder City Master Plan does not contain any specific goals or policies that are relevant to the Proposed Project.

City of Boulder City Building Code. The 2012 IBC has been adopted by the City of Boulder City.

Federal

Bureau of Land Management

Federal Earthquake Hazards Reduction Act. In 1977, the U.S. Congress passed the Earthquake Hazards Reduction Act to reduce the risks to life and property from future earthquakes through the establishment and maintenance of an effective earthquake hazards and reduction program. To accomplish this, the act established the National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program (NEHRP). The agencies responsible for coordinating NEHRP are the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), the National Science Foundation (NSF); and the United States Geological Survey (USGS). In 1990, NEHRP was amended by the National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program Act (NEHRPA), which refined the description of the agency responsibilities, program goals, and objectives. The four goals of the NEHRP are: (1) develop effective practices and policies for earthquake loss-reduction and accelerate their implementation; (2) improve techniques to reduce seismic vulnerability of facilities and systems; (3) improve seismic hazards identification and risk-assessment methods and their use; and (4) improve the understanding of earthquakes and their effects.

International Building Code. Published by the International Code Council, the purpose of the IBC is to establish minimum structural requirements to provide a reasonable level of safety, public health and general welfare through structural strength, and safety to life and property from fire and other hazards attributed to the built environment. The provisions of the IBC apply to the construction, alteration, relocation, enlargement, replacement, repair, equipment, use and occupancy, location, maintenance, removal, and demolition of buildings or structures, as well as any appurtenances connected to applicable buildings or structures. The IBC also incorporates the requirements and regulations set forth in several other ICC codes including the International Energy Conservation Code, the International Existing Building Code, the International Fire Code, and the International Fuel Gas Code. The IBC is in use or adopted in all 50 states of the U.S. and is updated every three years to ensure that new construction methods and technologies are incorporated into existing codes. The IBC has replaced the Uniform Building Code (UBC) as the basis for the California Building Code (CBC).

Clean Water Act. The Clean Water Act (CWA) (33 U.S. Code §1251 et seq.), formerly the Federal Water Pollution Control Act of 1972, was enacted with the intent of restoring and maintaining the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of waters of the U.S. The CWA requires states to set standards to protect, maintain, and restore water quality through the regulation of point-source and certain non-point-source discharges to surface water. Section 402 of the CWA establishes the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit program to regulate point-source discharges of pollutants into waters of the U.S. Discharges or construction activities that disturb 1 or more acres — including the Proposed Project — are regulated under the NPDES stormwater program and are required to obtain coverage under a NPDES Construction General Permit. The Construction General Permit establishes limits and other requirements, such as the implementation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), which would further specify best management practices (BMPs) and other measures designed to avoid or eliminate pollution discharges in waters of the U.S.

Archaeological and Paleontological Salvage (23 USC 305). Statute 23 United States Code (USC) 305 amends the Antiquities Act of 1906. Specifically, it states that funds authorized to be appropriated to carry out this title to the extent approved as necessary, by the highway department of any State, may be used for archaeological and paleontological salvage in that state in compliance with the Act entitled *An Act for the preservation of American Antiquities*, approved June 8, 1906 (Public Law [PL] 59-209; 16 USC 431-433), and State laws where applicable.

This statute allows funding for mitigation of paleontological resources recovered pursuant to federal aid highway projects, provided that excavated objects and information are to be used for public purposes without private gain to any individual or organization (Federal Register [FR] 46(19): 9570).

National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA; 16 USC 470). The NHPA only applies to paleontological resources that are found in culturally related contexts and are then considered cultural resources.

Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976. The Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA, 43 USC 1701-1782) authorizes inventories of paleontological resources on federal land managed by the BLM, which issues a permit for collecting paleontological resources.

Paleontological Resources Preservation Act of 2009. The Paleontological Resources Preservation Act (PRPA) is part of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 (PL 111-011 Subtitle D). This act directs the Secretary of the Interior or the Secretary of Agriculture to manage and protect paleontological resources on federal land, and develop plans for inventorying, monitoring, and deriving the scientific and educational use of such resources. It prohibits the removal of paleontological resources from federal land without a permit issued under this Act, establishes penalties for violation of this act and estab-

lishes a program to increase public awareness about such resources. A paleontological resource use permit is required to collect paleontological resources of scientific interest. The act requires that paleontological resources collected under a permit remain United States property and must be preserved for the public in an approved repository, to be made available for scientific research and public education. The act also requires that the nature and location of paleontological resources on public lands be kept confidential as a means of protecting paleontological resources from theft and vandalism.

Section 6301 of the PRPA and Departmental Proposed Rule at 43 CFR Part 49 defines a paleontological resource as any fossilized remains, traces, or imprints of organisms, preserved in or on the earth's crust, that are of paleontological interest and that provide information about the history of life on earth, except that the term does not include: (A) any materials associated with an archaeological resource... (B) any cultural item... (3) Resources determined in writing by the authorized officer to lack paleontological interest or not provide information about the history of life on earth, based on scientific and other management considerations.

Consistent with the definition of a paleontological resource under the PRPA, paleontological resources that lack scientific interest (e.g., ubiquitous, or do not provide information about the history of life on earth, etc.) are considered scientifically non-significant fossils.

National Park Service

The regulatory requirements identified for the BLM also apply to the NPS.

5.7.3 Applicant Proposed Measures

No APMs have been proposed by SCE specifically for Geology and Soils. SCE identified one APM related to Paleontology, APM CUL-04. This APM would be superseded by Mitigation Measure PAL-3 (Prepare and implement a Paleontological Mitigation and Monitoring Plan).

APM CUL-04: Paleontological Resource Mitigation and Monitoring Plan. [Superseded by Mitigation Measure PAL-1] SCE would prepare and submit to the BLM for review and approval a Paleontological Resources Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (PRMMP) that is consistent with the following requirements:

- The PRMMP would be prepared by a qualified paleontologist, would be based on Society of Vertebrate Paleontology guidelines, and would meet all regulatory requirements. The qualified paleontologist would have a master's degree or a Doctor of Philosophy in paleontology, would have knowledge of the local paleontology, and would be familiar with paleontological procedures and techniques.
- The PRMMP would include a site-specific investigation to identify construction impact areas of moderate (Potential Fossil Yield Classification [PFYC] 3a) to very high (PFYC 5) sensitivity for encountering significant resources and the approximate depths where those resources are likely to be encountered for each Proposed Project component.
- The PRMMP would require the qualified paleontological monitor to monitor all construction-related ground disturbance in sediments determined to have a moderate (PFYC 3a) to very high (PFYC 5) sensitivity.
- The PRMMP would define monitoring procedures and methodology and would specify that sediments of undetermined sensitivity must be monitored on a part-time basis (as determined by the qualified paleontologist). Sediments with very low or low sensitivity would not require paleontological monitoring. The qualified paleontological monitor would have at least a Bachelor of Science degree in geology or paleontology, as well as demonstrated field experience in the collection and identification of fossil material.

- The PRMMP would state which resources would be avoided and which would be recovered for their data potential. Where possible, recovery is preferred over avoidance in order to mitigate the potential for looting of paleontological resources. The PRMMP would also detail methods of recovery, preparation and analysis of specimens, final curation of specimens at a federally accredited repository, data analysis, and reporting.
- The PRMMP would specify that all paleontological work undertaken by SCE on public lands managed by the BLM would be carried out by qualified, permitted paleontologists with the appropriate current paleontological resources use permit.

5.7.4 CEQA Significance Criteria

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR 15000 et seq.) provides guidance on assessing whether a project would have significant impacts on the environment. Consistent with Appendix G, the Proposed Project would have significant geology and soils impacts if it would:

- a. *Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving*
 - i) *Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault*
 - ii) *Strong seismic ground shaking*
 - iii) *Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction*
 - iv) *Landslides*
- b. *Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil*
- c. *Be located on geologic units or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse*
- d. *Be located on expansive soil, as defined as defined in the 2016 California Building Code (CBC),¹ creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property*
- e. *Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water*
- f. *Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature.*

5.7.5 Methodology

Geology and Soils

The methodology for assessing impacts is the same throughout the project, regardless of jurisdiction. Geologic, soil, and seismic conditions were evaluated with respect to adverse effects implementation of

¹ The CEQA Checklist refers to "Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994)," but this is now obsolete. The California Building Code is updated every three years and the current version of the CBC, which was effective January 1, 2017, is based on the International Building Code (2015).

the Proposed Project may have on local geology and soils, as well as the impact that specific geologic hazards may have upon the Proposed Project components. The methodology applied to assess probable impacts to and from geologic and soils conditions involves comparing actions included under the Proposed Project against the environmental setting presented in this section, with consideration to the significance criteria identified in Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines.

Paleontology

A paleontological locality search, paleontological literature review, geologic map review, and paleontological field survey were conducted in order to identify the existence of known fossils or areas with a high potential for the existence of fossils that could potentially be impacted by the Proposed Project.

Potential impacts identified for this analysis are based upon the “paleontological sensitivity” of geologic formations that would be encountered during construction. Paleontological sensitivity is an estimate of the likelihood that fossils will be discovered during excavations in a given area. However, this estimate does not measure the significance of individual fossils that may be present or discovered in an area. Individual fossils that may be discovered must be examined to determine the nature, age, and value of the fossil.

On private and California state land, the sensitivity standards of the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology (SVP, 2010) were used. These national standards provide 4 classification levels of sensitivity as follows:

- **High Sensitivity:** Rock units from which vertebrate or significant invertebrate fossils or significant suites of plant fossils have been recovered are considered to have a high potential for containing significant nonrenewable fossiliferous resources.
- **Low Sensitivity:** Reports in the paleontologic literature of field survey by a qualified vertebrate paleontologist may allow determination that some areas or units have low potentials for yielding significant nonrenewable fossiliferous resources.
- **Undetermined Sensitivity:** Specific areas underlain by sedimentary rock units for which little information is available are considered to have undetermined fossiliferous potential.
- **No Sensitivity:** Metamorphic and granitic rock units do not yield fossils and therefore have no potential to yield significant nonrenewable fossiliferous resources.

On federal land the BLM Potential Fossil Yield Classification (PFYC) system was used. The PFYC system was developed to provide baseline guidance for assessing paleontological resources and allow BLM employees to make initial assessments of paleontological resources. The presence of paleontological resources is known to be correlated with mapped geologic units, and the PFYC was created based on available geologic maps. The system assigns a class value to each geological unit, representing the potential abundance and significance of paleontological resources that occur in that geological unit.

- **Very Low Potential (1)** – Geologic units are not likely to contain recognizable paleontological resources. Impact mitigation is unnecessary except in rare or isolated circumstances.
- **Low (2)** – Geologic units are not likely to contain paleontological resources. Impact mitigation is usually unnecessary except in occasional or isolated circumstances.
- **Moderate Potential (3)** – Sedimentary geologic units where fossil content varies in significance, abundance, and predictable occurrence. Management options could include record searches, pre-disturbance surveys, monitoring, mitigation, or avoidance.
- **High Potential (4)** – Geologic units that are known to contain a high occurrence of paleontological resources. A field survey by a qualified paleontologist is often needed to assess local conditions. On-

site monitoring or spot-checking may be necessary during land disturbing activities. Avoidance of known paleontological resources may be necessary.

- **Very High Potential (5)** – Highly fossiliferous geologic units that consistently and predictably produce significant paleontological resources. A field survey by a qualified paleontologist is almost always needed and on-site monitoring may be necessary during land use activities. Avoidance or resource preservation through controlled access, designation of areas of avoidance, or special management designations should be considered.
- **Unknown (U)** – Geologic units that cannot receive an informed PFYC assignment. Until a provisional assignment is made, geologic units with unknown potential have medium to high management concerns. Field surveys are normally necessary, especially prior to authorizing a ground-disturbing activity.

5.7.6 Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

- a. *Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:*
 - i) *Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.*

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. Although many active and potentially active faults cross the project alignment, including several Alquist-Priolo zoned faults, no faults cross or are located in close proximity to new or modified Proposed Project components. The Alquist-Priolo zoned Hector Mine (Lavik Lake) fault zone is the closest fault to new/modified Proposed Project components, being located 1.7 miles west of the Newberry Springs Capacitor. Although portions of the Proposed Project are located in an area that may experience moderate to strong ground shaking due to large local or regional earthquakes, the series capacitors and fiber optic repeater sites would be designed based on geotechnical study recommendations, standard engineering practices, and relevant regulations. Therefore, the impact related to rupture of a known fault is less than significant.

Operation and Maintenance

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. Operation and maintenance activities would be incorporated into the existing O&M schedule for the existing transmission lines, substations, and associated facilities. O&M practices would also include routine inspections and emergency repair within substations and rights-of-way (ROWS) (SCE, 2018). As noted above, no active faults cross Proposed Project components, therefore there would be no change in the impacts due to fault rupture along the project routes due to operation and maintenance of the Proposed Project. The risk of loss, injury, or death during O&M activities would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. The Proposed Project site is located in a seismically active area and is likely to experience one or more earthquakes within the project's lifetime. Such an event could occur during construction; however, standard work site safety practices (e.g., clipping on to structures when working off the ground) would serve to reduce risk during ground shaking. Estimated PGA along the Proposed Project range from 0.113g to 0.784g across the Proposed Project (SCE, 2018) with the higher values located in the western portion of the project, where most of the active and potentially active faults are located. Proposed Project components near to and west of the Kelbaker Fiber Optic Repeater site can expect to experience moderate to severe ground shaking in the event of a large local or regional earthquake. Project construction itself would not trigger strong seismic ground shaking.

Operation and Maintenance

Although portions of the Proposed Project are located in an area that may experience moderate to strong ground shaking due to large local or regional earthquakes, the series capacitors and fiber optic repeater sites would be designed per geotechnical recommendations, standard engineering practices, and relevant regulations. As part of the facility design process, SCE would conduct geotechnical investigations at the fiber optic repeater sites to ensure that new structures would be designed and constructed to withstand seismic-induced hazards and potential geologic instability and that the new access roads for the new series capacitors would also be assessed in the geotechnical studies. (SCE, 2018). The modified tower structures on the transmission lines, new sub transmission and distribution poles, and new underground conduit and vaults for distribution and fiber optic lines would be designed as required by California Public Utilities Commission General Orders 95 and 128 (overhead electrical line construction requirements and underground electrical supply and communication systems requirements, respectively). Implementation and compliance with standard design guidelines, and relevant State and federal regulations reduces potential impacts related to damage from seismically induced ground shaking to less than significant.

Operation and maintenance activities would be incorporated into the existing O&M schedule for the existing transmission lines, substations, and associated facilities. O&M practices would also include routine inspections and emergency repair within substations and ROWs (SCE, 2018). There would be no change in the impacts due to damage from seismically induced ground shaking along the project routes due to operation and maintenance of the Proposed Project. The risk of loss, injury, or death during O&M activities would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. Activities during construction would not induce seismic-related ground failure or liquefaction. The Proposed Project components are primarily underlain by relatively flat to gently sloping terrain and no landslides are mapped near the Proposed Project's new and modified components. Although portions of the Proposed Project may experience moderate to strong seismically induced

ground shaking, it is unlikely that slope failures would occur at or near the Proposed Project components during construction, resulting in a less than significant impact due to seismically induced slope failure.

Operation and Maintenance

Most of the Proposed Project components are located in areas with groundwater levels greater than 100 feet bgs; however, the Barstow Fiber Optic Repeater site is located in an area with groundwater levels of less than 50 feet bgs (42-57 feet bgs) where liquefiable sediments may be present. As part of project design, geotechnical investigations conducted for the fiber optic repeater sites would ensure that structures installed under the Proposed Project would be able to withstand seismic-induced hazards and potential geologic instability and that the new access roads for the new series capacitors would also be assessed in the geotechnical studies (SCE, 2018). The modified tower structures for the transmission lines, new sub transmission and distribution poles, and new underground conduit and vaults for distribution and fiber optic lines would be designed as required by CPUC General Orders 95 and 128 (overhead electrical line construction requirements and underground electrical supply and communication systems requirements, respectively). Implementation and compliance with standard design guidelines, and relevant State and federal regulations reduces potential impacts related to damage from seismically induced liquefaction ensure that during O&M activities the possibility of seismic-related ground failure and liquefaction that could result in loss, injury, or death are less than significant.

Operation and maintenance activities would be incorporated into the existing operation and maintenance schedule for the existing transmission lines, substations, and associated facilities. Operation and maintenance practices would also include routine inspections and emergency repair within substations and ROWs (SCE, 2018). There would be no change in the impacts due to damage from seismically induced ground failure, including landslides and liquefaction, along the project routes due to operation and maintenance of the Proposed Project.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

iv) Landslides?

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. As discussed above, the Proposed Project components are primarily underlain by relatively flat to gently sloping terrain and no landslides are mapped near the Proposed Project components. No construction work is planned that would destabilize slopes. It is unlikely that project construction activity could result in landslides.

Operation and Maintenance

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. Although portions of the Proposed Project may experience moderate to strong seismically induced ground shaking, it is unlikely that slope failures would occur at or near the Proposed Project components, resulting in a less than significant impact due to seismically induced slope failure.

Operation and maintenance activities would be incorporated into the existing Operation and maintenance schedule for the existing transmission lines, substations, and associated facilities. Operation and maintenance practices would also include routine inspections and emergency repair within substations and ROWs (SCE, 2018). Existing access roads would be used. These are already subject to the seismic activity that occurs in the region. There would be no change in the impacts due to damage from

seismically induced landslides along the project routes due to operation and maintenance of the Proposed Project.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

b. Would the project result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION. Construction-related ground disturbance consisting of clearing and grading, trenching for underground telecommunication and distribution lines, construction of temporary access roads, and improvements to existing access and spurs could increase the potential for erosion. Grading is proposed at eight locations; two of these locations would be graded to reduce the clearance discrepancies between overhead conductors and the ground surface, the remaining six locations would be graded as part of site preparation for the installation of the new mid-line series capacitor facilities, replacement series capacitors within Mohave Substation, and the three fiber optic repeaters. The movement of equipment and materials during construction could destabilize the soil surface and increase erosion potential from water and wind. The most likely time for erosion to occur is after initial disturbance and before reestablishment of vegetative cover or placement of structures. Some of the soils underlying the Proposed Project have moderate to high susceptibility to wind erosion and moderate susceptibility to sheet and rill erosion by water (Table 5.7-2). However, as the Proposed Project would disturb a surface area greater than one acre, it would be required to obtain, under Clean Water Act regulations, a National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction Activity. Compliance with the NPDES would require that the SCE submit a project specific Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). The SWPPP would require development and implementation of BMPs to identify and control erosion, which would reduce the potential for construction to trigger erosion. To ensure no violation occurs of water quality standards or waste discharge requirements, the following mitigation measure would be required: HWQ-1: Implement an Erosion Control Plan and demonstrate compliance with water quality permits. Additionally, Mitigation Measure BR-2. Prepare and implement a Worker Environmental Awareness Program (WEAP), provides for all on-site personnel to be made aware of environmental issues and required protocols. This would ensure that proper procedures are taken to implement BMPs during construction to address erosion risks. With implementation of the SWPPP, which would include BMPs to control erosion and prevent off-site sedimentation, substantial soil erosion is not anticipated to occur, and impacts would be less than significant. Therefore, potential impacts related to erosion caused by construction would be less than significant with mitigation.

Operation and Maintenance

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. Operation and maintenance activities would be incorporated into the existing operation and maintenance schedule for the existing transmission lines, substations, and associated facilities. Operation and maintenance practices would also include routine inspections and emergency repair within substations and ROWs (SCE, 2018). There would be no change in the impacts due to soil erosion along the project routes due to operation and maintenance of the Proposed Project.

Mitigation Measures

HWQ-1 Implement an Erosion Control Plan and demonstrate compliance with water quality permits. (The full text of this mitigation measure is provided in Section, 5.10 Hydrology and

Water Quality. The Plan may be part of the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and would describe erosion controls and their location and maintenance.)

BR-2 Prepare and implement a Worker Environmental Awareness Program (WEAP). (The full text of this mitigation measure is provided in Section 5.4, Biological Resources. The WEAP training would be provided to all personnel and would be conducted by a qualified biologist.)

c. *Would the project be located on geologic units or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?*

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. Impacts related to landslides and liquefaction are discussed above in question (a), subsections iii and iv.

Subsidence within the Proposed Project area is found in the vicinity of Lucerne and Troy dry lakebeds. Significant subsidence underlying a portion of a structure or transmission line could potentially cause damage due to ground fissures, ground tilt from differential subsidence, loss of clearance height, or increased tension of the line due to relative elevation changes. However, no Proposed Project components are within these subsidence areas. Additionally, all project components would be designed to conform with standard design practices and all appropriate State and federal regulations. Therefore, there is a less than significant impact related to project damage from subsidence.

Conditions in the arid and semi-arid climate of the Proposed Project favor the formation of collapsible soils. Based on the laboratory test results from the site-specific geotechnical studies, the soils at the Mohave Substation possess slight collapse potential, and the soils at the Newberry Springs and Ludlow Series Capacitor sites have moderate to high collapse potential (Wood, 2018a, 2018b, and 2018c). However, the sites would be designed based on geotechnical study recommendations, standard engineering practices, and relevant State and federal regulations would reduce the impact related to collapsible soils to less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

d. *Would the project be located on expansive soil, as defined in the 2016 California Building Code (2017), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?*

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. Soils underlying the Proposed Project are generally granular (sandy) and non-expansive (SCE, 2018). Additionally, site specific geotechnical studies for the Newberry Spring and Ludlow Series Capacitors and Mohave Substation confirm the presence of non-expansive granular soil material at these sites. Additionally, in the unlikely event that expansive soils are present, implementation and compliance with recognized standard engineering practices and compliance with relevant State and federal regulations would reduce any potential impacts from expansive soil to less than significant.

Operation and Maintenance

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. Operation and maintenance activities would be incorporated into the existing O&M schedule for the existing transmission lines, substations, and associated facilities. O&M practices would also include routine inspections and emergency repair within substations and ROWs (SCE, 2018). There would be no change in the impacts due to operation and maintenance of the Proposed Project.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

- e. *Would the project have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?***

Construction

NO IMPACT. The Proposed Project would not involve the installation of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems. Therefore, no impact would occur.

Operation and Maintenance

~~LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT~~*NO IMPACT.* Proposed Project operation and maintenance activities would be incorporated into the existing Operation and Maintenance schedule for the existing transmission lines, substations, and associated facilities. Operation and Maintenance of the Proposed Project would not involve the use of a septic tank or alternative wastewater disposal system, as Operation and Maintenance of the Proposed Project is not anticipated to generate wastewater (SCE, 2018). As a result, no impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

- f. *Would the project directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?***

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION. No paleontological resources have been identified in the project area to date. However, there is the potential for adverse impacts to scientifically significant paleontological resources during ground disturbance within sediments with unknown, high, or very high paleontological sensitivity (PFYC U, PFYC 4, or PFYC 5). Ground disturbing activity that exceeds 5 feet in depth in work areas underlain by Holocene units may also result in impacts to paleontological resources because older sensitive Pleistocene units may occur at depth. Impacts would be the same regardless of land category.

The Proposed Project includes one APM related to Paleontology, APM CUL-04, but this analysis recommends mitigation to supersede this APM. While APM CUL-04 identifies basic content of the PRMMP, additional detail and direction is required to ensure that qualified personnel are engaged, workers are adequately trained, the PRMMP is provided to the CPUC for review and that it adequately addresses procedures for monitoring project activities and for protecting, recovering, and curating any discoveries, and monitoring is conducted as appropriate. For these reasons, APM CUL-04 would be superseded by Mitigation Measures PAL-1, PAL-2, PAL-3, and PAL-4, as follows: MM PAL-1 (Retain qualified paleontological staff) specifies the qualifications of paleontological resources staff; MM PAL-2 (Provide paleontological environmental awareness training) establishes training for all project staff; MM PAL-3 (Prepare and implement a Paleontological Resources Monitoring and Treatment Plan) requires the development of a monitoring and treatment plan; and MM PAL-4 (Conduct monitoring for paleontological resources) addresses inadvertent discoveries.

The construction, operation and maintenance of the Proposed Project could have an indirect impact on paleontological resources. The primary indirect impact would be associated with increased access to sensitive sediments potentially resulting in increased erosion and unauthorized fossil collection. Indirect effects would be addressed by Mitigation Measures PAL-2, PAL-3, and PAL-4 which would educate project staff members and establish a treatment protocol in the event fossils were encountered.

Implementation of MM PAL-1 through PAL-4 would evaluate and protect unanticipated discoveries of unique paleontological resources or unique geologic features, thereby reducing this impact to less than significant.

Operation and Maintenance

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. Activities associated with O&M for the Proposed Project would occur at previously disturbed sites and would not disturb any previously unidentified paleontological resources. The impact of O&M on paleontological resources would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

PAL-1 Retain qualified paleontological staff. Project Paleontologist – Prior to the start of ground disturbance, a qualified paleontologist to serve as Project Paleontologist shall be retained by SCE. The qualifications of the Project Paleontologist shall be submitted to CPUC and BLM for approval. This individual shall retain a BLM paleontological resource use permit for the project and other appropriate permits. To do so this individual shall have the following qualifications as stipulated in BLM Manual 8270-1:

- Professional instruction in a field of paleontology relevant to the work proposed (vertebrate, invertebrate, trace, paleobotany, etc.), obtained through:
 - Formal education resulting in a graduate degree from an accredited institution in paleontology, or in geology, biology, botany, zoology or anthropology if the major emphasis is in paleontology; or
 - Equivalent paleontological training and experience including at least 24 months under the guidance of a professional paleontologist who meets qualification above that provided increased responsibility leading to professional duties similar to those in qualification above; and
- Demonstrated experience in collecting, analyzing, and reporting paleontological data, similar to the type and scope of work proposed in the application;
- Demonstrated experience in planning, equipping, staffing, organizing, and supervising crews performing the work proposed in the application;
- Demonstrated experience in carrying paleontological projects to completion as evidenced by timely completion and/or publication of theses, research reports, scientific papers and similar documents.

As described in BLM Instruction Manual (IM) 2009-011, the Project Paleontologist will serve as the Principal Investigator (PI) under the BLM permit and is responsible for all actions under the permit, for meeting all permit terms and conditions, and for the performance of all other personnel. This person is also the contact person for the project proponent, CPUC, and the BLM.

Additional Paleontological Staff – The Project Paleontologist may obtain the services of Paleontological Field Agents, Field Monitors, and Field Assistants, if needed, to assist in mitigation, monitoring, and curation activities. These individuals must meet the qualifications described in BLM IM 2009-011.

PAL-2 Provide paleontological environmental awareness training. SCE will provide worker’s environmental awareness training on paleontological resources protection as part of its WEAP required under Mitigation Measure BR-2, Prepare and implement a Worker Environmental Awareness Program. This training may be administered by the project paleontologist as a stand-alone training or included as part of the overall worker’s environmental awareness training. At a minimum, the training would include the following:

- the types of fossils that could occur at the project site;
- the types of lithologies in which the fossils could be preserved;
- the procedures that should be followed in the event of a fossil discovery; and
- penalties for disturbing paleontological resources.

PAL-3 Prepare and implement a Paleontological Resource Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (PRMMP). (Supersedes APM CUL-04) Prior to the start of the project, SCE shall submit a Paleontological Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (PRMMP) for the project to the CPUC and BLM for review and approval. The PRMMP shall be prepared and implemented under the direction of the Project Paleontologist and shall address and incorporate Mitigation Measures PAL-1, PAL-3, and PAL-4. The PRMMP shall be based on Society of Vertebrate Paleontology (SVP) assessment and mitigation guidelines and meet all regulatory requirements. A monitoring plan indicates the avoidance or treatments recommended for the area of the proposed disturbance and must at a minimum address the following:

- Identification and mapping of impact areas of high sensitivity that will be monitored during construction;
- A coordination strategy to ensure that a qualified paleontologist will conduct monitoring at the appropriate locations at the appropriate intensity;
- The significance criteria to be used to determine which resources will be avoided or recovered for their data potential;
- Procedures for the discovery, recovery, preparation, and analysis of paleontological resources encountered during construction, in accordance with standards for recovery established by the SVP;
- Provisions for verification that the project proponent has an agreement with a recognized museum repository, for the disposition of recovered fossils and that the fossils shall be prepared prior to submittal to the repository as required by the repository (e.g., prepared, analyzed at a laboratory, curated, or cataloged);
- Specifications that all paleontological work undertaken by the project proponent shall be carried out by qualified paleontologists with appropriate current permits, including but not limited to a Paleontological Resources Use Permit (for work on public lands administered by BLM) and any other permits required by other jurisdictions;
- Description of monitoring reports that will be prepared which shall include daily logs, monthly reports, and a final monitoring report with an itemized list of specimens found to be submitted to the BLM, the CPUC, the project proponent and the designated repository within 90 days of the completion of monitoring;

- The implementation sequence and the estimated time frames needed to accomplish all project-related tasks during the ground-disturbance and post-ground-disturbance analysis phases of the project shall be specified; and
- Person(s) expected to perform each of the tasks, their responsibilities, and the reporting relationships between project construction management and the mitigation and monitoring team shall be identified.
- All impact-avoidance measures (such as flagging or fencing) to prohibit or otherwise restrict access to sensitive resource areas that are to be avoided during ground disturbance, construction, and/or operation shall be described. Any areas where these measures are to be implemented shall be identified. The description shall address how these measures would be implemented prior to the start of ground disturbance and how long they would be needed to protect the resources from project-related impacts.

PAL-4 Conduct monitoring for paleontological resources. The applicant shall continuously comply with the following during all ground disturbing activities during the project:

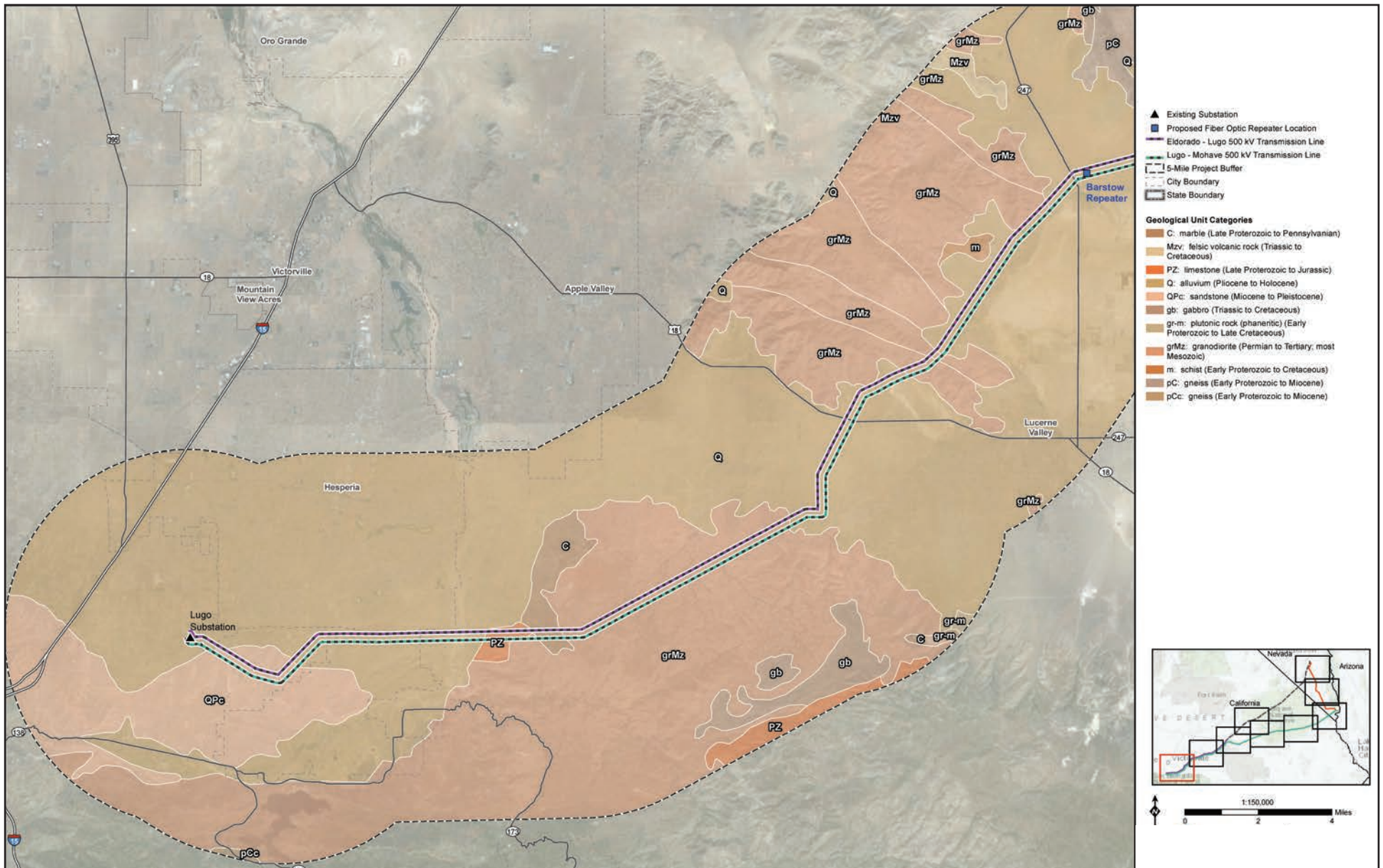
- All ground disturbing activity in Proposed Project work areas identified with unknown, high, or very high paleontological sensitivity (PFYC U, PFYC 4, or PFYC 5) should be monitored on a full-time basis by a BLM-approved Paleontological Field Agent who will work under the supervision of the BLM-permitted paleontologist and principal investigator.
- Ground disturbing activity that exceeds 5 feet in depth in work areas underlain by Holocene units shall be monitored part time. Spot-checking shall take place at least once a day and be conducted by a Qualified Paleontologist.
- The level of effort and intensity for monitoring shall be modified as needed by a Qualified Paleontologist, in consultation with the appropriate agency personnel, based on the sediment types, depths, and distributions observed during monitoring throughout the life of the project.
- Project activities shall be diverted when data recovery of significant fossils is warranted, as determined by the Project Paleontologist. Monitoring shall be conducted as follows:
 - Monitoring of ground disturbance shall consist of the surface collection of visible vertebrate and significant invertebrate fossils within the project site. Upon discovery of paleontological resources by paleontologists or construction personnel, work in the immediate area of the find shall be halted and diverted and the Project Paleontologist shall be notified. Once the find has been inspected and a preliminary assessment has been made, the Project Paleontologist will notify the CPUC and other appropriate agencies of the discovery within 24 hours. If recovery of a large or unusually productive fossil occurrence is warranted, earth-moving activities shall be diverted temporarily around the fossil locality, and a recovery crew shall be mobilized to remove the material as quickly as possible. The monitor shall be permitted to photograph and/or draw stratigraphic profiles of cut surfaces and take samples for analysis of microfossils, dating, or other specified purposes in accordance with the PRMMP.
 - Recovered specimens shall be prepared to a point of identification, including washing of sediments to recover smaller fossil remains. Once excavation has reached specified depths, salvage of fossil material from the sidewalls of the cut shall resume. Specimens shall be identified and curated into a repository with retrievable storage.

- All significant fossil specimens recovered from the project site as a result of the paleontological monitoring and mitigation program shall be treated (prepared, identified, curated, and catalogued) in accordance with the designated repository requirements. Samples shall be submitted to a laboratory, acceptable to the designated repository, for identification, dating, and microfossil and pollen analysis.

5.7.7 References

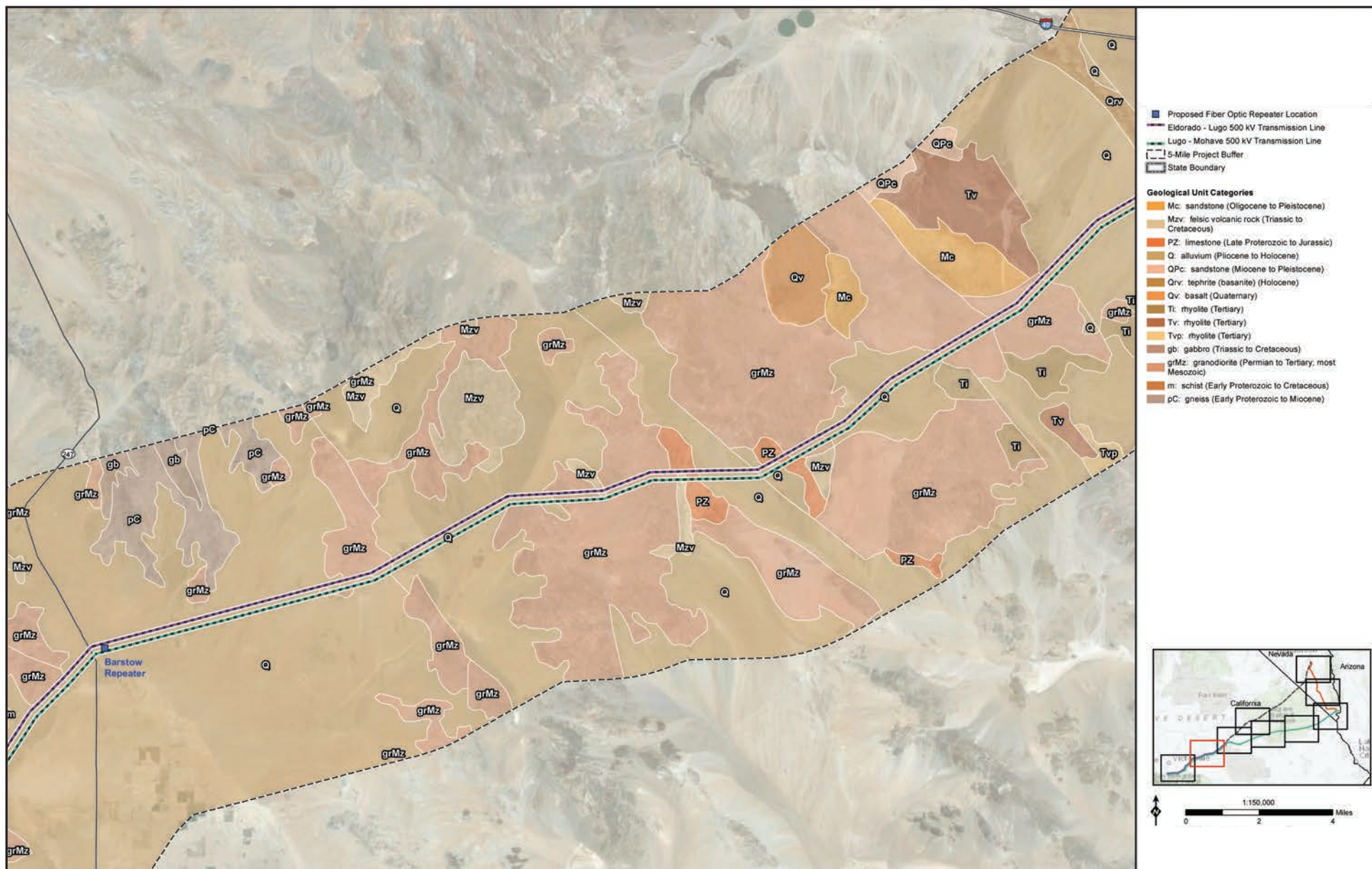
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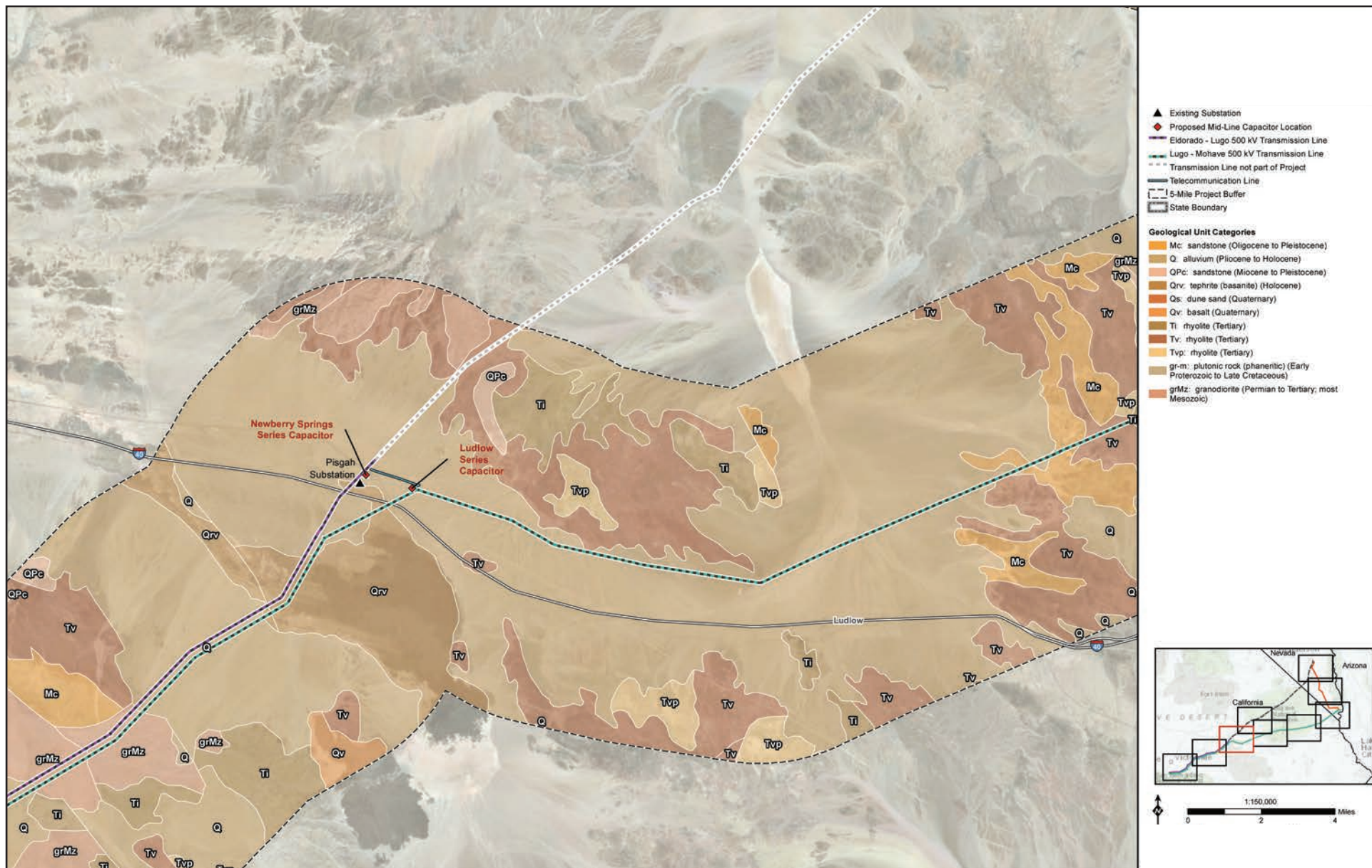
Source: SCE, 2018.

Figure 5.7-1
Geologic Formations in the Proposed Project Area
Map 1 of 9



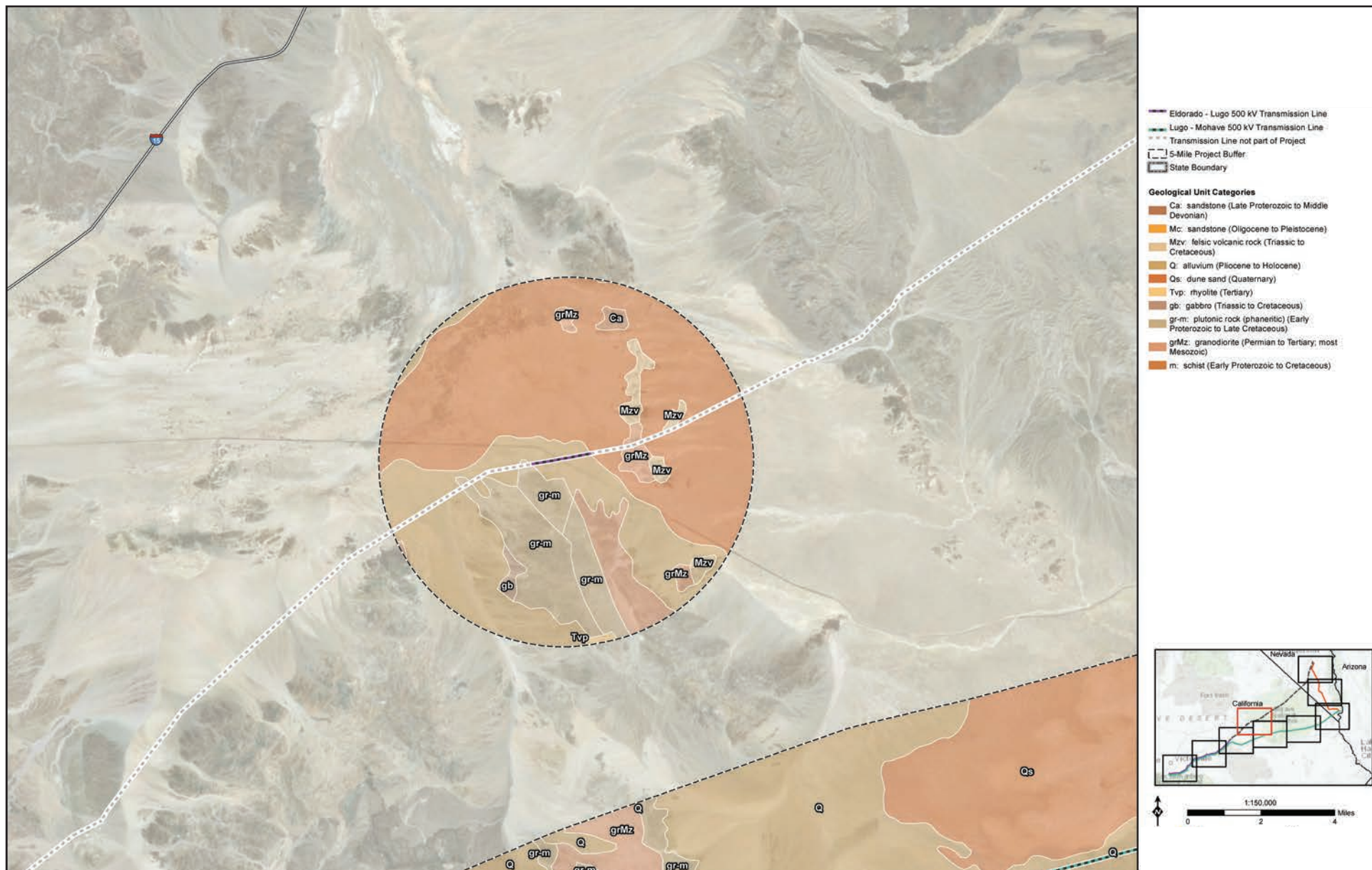
Source: SCE, 2018.

Figure 5.7-1
Geologic Formations in the Proposed Project Area
Map 2 of 9



Source: SCE, 2018.

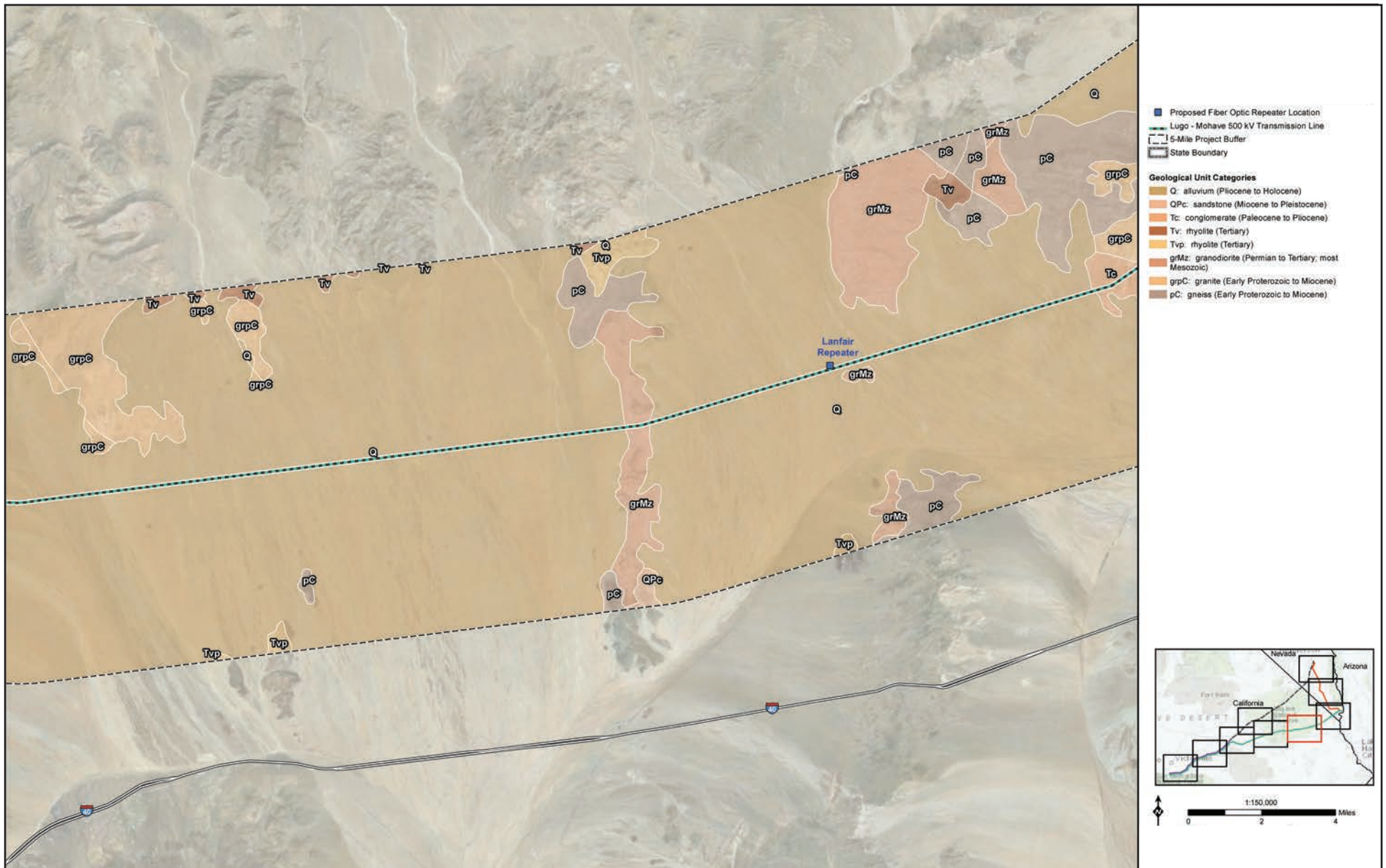
Figure 5.7-1
Geologic Formations in the Proposed Project Area
Map 3 of 9



Source: SCE, 2018.

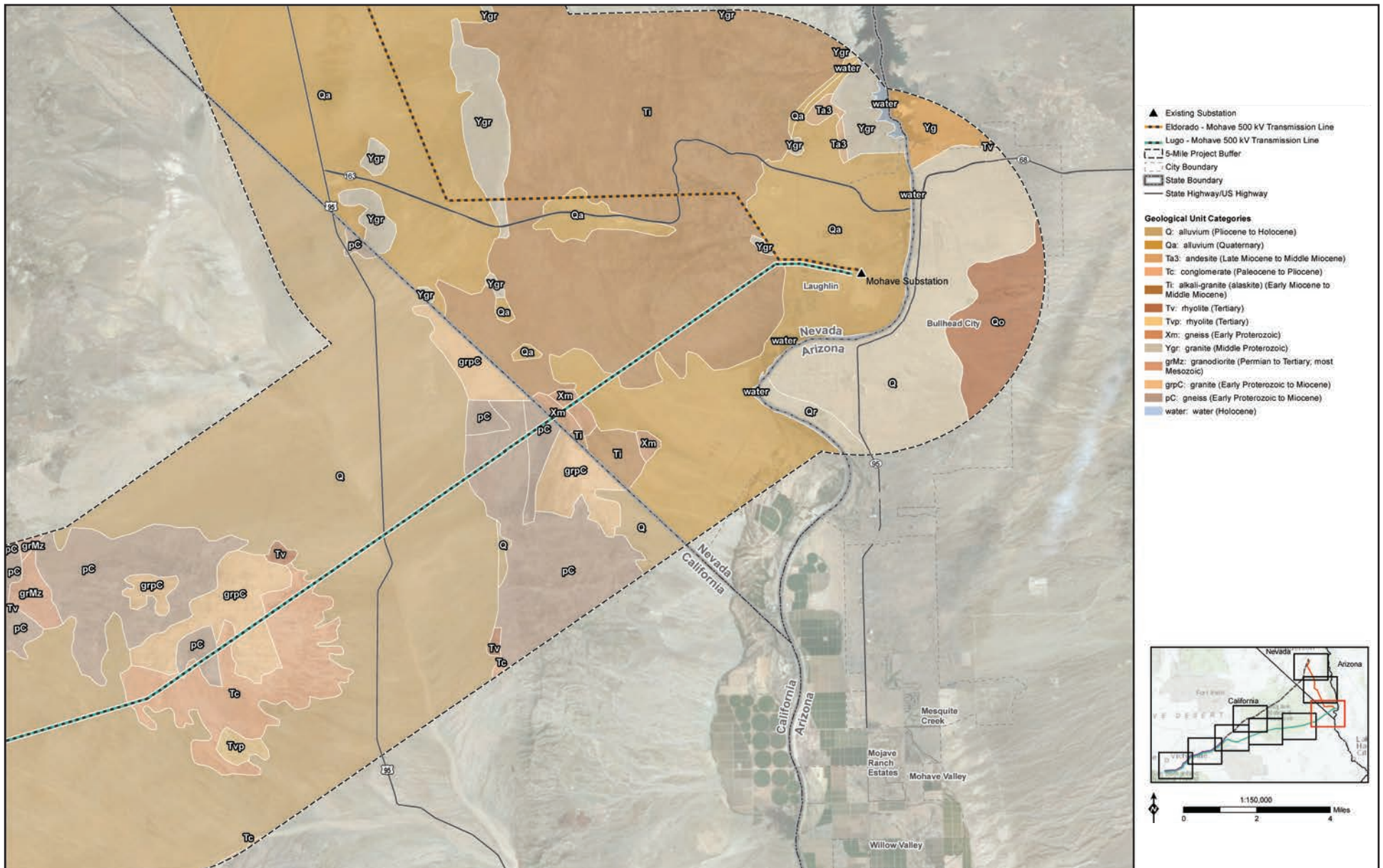
Figure 5.7-1
Geologic Formations in the Proposed Project Area
Map 4 of 9





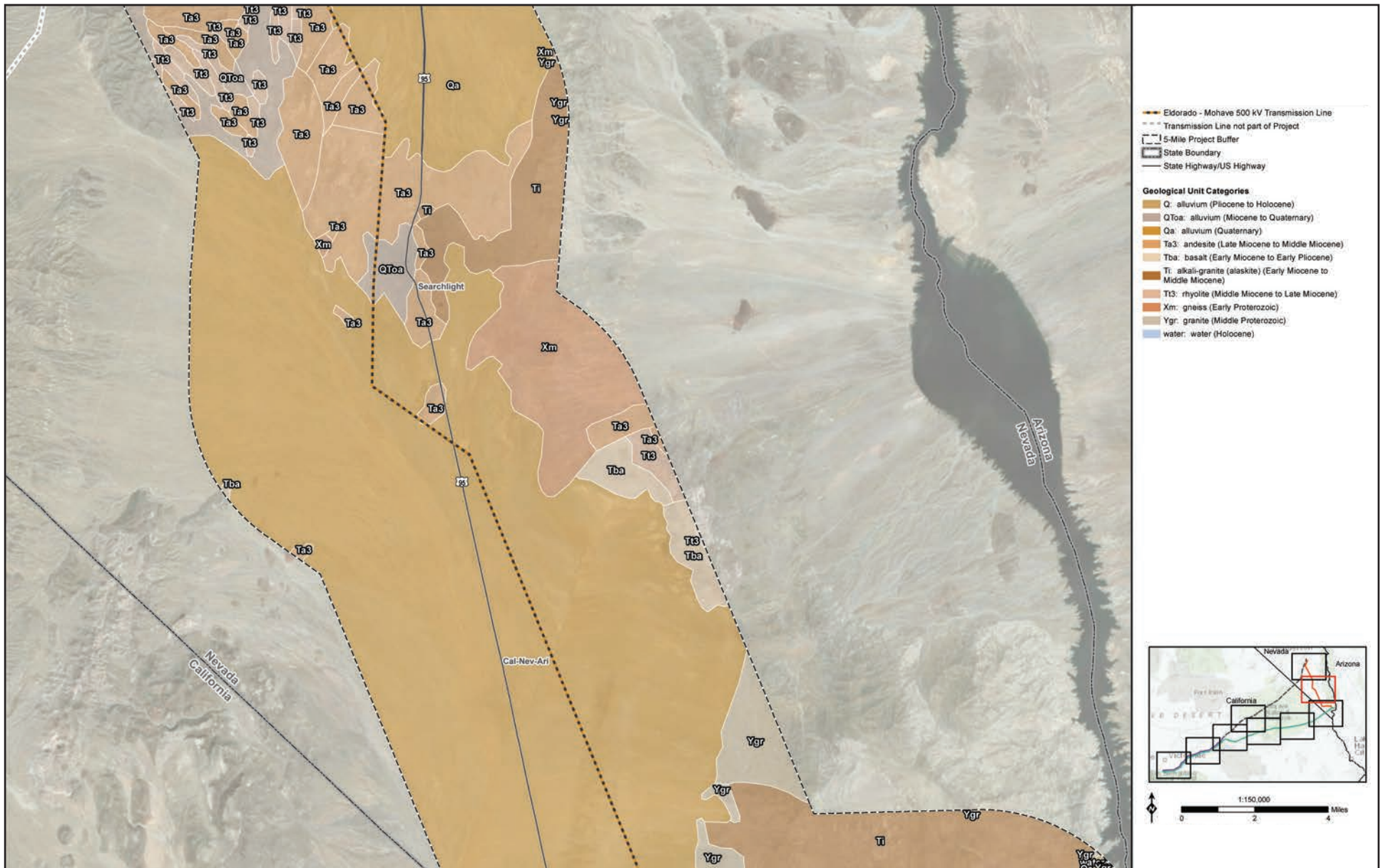
Source: SCE, 2018.

Figure 5.7-1
Geologic Formations in the Proposed Project Area
Map 6 of 9



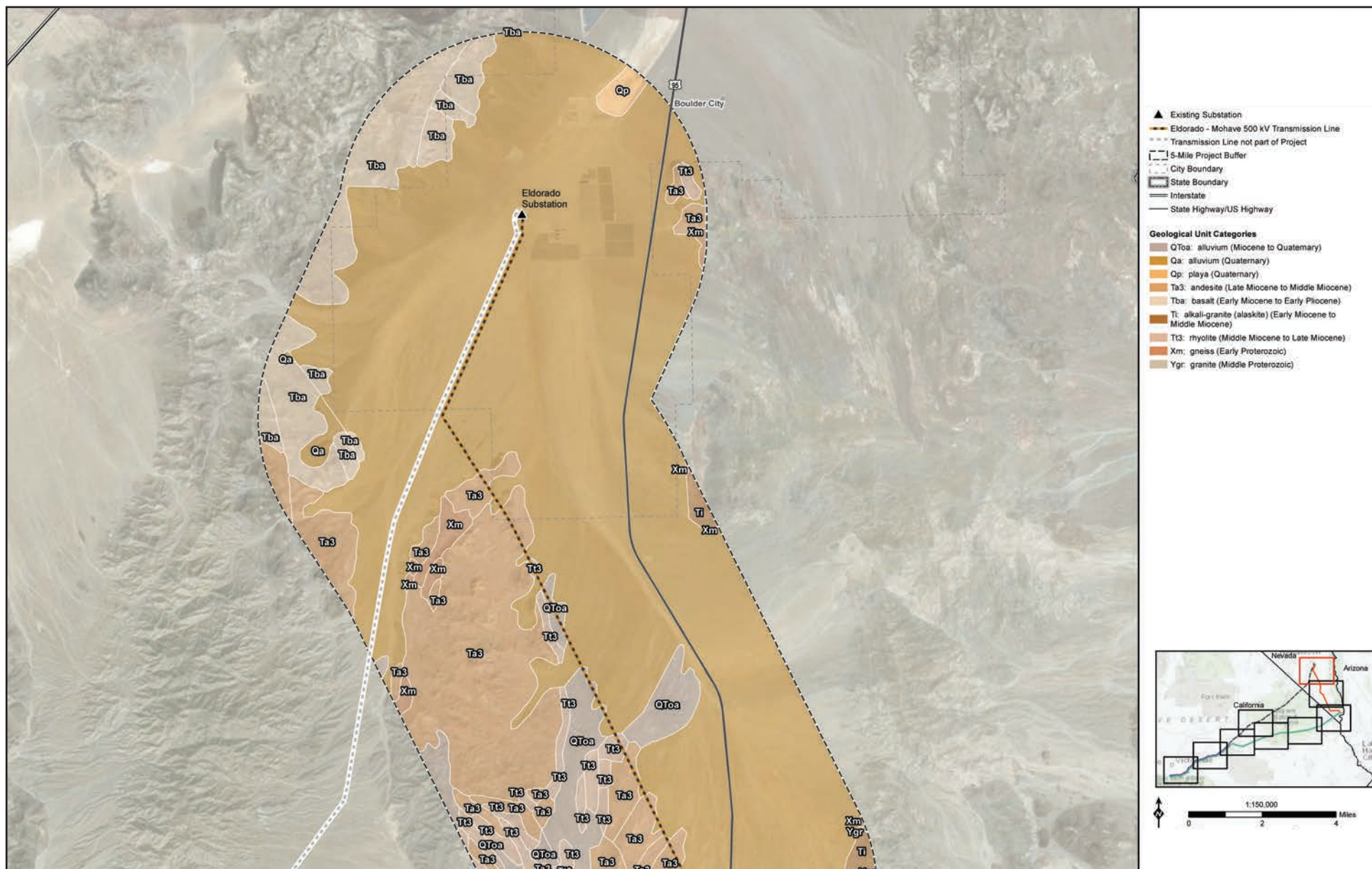
Source: SCE, 2018.

Figure 5.7-1
Geologic Formations in the Proposed Project Area
Map 7 of 9



Source: SCE, 2018.

Figure 5.7-1
Geologic Formations in the Proposed Project Area
Map 8 of 9



Source: SCE, 2018.

Figure 5.7-1
Geologic Formations in the Proposed Project Area
Map 9 of 9



Source: SCE, 2018.

Figure 5.7-2
Active and Potentially Active Faults
in the Proposed Project Area

5.8 Greenhouse Gas Emissions

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Conflict with any applicable plan, policy or regulation of an agency adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Significance criteria established by CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G.

5.8.1 Environmental Setting

Physical Setting. The global climate depends on the presence of naturally occurring greenhouse gases (GHG) to provide what is commonly known as the “greenhouse effect” that allows heat radiated from the Earth’s surface to warm the atmosphere. The greenhouse effect is driven mainly by water vapor, aerosols, carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), and other constituents. Globally, the presence of GHG affects temperatures, precipitation, sea levels, ocean currents, wind patterns, and storm activity.

Human activity directly contributes to emissions of six primary anthropogenic GHGs: CO₂, CH₄, N₂O, hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs), and sulfur hexafluoride (SF₆). The standard definition of anthropogenic GHG includes these six substances under the 1997 Kyoto Protocol (UNFCCC, 1998). The most important and widely occurring anthropogenic GHG is CO₂, primarily from the use of fossil fuels as a source of energy.

Effects of GHG Emissions. Changing temperatures, precipitation, sea levels, ocean currents, wind patterns and storm activity provide indicators and evidence of the effects of climate change. From 1950 onward, relatively comprehensive data sets of observations are available. Research by California’s Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) documents climate change indicators by categorizing the effects as: changes in California’s climate; impacts to physical systems including oceans, lakes, rivers, and snowpack; and impacts to biological systems including humans, vegetation and wildlife. The primary observed changes in California’s climate include increased annual average air temperatures, more-frequent extremely hot days and nights, and increasingly severity of drought. Impacts to physical systems affected by warming temperatures and changing precipitation patterns show decreasing snowmelt runoff, shrinking glaciers, and rising sea levels. Impacts to terrestrial, marine, and freshwater biological systems, with resulting changes in habitat, agriculture, and food supply are occurring in conjunction with the potential to impact human well-being (OEHHA, 2018).

California GHG Emissions Trends. California first formalized a strategy to achieve GHG reductions in 2008, when California produced approximately 483 million metric tons of CO₂ equivalent (MMTCO₂e) according to the official Air Resources Board inventory (ARB, 2018). The State’s economy-wide emissions have been declining in recent years, and California emitted approximately 429 MMTCO₂e in 2016 (ARB, 2018). Globally, anthropogenic GHG emissions have increased by roughly 80 percent, from around 27,000 to 49,000 MMTCO₂e per year between 1970 and 2010 (IPCC, 2014). However, in this global context, California emits less than 1 percent of the global anthropogenic GHG.

5.8.2 Regulatory Background

State and Local

California

California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 [Assembly Bill 32 (AB 32)]. The California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (AB 32) required that California's GHG emissions be reduced to 1990 levels by 2020. The reduction is being accomplished through an enforceable statewide cap on global warming emissions beginning in 2012. AB 32 directs the ARB to develop regulations and a mandatory reporting system to track and monitor global warming emissions levels (AB 32, Chapter 488, Statutes of 2006). The ARB Climate Change Scoping Plan, initially approved December 2008 (ARB, 2008) and most recently updated by ARB in December 2017, provides the framework for achieving California's goals (ARB, 2017).

In passing AB 32, the California Legislature found that:

Global warming poses a serious threat to the economic well-being, public health, natural resources, and the environment of California. The potential adverse impacts of global warming include the exacerbation of air quality problems, a reduction in the quality and supply of water to the state from the Sierra snowpack, a rise in sea levels resulting in the displacement of thousands of coastal businesses and residences, damage to marine ecosystems and the natural environment, and an increase in the incidences of infectious diseases, asthma, and other human health-related problems.

Other major Executive Orders, legislation, and regulations adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions support the implementation of AB 32 and California's climate goals, as described below.

California Governor's Executive Orders on GHG Emissions. In September 2018, Executive Order B-55-18 established a new statewide goal to achieve carbon neutrality as soon as possible, and no later than 2045, and achieve and maintain net negative emissions thereafter. The ARB was directed to develop the framework for implementing the goal of carbon neutrality. Executive Order B-30-15 (April 2015) established a California GHG reduction target of 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030. One purpose of this interim target is to ensure California meets its target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions to 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050 (Executive Order S-3-05, June 2005). This executive order also specifically addresses the need for climate adaptation and directs state agencies to update the California Climate Adaptation Strategy to identify how climate change will affect California infrastructure and industry and what actions the state can take to reduce the risks posed by climate change. Senate Bill 32 (SB 32) of 2016 codified this GHG emissions target to 40 percent below the 1990 level by 2030.

California Renewables Portfolio Standard (RPS) Program. Electric utilities in California must procure a minimum quantity of the sales from eligible renewable energy resources as specified by RPS requirements. The Clean Energy and Pollution Reduction Act of 2015 [Senate Bill 350 (SB 350)] established California's state policy objectives on long-term energy planning and procurement as signed into law on October 7, 2015. The 100 Percent Clean Energy Act of 2018 [Senate Bill 100 (SB 100)] revised the RPS targets to establish the policy that eligible renewable energy resources and zero-carbon resources supply 100 percent of retail sales of electricity to California end-use customers and 100 percent of electricity procured to serve all state agencies by December 31, 2045. With SB 350 and SB 100, California's objectives include:

- *To set the Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) for the procurement of California’s electricity from renewable sources at 33 percent by 2020, 50 percent by 2026, and 60 percent by 2030;*
- *To plan for 100 percent of total retail sales of electricity in California to come from eligible renewable energy resources and zero-carbon resources by December 31, 2045; and*
- *To double the energy efficiency savings in electricity and natural gas end uses by retail customers by 2030.*

Cap-and-Trade Program (17 CCR 95801 to 96022). The California Cap on Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Market-Based Compliance Mechanisms Regulation (Cap-and-Trade Program) was initially approved by ARB in 2011. The Cap-and-Trade Program applies to covered entities that fall within certain source categories, including petroleum refiners and suppliers of transportation fuels, and is triggered when facility emissions exceed 25,000 metric tons of CO₂ equivalent (MTCO₂e) in a year. The covered entities must hold compliance instruments sufficient to cover the actual GHG emissions, as evidenced through the ARB’s Mandatory Reporting Regulation requirements. This means that transportation fuel suppliers bear the GHG compliance obligation in the Cap-and-Trade Program for the GHG emissions from motor vehicle and off-road equipment fuels used by construction workforces and crews.

Emission Reductions of SF₆ from Gas Insulated Switchgear (17 CCR 95350 to 95359). In 2010, ARB adopted a regulation for reducing or phasing-out SF₆ emissions from electric power system gas insulated switchgear. The regulation requires owners of such switchgear to: (1) annually report their SF₆ emissions; (2) determine the emission rate relative to the SF₆ capacity of the switchgear; (3) provide a complete inventory of all gas insulated switchgear and their SF₆ capacities; (4) produce a SF₆ gas container inventory; and (5) keep all information current for ARB enforcement staff inspection and verification.

Nevada

Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS). The Nevada Bureau of Air Quality Planning (BAQP) prepares the statewide GHG inventory and projections reports that are required by NRS Section 445B.380. Under this rule, every four years the BAQP releases the GHG emissions data quantifying Nevada’s emissions characteristics to facilitate informed policy decisions in addressing global climate change. No other GHG requirements appear in the NRS.

Local

The CPUC has sole and exclusive jurisdiction over the siting and design of the Proposed Project components located in the State of California. Pursuant to CPUC G.O. 131-D, Section XIV.B, “Local jurisdictions acting pursuant to local authority are preempted from regulating electric power line projects, distribution lines, substations, or electric facilities constructed by public utilities subject to the CPUC’s jurisdiction. However, in locating such projects, the public utilities shall consult with local agencies regarding land use matters.” Consequently, public utilities are directed to consider local regulations and consult with local agencies, but the county and cities’ regulations are not applicable as the county and cities do not have jurisdiction over the Proposed Project. However, for Greenhouse Gas Emissions, local plans help implement state goals and are, therefore, considered. The Proposed Project is subject to local regulations in the State of Nevada.

San Bernardino County, San Bernardino County Regional Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan. San Bernardino County adopted a Regional GHG Reduction Plan in September 2011, which identified statewide, San Bernardino County, and local community measures to reduce GHG from new development by 2020. These measures target all sectors but are primarily targeted at reducing GHG caused by solid waste

landfills and from the building, energy and transportation sectors (San Bernardino County, 2011). The County's development review procedures include a review standard of 3,000 MTCO₂e per year for identifying actions that require project-specific technical analysis for GHG. This analysis allows comparison of GHG emissions with the standard, although the Proposed Project would not be subject to the County's development review process.

Federal

Presidential Executive Order 13783. Presidential Executive Order 13783 on Promoting Energy Independence and Economic Growth, dated March 28, 2017, revoked the preceding Executive Order 13653 (Preparing the United States for the Impacts of Climate Change), dated November 1, 2013. The 2017 Order also rescinded the President's Climate Action Plan from June 2013 and the Climate Action Plan Strategy to Reduce Methane Emissions from March 2014. Further, the Order directs the Council on Environmental Quality to rescind its final guidance entitled "Final Guidance for Federal Departments and Agencies on Consideration of Greenhouse Gas Emissions and the Effects of Climate Change in National Environmental Policy Act Reviews," which is referred to in "Notice of Availability," 81 Fed. Reg. 51866 (August 5, 2016). As soon as practicable, each agency is to suspend, revise, or rescind, or publish for notice and comment proposed rules suspending, revising, or rescinding any such actions, consistent with existing law and the policies of Order 13783.

5.8.3 Applicant Proposed Measures

The Proposed Project does not include any APMs related to Greenhouse Gas Emissions.

5.8.4 CEQA Significance Criteria

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR 15000 et seq.) provides guidance on assessing whether a project would have significant impacts on the environment. Consistent with Appendix G, the Proposed Project would have significant greenhouse gas emissions impacts if it would:

- a. Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment*
- b. Conflict with any applicable plan, policy or regulation of an agency adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases*

5.8.5 Methodology

All construction- and operation-related emissions are quantified based on the best available forecast of activities. For each of the activities of the Project Description, the Applicant (SCE, 2018) developed emissions estimates within a database that draws emissions factors from the California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod; version 2016.3.2) software developed by the California Air Pollution Control Officers Association (CAPCOA). The emission factors were drawn from the most recent version of the CalEEMod software, which relies upon mobile source emission factors from the Air Resources Board (ARB) OFFROAD inventory and EMFAC2014 models. The activity assumptions, emission factors, and resulting quantities of emissions appear in Appendix C: Air Quality/GHG Data Tables.

The quantities of direct and indirect GHG emissions are compared against the CEQA threshold of significance for GHG emissions recommended by the California local air quality management district (AQMD). The Mojave Desert AQMD recommends that CEQA lead agencies should determine the significance of GHG emissions by evaluating whether the direct and indirect GHG emissions generated by a project

exceed 100,000 tons or 90,719 metric tons (MT) of CO₂e per year, or 548,000 pounds per day (lb/day), although the daily value would not apply to the Proposed Project because the construction phase would extend for more than one year (MDAQMD, 2016).

5.8.6 Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

a. Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. The activities associated with the Proposed Project include mobilizing construction equipment, crews, and materials, and would require use of motor vehicles and off-road equipment during all construction activities and clean-up. These activities would cause GHG emissions due to fuels used by the construction vehicles and off-road equipment. The different sources include helicopters, diesel-powered off-road equipment, and gasoline-powered construction vehicles and equipment including trucks and autos for moving crews, equipment, materials, and water and for fuel delivery. Equipment and motor vehicles would directly emit CO₂, CH₄, and N₂O due to fuel use and combustion. Motor vehicle fuel combustion emissions in terms of CO₂e are approximately 95 percent CO₂, with CH₄ and N₂O emissions occurring at rates of less than 1 percent of the mass of combustion CO₂ emissions.

As shown in Table 5.8-1 below, the resulting one-time quantity of GHG emitted during construction of the project would be a total of 13,520 MTCO₂e, estimated to occur over approximately 15 months, spanning two calendar years. Emissions were calculated by the Applicant using emission factors from the California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod; v.2016.3.2). Additional details appear in Appendix C: Air Quality/GHG Data Tables. These emissions would cease at the conclusion of construction. These one-time project-level construction-phase emissions would not exceed the MDAQMD threshold level of GHG emissions (90,719 MTCO₂e per year) that could have a significant impact on the environment.

Operation and Maintenance

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. Upon completion of construction, operations and maintenance activities to support the project would not result in a notable incremental increase in GHG emissions. Routine O&M would involve occasional additional worker-vehicle trips that would consume diesel fuel and gasoline. The Proposed Project would also install emergency-use, standby generators that would consume small volumes of propane. Use of these fuels would be necessary for normal O&M activities including periodic inspections, equipment testing, and propane fuel deliveries. No new full-time staffing or induced population growth would occur, because no new crews would be added by the project and maintenance would be incorporated with existing maintenance programs.

Minor new stationary sources of GHG added by the Proposed Project would include new equipment within the existing substations, mid-line series capacitor sites, and fiber optic repeater sites. The mid-line series capacitor sites and fiber optic repeater sites would include new emergency-use standby generators fired on propane. Routine use of the propane-powered engines during occasional non-emergency testing of the standby generators would emit small amounts of GHG. Switches and other equipment proposed for installation at existing substations and the proposed Newberry Springs Series Capacitor and Ludlow Series Capacitor would include gas-insulated switchgear containing SF₆, a potent GHG, which could leak over the life of the project. Emissions of SF₆ are quantified (in terms of CO₂e) with other project sources in Table 5.8-1.

Table 5.8-1. Proposed Project GHG Emissions

Sources	One-Time During Construction (CO ₂ ton)	One-Time During Construction (CH ₄ ton)	One-Time During Construction (MTCO ₂ e)	Proposed Project Total (MTCO ₂ e/year)
Helicopters	6,223	0.2	5,650	—
Off-Road Equipment	4,968	1.5	4,541	—
On-Road Motor Vehicles	3,668	0.1	3,329	—
Total, Duration of Construction	14,858	1.8	13,520	—
Construction, 30-year Amortized	—	—	—	451
Operation and Maintenance (Testing of Standby Generators)	—	—	—	4
Circuit Breakers (SF ₆ Leaks, in CO ₂ e)	—	—	—	989
Total, Proposed Project	—	—	—	1,444
Threshold of Significance				90,719
Significant?				No

Source: Appendix C (SCE, 2018; Responses to Data Requests).

Installation of the Proposed Project would also result in a small amount of total permanent ground disturbance (approximately 7.0 acres) that would eliminate a minor unquantified amount of natural sequestration of carbon. Soil and vegetation act as a sink by removing CO₂ from the atmosphere. To consider the overall effect of construction GHG emissions over the life of the facilities along with the effect of operation and maintenance, the quantity of construction GHG can be amortized by averaging over a 30-year life for the Proposed Project. The resultant total quantities of GHG generated by the Proposed Project would not have a significant impact on the environment because the MDAQMD threshold level (90,719 MTCO₂e per year) would not be exceeded, and the impact associated with the GHG emissions would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

b. Conflict with any applicable plan, policy or regulation of an agency adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. The Proposed Project, including the direct and indirect emissions of construction plus operation and maintenance, would improve California's ability to supply renewable energy to end-use customers and to achieve statewide renewable energy goals. Interconnected renewable resources would serve the needs of California's customers and would facilitate compliance with the Renewables Portfolio Standard (RPS), as set forth by SB 350 and SB 100. The sources of GHG emissions associated with the project activities would not conflict with the California's GHG emissions reduction targets, as set forth within the Climate Change Scoping Plan under the requirements of California Global Warming Solutions Act (AB 32) and SB 32. The Proposed Project would not be subject to the County's development review process or the review standard in the County Regional GHG Reduction Plan.

The following major policies are listed as "known commitments" within the 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan (ARB, 2017):

- **Renewables Portfolio Standard and SB 350.** Reducing GHG emissions in the electricity sector through the implementation of the 50 percent RPS and doubling of energy savings (SB 350).
- **Low Carbon Fuel Standard.** Transition to less-polluting transportation fuels that have a lower carbon footprint.
- **Mobile Source Strategy.** Reduce GHG and other pollutants from the transportation sector through transition to zero-emission and low-emission vehicles, cleaner transit systems and reduction of vehicle miles traveled.
- **Cap-and-Trade Program.** Implement the post-2020 program to reduce GHG from large sources, such as transportation fuel suppliers, through declining caps to ensure the State's 2030 target is achieved.

Project activities related to both construction and operation would emit GHG mostly through the use of transportation fuels that are within the policies of the Climate Change Scoping Plan. The majority of emissions would be from mobile sources, the off-road equipment and on-road motor vehicles, that are not directly subject to GHG controls but would be users of transportation fuels from refiners and suppliers that are required to comply with Air Resources Board (ARB) Cap-and-Trade and Low Carbon Fuel Standard regulations to reduce GHG emissions. Helicopters would use aviation fuels that are exempt from the Low Carbon Fuel Standard. Stationary source emissions of SF₆ would be subject to and required to comply with the ARB regulation for GHG from gas insulated switchgear (17 CCR 95350 to 95359). No regulations or requirements apply to GHG emissions from project activities in Nevada. To the extent that construction and operation of the Proposed Project could facilitate delivery of energy from renewable resources (solar power plants), the transmission facilities could facilitate a reduction in GHG emissions of California's electricity supply, which would contribute to RPS compliance and to meeting the State's GHG reduction goals under AB 32 and subsequent targets for 2030 and beyond. The Proposed Project would not conflict with any applicable GHG management plan, policy, or regulation. This impact would be less than significant, and no mitigation is required.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

5.8.7 References

- ARB (Air Resources Board). 2018. *California Greenhouse Gas Inventory for 2000-2016 — by Category as Defined in the 2008 Scoping Plan*. Updated: June 22, 2018.
- _____. 2017. *California's 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan*. The strategy for achieving California's 2030 greenhouse gas target. November.
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- IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change). 2014. Drivers, Trends, and Mitigation; and Energy Systems. In: *Climate Change 2014: Mitigation of Climate Change*. Contribution of Working Group III to the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, United Kingdom, and New York, NY, USA.
- MDQAMD (Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District). 2016. California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and Federal Conformity Guidelines. August.
- OEHHA (Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, California Environmental Protection Agency). 2018. *Indicators of Climate Change in California*. May.

San Bernardino County. 2011. Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Plan. September.

SCE (Southern California Edison). 2018. Eldorado-Lugo-Mohave Series Capacitor Project: Proponent's Environmental Assessment (PEA). Volumes 1 through 8. April.

UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change). 1998. Text of the Kyoto Protocol. <https://unfccc.int/kyoto-protocol-html-version>. Accessed November 5, 2018.

5.9 Hazards and Hazardous Materials

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d. Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Significance criteria established by CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G.

5.9.1 Environmental Setting

Environmental hazards include accidental spills of hazardous materials, the presence of existing subsurface contamination, the risk of wildfire, and aircraft safety. Hazardous materials include fuel, oil, and lubricants. If encountered, contaminated soil can pose a health and safety threat to workers or the public. The following discussion addresses existing environmental conditions in the affected area, identifies and analyzes environmental impacts, and recommends measures to reduce or avoid adverse impacts anticipated from project construction. In addition, existing laws and regulations relevant to public health and safety are described. In some cases, compliance with these existing laws and regulations would serve to reduce or avoid certain impacts that might otherwise occur with the implementation of the Proposed Project.

The area of influence for hazards associated with releases of hazardous materials (e.g., spills and leaks); past soil and groundwater contamination; and hazards associated with potential for exposure of workers or the public to unsafe situations, would include the project work areas, adjacent land areas, and roadways adjacent to and in the vicinity of the Proposed Project.

Land Use

The Proposed Project is located in San Bernardino County, California and Clark County, Nevada, within the Mojave Desert. The Proposed Project primarily traverses federal lands under the jurisdiction of BLM and NPS, with a minor amount of DoD; other lands traversed by the Project include State, County, and private land.

Existing and past land use activities are commonly used as indicators of sites or areas with potential for hazardous material storage and use or potential environmental contamination. For example, many current and historic industrial and defense sites have soil or groundwater contamination by hazardous substances. Other hazardous materials sources include leaking underground tanks in commercial and rural areas, contaminated surface runoff from polluted sites and agricultural land, and contaminated groundwater plumes that may exist along the transmission line routes.

The Proposed Project would modify two existing transmission lines that extend northeast from Lugo Substation in Hesperia, California, to Eldorado Substation in Boulder City, Nevada, and to Mohave Substation in Clark County, Nevada, and one that extends from Mohave Substation northwest to Eldorado Substation. The Project alignments traverses predominantly undeveloped desert along most of the Project alignment through California and Nevada, with low-density rural residential areas near the alignments in Hesperia and Lucerne Valley, California, and Searchlight, Nevada. A small pocket of high density residential development is located immediately south of the alignments in Laughlin, Nevada. The Proposed Project does not traverse commercial or industrial land use areas.

Hazardous Materials

The Proposed Project would involve limited transport, storage, use, and disposal of hazardous materials during construction. Some examples of hazardous materials handling during construction would include the transport of fuels, lubricating fluids, and solvents associated with construction equipment, as well as the transport of potentially contaminated soils excavated from the Project site. All hazardous materials would be stored, handled, and used in accordance with applicable regulations. Safety Data Sheets would be made available at the construction site for all crew workers (SCE, 2018). Table 5.9-1: Typical Hazardous Materials Used for Construction, provides a list of the hazardous materials that are anticipated to be used during construction of the Proposed Project. Spills and leaks of hazardous materials during construction activities could result in soil or groundwater contamination.

Construction of the Proposed Project would result in generation of various waste materials, including material from existing infrastructure that would be removed as part of the Proposed Project (e.g., conductor, steel, concrete, excess soil, and debris). This material would be temporarily stored in one or more staging yards as the material awaits salvage, recycling, and/or disposal; any material deemed hazardous waste would need to be properly disposed of per State or federal regulations. The existing wood poles removed for the Proposed Project would be returned to a staging yard, and either reused by SCE, disposed of in a Class I hazardous waste landfill, and/or disposed of in the lined portion of a Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) certified municipal landfill (SCE, 2018).

Table 5.9-1. Typical Hazardous Materials Used for Construction

▪ ABC fire extinguisher	▪ Connector grease (penotox)	▪ Insulating oil (inhibited, non-PCB)	▪ Safety fuses
▪ Acetylene gas	▪ Contact cleaner 2000	▪ Jet A-1 fuel	▪ Starter fluid
▪ Air tool oil	▪ Diesel fuel	▪ Lubricating grease	▪ Sulfur hexafluoride (within the line breakers in the substations)
▪ Ammonium hydroxide	▪ Diesel fuel additive	▪ Mastic coating	▪ Two-cycle oil (contains distillates and hydro-treated heavy paraffinic)
▪ Battery acid (in vehicles and in substations' meter house)	▪ Eyeglass cleaner (contains methylene chloride)	▪ Methyl alcohol	▪ WD-40
▪ Bottled oxygen	▪ Gasoline	▪ Mineral oil	▪ ZEP (safety solvent)
▪ Brake fluid	▪ Gasoline treatment	▪ Motor oils	▪ ZIP (1,1,1-trichloroethane)
▪ Canned spray paint	▪ Hot stick cleaner (cloth treated with polydimethylsiloxane)	▪ Paint thinner	
▪ Chain lubricant (contains methylene chloride)	▪ Hydraulic fluid	▪ Propane	
		▪ Puncture seal tire inflator	

Source: SCE, 2018, SCE Eldorado-Lugo-Mohave Series Capacitor Project PEA, Table 4.8-2

Environmental Contamination

Ground disturbance during construction would be susceptible to potentially encountering environmental contamination if located in the vicinity of hazardous material or environmentally contaminated sites. SCE conducted a review of regulatory databases compiled by Environmental Data Resources, Inc. (EDR) (SCE, 2018). The EDR database searched federal, State, and local environmental databases for sites that use, store, and/or dispose of hazardous materials and for sites with known environmental contamination within 1-mile either side of the Project alignment. Eleven hazardous sites were identified, including the Eldorado Substation and Lugo Substation sites. These sites are summarized in Table 5.9-2, Hazardous Material Sites within 1 Mile of the Proposed Project.

Two open hazardous materials sites and one closed landfill were identified within 1 mile of where proposed ground disturbance would occur. As noted in Table 5.9-2, the Former Mohave Generating Station Site is adjacent to Mohave Substation and is reported to be in remediation; the extent of the contaminant plume and the existing contaminant levels are unknown, therefore there is the potential that subsurface contaminants may have spread to the vicinity of the Mohave Substation. No other soil or groundwater contamination was identified in the vicinity of the Proposed Project components that require ground disturbance.

Table 5.9-2. Hazardous Material Sites Within 1 Mile of the Proposed Project

Site	Cleanup Status	Description	Databases	Closest Distance to Proposed Project ¹	Nearest Proposed Project Component ¹
Lugo Substation	N/A	Minor release of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) to soil. Following the initial cleanup, no additional corrective action measures or remedial activities were specified. UST listed from 1988 containing regular unleaded gasoline, current status of the UST unspecified. Site stores, and disposes of materials and liquids containing PCBs, waste oil, organic solids, empty containers, and other unspecified waste materials. Site had a fire that occurred at a transformer station on site.	ERNS, SWEEPS UST, CHMIRS, NPDES, RCRA-LQG, and CA HAZNET	0 miles	Lugo Substation
SCE/Unnamed Site, 33261 Haynes Road	Closed landfill	Site is upgradient. Landfill or surface impoundment that was closed as a landfill. Site also listed as a former clandestine drug lab operation. No clean actions required; however, subsurface materials associated with the former landfill may be located in the vicinity of the Proposed Project.	CA HAZNET (multiple times) and CHMIRS	0.1 miles	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line, Barstow fiber optic repeater site
Ford Cady Borate – Pilot Project	N/A	Site is downgradient. No releases reported. Borate solution mine, boric acid recovered from acid injection wells. Ongoing groundwater monitoring conducted as part of RWQCB requirements (SWRCB, 2018).	LDS/WDS	1 mile	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line, Tower M64-T2

Table 5.9-2. Hazardous Material Sites Within 1 Mile of the Proposed Project

Site	Cleanup Status	Description	Databases	Closest Distance to Proposed Project ¹	Nearest Proposed Project Component ¹
BLM Communication Site	N/A	Site is upgradient. No releases reported. One permanently out-of-use UST on-site.	SWEEPS UST	Adjacent	Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Laughlin High School	N/A	Site is upgradient. No releases reported. One active UST on site.	SWEEPS UST	0.7 miles	Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Mobil Gas Station and Convenience Store	N/A	Site is downgradient. No releases reported. Two active USTs on site.	SWEEPS UST	0.7 miles	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Laughlin Water Reclamation Facility/Waste-water Treatment Plant	Active water reclamation facility, waste-water treatment plant	Site is downgradient. No releases reported. Two permanently out-of-use USTs were previously reported on site. The current status of each UST is unknown. One UST reported by NDEH.	SWEEPS UST	0.4 miles	Underground Mohave Conduit and telecommunication cable
Former Mohave Generating Station	Open – In remediation	Site is upgradient. Soil and ground-water contaminated with volatile organic compounds, petroleum hydrocarbons, metals, oils, and other unspecified contaminants.	NV UST, NV LUST, and CERCLIS-NFRAP	Adjacent	Mohave Substation
Casino Drive Lift Station #24	Open; however, no longer included on the NDEH open LUST sites list	Site is upgradient. Soil and ground-water contaminated with diesel.	NV LUST	0.9 miles	Mohave Substation
Laughlin Landfill	N/A	Site is downgradient. No releases reported.	NV SHWS and SWF/LF	0.8 miles	Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Eldorado Substation	N/A	Storage, bulking, and/or off-site transfer of asbestos containing waste, organic solids, and other unspecified waste materials	CA HAZNET and RCRA-SQG	Proposed project component	Eldorado Substation

Sources: Modified from SCE, 2018, SCE Eldorado-Lugo-Mohave Series Capacitor Project PEA, Table 4.8-1; and NDEP, 2018a, Site Cleanup Database, open cases report.

N/A – Not Applicable

1 - Distances were measured from each hazardous site to the closest Proposed Project component requiring ground disturbance.

Formerly Used Defense Sites

Numerous Formerly Used Defense Sites (FUDS) are located in the Mojave Desert area. Military munitions and explosives of concern (MEC), and principally unexploded ordnance (UXO), are known or suspected to be at or in the vicinity of former military sites in the Mojave Desert. Many of these sites are former bombing range sites and are known or suspected to contain munitions and explosives of concern (e.g., unexploded ordnance), and therefore may present an explosive hazard. These types of sites may also have heavy metal contamination due to the former use of munitions. Four former World War II-era practice bombing ranges occur in the Project area, as summarized in Table 5.9-3, FUDS Sites in the Vicinity of the Proposed Project. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers manages and directs the FUDS program administration; environmental cleanup at FUDS properties is conducted in accordance with the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA).

Table 5.9-3. FUDS Sites in the Vicinity of the Proposed Project

FUDS Site Name	FUDS Site Description	Proximity to Proposed Project ¹	Nearest Proposed Project Workspace
Goffs Campsite	Goffs Campsite, approximately 426 acres, consists of a railhead, ammunition storage area, and campsite, all located in an undeveloped region of San Bernardino County, California, approximately 35 miles west of Needles. Used for Desert training in WWII.	0.4 miles	Goffs Yard
Victorville Precision Bombing Range (PBR) No. 6	Victorville PBR No. 6, approximately 1,490 acres, includes target zones and buffer areas located in an undeveloped region of San Bernardino County, California, approximately 16 miles east of Victorville. Military munitions and explosives of concern (e.g., unexploded ordnance) are known or suspected to be present at this location. Used by the Army Air Corps as a practice bombing range during WWII.	0.8 miles	Guard Structure
Victorville PBR No. 7	Victorville PBR No. 7, approximately 640 acres, includes a former bombing range in an undeveloped region of San Bernardino County, California, approximately 24 miles east of Victorville. Military munitions and explosives of concern (e.g., unexploded ordnance) are known or suspected to be present at this location. Used as a practice bombing range during WWII.	1.3 miles	LST M33-T1 and Landing Zone 44
Daggett Army Airfield	Daggett Army Air Field, approximately 1,100 acres, includes an airfield, lubricating oil storage and distribution facilities, and associated support buildings. It is currently owned and operated by the County of San Bernardino's Public Works Group and is located in San Bernardino County, approximately 11 miles southeast of Barstow and 4 miles southeast of Daggett.	1.5 miles	Coolwater Yard

Source: SCE, 2018, SCE Eldorado-Lugo-Mohave Series Capacitor Project Response to Comments, Question 73

1 - Distances were measured from each FUDS site to the closest Proposed Project component requiring ground disturbance.

Schools

There are no schools located within 0.25 miles of the Proposed Project. Three schools (one in California and two in Clark County, Nevada) are located within 1-mile of the transmission lines associated with the Proposed Project. The schools and their approximate distance from the Proposed Project and components are:

- Krystal School of Science, Math & Technology, 17160 Krystal Drive, Hesperia – located approximately 1 mile north of the Lugo-Mohave and Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Lines.
- William G. Bennet Elementary School, 2750 S. Needles Highway, Laughlin – located approximately 0.50 miles south of the Lugo-Mohave and Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Lines and the proposed underground conduit and telecommunication cable in Bruce Woodbury Drive.
- Laughlin Junior/Senior High School, 1900 Cougar Drive, Laughlin – located approximately 0.55 miles north of the proposed underground conduit and telecommunication cable and 0.75 miles north of the Lugo-Mohave and Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Lines.

Aviation Hazards

There are four airports and one airstrip within 2 miles of the Proposed Project. The four public airports are: the Hesperia Airpark in Hesperia, California, the Laughlin/Bullhead International Airport in Bullhead City, Arizona, the Kidwell Airport in Cal-Nev-Ari, Nevada, and the Searchlight Airport in Searchlight, Nevada. The southwest edge of the Hesperia Airport runway is approximately 0.9 miles north of the

Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line. The runway is oriented in a general northeast/southwest direction and planes would not directly cross the alignment when landing or taking off. Approximately 3,700 feet of the Eldorado-Lugo and Lugo-Mohave Transmission Line alignments are within Safety Zone III for the Comprehensive Land Use Plan for the Hesperia Airport; however, there are no proposed work areas in this location, with the exception of stringing new OPWG line. The Laughlin/Bullhead International Airport is in Bullhead City, Arizona, across the Colorado River approximately 1.9 mile east of the Mohave Substation. Its runway trends north-south; however, as it is east of the Proposed Project planes would not directly cross the Project alignments during landing and takeoff. The Kidwell Airport is approximately 1.5 miles west of the Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line. It has one slightly northwest-southeast trending runway and planes would not directly cross the Project alignment during landing or take off. The Searchlight Airport is approximately 1.7 miles east of the Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line. Its runway is north-south trending and planes would not directly cross the Project alignment during landing and takeoff.

The Ludlow Airstrip is a small private airstrip with one east-west trending runway. It is located east of Crucero Road and north of Interstate 40 at exit 50 in San Bernardino County, California. It is just under 2 miles south of the Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line. Planes would not directly cross the Project alignments during landing and takeoff.

Two inactive/closed airstrips, the Dick Taylor Airstrip and the Rabbit Ranch Airstrip, are located 0.2 miles and 0.6 miles from the Proposed Project (SCE, 2018).

Wildland Fire Hazards

In California the Proposed Project passes through areas of undeveloped desert with sparse low scrub brush and grasses and scattered rural residential properties in the City of Hesperia and unincorporated San Bernardino County. Fire services are provided to the City of Hesperia by the City of Hesperia Fire Department; San Bernardino County Fire Department provides services to more than 60 communities/cities and all unincorporated areas of the county. Federal lands within California are served by a partnership of federal, State, and local firefighting agencies. With this partnership the State is divided into “direct protection areas” where one agency takes the lead in initially attacking fires, drawing on the resources of the others as necessary.

Within California, CAL FIRE is responsible for mapping fire hazard severity zones. Fire hazard severity zone levels range from moderate to very high and are further divided into State, local, and federal responsibility areas. The existing transmission lines and substations associated with the Proposed Project are located within all three responsibility areas. The majority of the Proposed Project is located within the CAL FIRE moderate fire hazard severity zone, with small portions of the Proposed Project near Hesperia and the southern edge of Lucerne Valley mapped as High and Very High (CAL FIRE, 2007a, 2007b, 2007c, and 2007d). (See also Section 5.20, Wildfire, where wildfire is addressed in more detail.)

In Nevada, the Proposed Project traverses undeveloped desert with sparse low scrub and grasses and is adjacent to a high density residential area in Laughlin. Fire services to unincorporated Clark County and the communities of Laughlin, Searchlight, and Cal-Nev-Ari are provided by the Clark County Fire Department, and fire services for Boulder City are provided by the Boulder City Fire Department. BLM Nevada Fire and Aviation is responsible for firefighting, fire prevention, and rehabilitation of public lands in Nevada. BLM Nevada works cooperatively with other federal agencies, Counties, and local Fire Departments to suppress wildland fires throughout the state.

Within Nevada, wildland fire threat is mapped by the Nevada Division of Forestry and is presented on the Nevada Natural Resources and Fire Information Portal (NDF, 2018). Based on this mapping, most of the Proposed Project in Nevada is in very, very low to low fire threat areas, with small pockets of low to moderate fire threat near the community of Searchlight. The Mohave Substation and the immediate area is mapped as ranging from moderate to high fire threat. The fire threat is based on historical fire occurrence, landscape characteristics including surface fuels and canopy fuels, percentile weather derived from historical weather observations and terrain conditions (NDF, 2018).

Emergency Response and Evacuations Plans

Emergency response plans include elements to maintain continuity of government, emergency functions of governmental agencies, mobilization and application of resources, mutual aid, and public information during times of emergency. Emergency response plans are maintained at the federal, State, and local levels for all types of man-made and natural disasters. It is the responsibility of the government to undertake an ongoing comprehensive approach to emergency management to avoid or minimize the effects of hazardous events. Local governments have the primary responsibility for preparedness and response activities.

California

County of San Bernardino. The San Bernardino County Fire Department's OES maintains the San Bernardino County Emergency Operations Plan (EOP), which provides guidance for the county to respond to catastrophic natural, environmental, or conflict-related risks. The EOP implements the standards and principles of the National Incident Management System, the Standardized Emergency Management System, the National Response Framework, and the Incident Command System. In addition, San Bernardino County Fire Department participates in the Mountain Area Safety Taskforce (MAST), which is a coalition of federal, State, and local government agencies, private companies, and volunteer organizations tasked with preventing catastrophic wildfires. The MAST provides emergency planning strategies to the public and issues evacuation route maps for several areas in San Bernardino County. West of Lucerne Valley the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line spans State Route (SR-) 18, which is designated as an evacuation route by the MAST (SCE, 2018).

City of Hesperia. The City of Hesperia implements an Emergency Preparedness Program to provide residents and businesses with resources for emergency planning and response. Potential emergency shelters and evacuation routes are provided in the Safety Element of the City of Hesperia General Plan 2010 (SCE, 2018).

Nevada

Clark County. The Clark County Office of Emergency Management (OEM) maintains the Clark County EOP, in which Clark County Public Works (CCPW) acts as the Lead Agency. CCPW provides support in response to emergency situations caused by earthquakes, floods, storms, severe heat, volcanic ash fallout, avalanches, and fires. The Clark County OEM facilitates the coordination between agencies and resources to mitigate, prepare for, and respond to emergencies (SCE, 2018).

City of Boulder City. The City of Boulder City maintains an EOP and city representatives attend emergency management meetings to coordinate with Clark County and other entities in Southern Nevada. The Boulder City EOP is not available for public dissemination (SCE, 2018).

5.9.2 Regulatory Background

Hazardous substances are defined by federal and State regulations that aim to protect public health and the environment. Hazardous materials have certain chemical, physical, or infectious properties that cause them to be considered hazardous. Hazardous substances are defined in the federal Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) Section 101(14), and in the California Code of Regulations (CCR), Title 22, Chapter 11, Article 2, Section 66260 et seq.

For purposes of this environmental analysis, soil that is excavated from a site containing hazardous materials would be considered a hazardous waste if it exceeded specific CCR Title 22 criteria or criteria defined in CERCLA or other relevant federal regulations. Remediation (cleanup and safe removal/disposal) of hazardous wastes found at a site is required if excavation of these materials occurs; it may also be required if certain other activities occur. Even if soils or groundwater at a contaminated site do not have the characteristics required to be defined as hazardous wastes, remediation of the site may be required by regulatory agencies. Cleanup requirements are determined on a case-by-case basis by the agency having lead jurisdiction.

State and Local

State of California

California Environmental Protection Agency. Cal/EPA was created in 1991. It unified California's environmental authority in a single cabinet-level agency, bringing the Air Resources Board (ARB), State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCBs), Integrated Waste Management Board (IWMB), Department of Toxic Substance Control (DTSC), Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA), and Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) under one agency. These agencies were placed within the Cal/EPA "umbrella" for the protection of human health and the environment and to ensure the coordinated deployment of State resources. Their mission is to restore, protect, and enhance the environment, and to ensure public health, environmental quality, and economic vitality.

Department of Toxic Substance Control. DTSC is a department of Cal/EPA and is the primary agency in California that regulates hazardous waste, cleans-up existing contamination and looks for ways to reduce the hazardous waste produced in California. DTSC regulates hazardous waste in California primarily under the authority of RCRA and the California Health and Safety Code. Other laws that affect hazardous waste are specific to handling, storage, transportation, disposal, treatment, reduction, cleanup, and emergency planning. The California Hazardous Waste Control Law (HWCL) is administered and enforced by the DTSC to regulate hazardous wastes. While the HWCL is generally more stringent than RCRA, until the EPA approves the California program, both the State and federal laws apply in California. The HWCL lists 791 chemicals and about 300 common materials that may be hazardous; establishes criteria for identifying, packaging and labeling hazardous wastes; prescribes management controls; establishes permit requirements for treatment, storage, disposal and transportation; and identifies some wastes that cannot be disposed of in landfills.

California Occupational Safety and Health Administration. Cal/OSHA is the primary agency responsible for worker safety in the handling and use of chemicals in the workplace. Cal/OSHA standards are generally more stringent than federal regulations. The employer is required to monitor worker exposure to listed hazardous substances and notify workers of exposure (8 CCR Sections 337-340). The regulations specify requirements for employee training, availability of safety equipment, accident-prevention programs, and hazardous substance exposure warnings.

Porter-Cologne Water Quality Act. This state law provides a comprehensive water quality management system for the protection of California waters. The act designates the SWRCB as the ultimate authority over State water rights and water quality policy, and also established nine RWQCBs to oversee water quality on a day-to-day basis at the local and regional level. The Lahontan and Colorado River Basin RWQCBs are responsible for protecting the beneficial uses of surface water and groundwater resources in the Proposed Project area in California. The Lahontan RWQCB adopted a Water Quality Control Plan (Basin Plan) in March 1995 and the most recent Basin Plan includes fully approved sets of amendments adopted since 1995. The Colorado River Basin RWQCB adopted its Basin Plan in 1993. These Basin Plans set forth implementation policies, goals, and water management practices in accordance with the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act. The Basin Plans establish both numerical and narrative standards and objectives for water quality aimed at protecting aquatic resources. Project discharges to surface waters are subject to the regulatory standards set forth in applicable regional basin plans, which prevent the discharge of hazardous materials into waters of the State.

The RWQCBs have the responsibility of granting National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits and setting waste discharge requirements for stormwater runoff from construction sites. The Proposed Project's NPDES permits in California would be under the jurisdiction of the Lahontan and Colorado River Basin RWQCBs.

Senate Bill 1082 (Health and Safety Code Chapter 6.11). In 1993, the Cal-EPA was mandated to establish a "unified hazardous waste and hazardous materials management" regulatory program (Unified Program). The **Unified Program** consolidates, coordinates, and makes consistent the administrative requirements, permits, inspections, and enforcement activities of the following six environmental and emergency response programs:

- Hazardous Materials Release Response Plans and Inventories
- California Accidental Release Prevention Program
- Underground Storage Tank Program
- Aboveground Petroleum Storage Act
- Hazardous Waste Generator and Onsite Hazardous Waste Treatment Programs
- California Uniform Fire Code: Hazardous Material Management Plans and Hazardous Material Inventory Statements.

The Unified Program is implemented at the local level by local government agencies certified by the Secretary of Cal-EPA. These agencies, known as Certified Unified Program Agencies (CUPA) implement all of the Unified Program elements and serve as a local contact for area businesses. The CUPA for the Project area in California is the Hazardous Materials Division of the San Bernardino County Fire Department.

California Public Utilities Commission General Order 166. CPUC GO 166 provides standards to ensure that electric utilities are prepared for emergencies and disasters in order to minimize damage and inconvenience to the public that may occur as a result of electric system failures, major outages, or hazards posed by damage to electric distribution facilities. GO 166 Standard 1, Emergency Response Plan, requires under paragraph E that a Fire Prevention Plan be prepared as part of the Emergency Response Plan in: (1) investor-owned electric utilities in Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, Santa Barbara, San Bernardino, San Diego, and Ventura Counties; and (2) investor-owned electric utilities in all other counties with overhead electric facilities located in areas of high fire risk. GO 166 applies to all electric utilities subject to the jurisdiction of the CPUC with regard to matters relating to electric service reliability and safety.

California Public Resources Code (CPRC) Sections 4292 and 4293. These sections of the Public Resources Code specify requirements related to fire protection and prevention in transmission line corridors. CPRC Section 4292 states that any person that owns, controls, operates, or maintains any electrical transmission or distribution line has primary responsibility for fire protection of such areas, and shall maintain around and adjacent to any pole or tower which supports a switch, fuse, transformer, lightning arrester, line junction, or dead end or corner pole, a firebreak which consists of a clearing of not less than 10 feet in each direction from the outer circumference of such a pole or tower (CPRC 4292). CPRC 4293 states that any person that owns, controls, operates, or maintains any electrical transmission or distribution line upon any mountainous land, or in forest-covered land, or grass covered land which has primary responsibility for the fire protection of such area, shall maintain a clearance of the respective distances.

State of Nevada

Nevada Revised Statutes Section 704.865 provides that “A person, other than a local government, shall not commence to construct a utility facility in the State without first having obtained a permit therefor from the [Public Utilities] Commission. The replacement of an existing facility with a like facility, as determined by the Commission, does not constitute construction of a utility facility.” The Public Utilities Commission of Nevada is the Lead Agency for compliance with the Nevada Utility Environmental Protection Act.

Nevada Administrative Code (NAC) Chapter 459 – Hazardous Materials, provides regulations for the handling, transportation, disposal, and storage of hazardous materials. Chapter 459 also includes regulations that pertain to storage tanks, explosives, voluntary cleanup of hazardous substances, enforcement actions, spill response, and funding for Brownfield projects.

The Nevada Bureau of Corrective Actions operates under the regulations provided in Chapter 445A – Water Controls of the NAC and manages the cleanup of regulated substances following a release. The Bureau of Corrective Actions administers Superfund and Brownfield programs, environmental response programs, and the UST program for the State. The Bureau also specifies spill reporting requirements and provides current information on a number of active hazardous sites and remediation projects located in the State of Nevada.

Local

The CPUC has sole and exclusive jurisdiction over the siting and design of the Proposed Project components located in the State of California. Pursuant to CPUC G.O. 131-D, Section XIV.B, “Local jurisdictions acting pursuant to local authority are preempted from regulating electric power line projects, distribution lines, substations, or electric facilities constructed by public utilities subject to the CPUC’s jurisdiction. However, in locating such projects, the public utilities shall consult with local agencies regarding land use matters.” Consequently, public utilities are directed to consider local regulations and consult with local agencies, but the county and cities’ regulations are not applicable as the county and cities do not have jurisdiction over the Proposed Project. For informational purposes, local regulations in California jurisdictions are provided in Appendix C. The Proposed Project is subject to local regulations in the State of Nevada.

Clark County, Nevada. The Safety Element of the Clark County Comprehensive Plan contains the following policies to address hazards and hazardous materials:

- *Minimize public exposure to natural and man-made hazards*
- *Ensure that land use plans and development regulations consider natural and man-made hazards and mitigation programs*
- *Provide public facilities and services to protect against natural and man-made hazards*
- *Support educational programs to inform the community about natural and man-made hazards*
- *Coordinate with local, regional, State and federal governments and the private sector to provide protection against natural and man-made hazards*

The South Clark County Land Use Plan does not contain any specific goals or policies that are relevant to the Proposed Project.

Laughlin, Nevada. The Laughlin Land Use Plan does not contain any specific goals or policies that are relevant to the Proposed Project.

Boulder City, Nevada. The Public Safety Element of the Boulder City Master Plan does not contain any specific goals or policies that are relevant to electric utility projects.

Federal

Bureau of Land Management. It is BLM California and BLM Nevada policy to comply with all federal, state, and local environmental laws and regulations.

National Park Service. Both Federal and State regulations would apply to National Park Service land. Under federal clean-air and water laws, state environmental regulators have jurisdiction over federal lands if state law is stricter than federal regulations.

The following are federal laws and regulations that are administered by federal agencies or that have been delegated to state agencies. They apply to the entire Proposed Project, including lands under state or federal jurisdiction.

Title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) established the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in the Executive branch as an independent Agency in 1970 and provides regulations related to the EPA's operations. The EPA's mission is to protect human health and to safeguard the natural environment — air, water, and land — upon which life depends. The EPA's roles include environmental research, education, and enforcement. It has responsibility for developing, maintaining, and enforcing national standards under a variety of environmental laws, and delegates to some states and tribes the responsibility for issuing permits and for monitoring and enforcing compliance. Where national standards are not met, the EPA can issue sanctions and take other steps to assist the states and tribes in reaching the desired levels of environmental quality.

The **Toxic Substances Control Act (1976)** and the **Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976 (RCRA)** established a program administered by the EPA for regulating the generation, transportation, treatment, storage, and disposal of hazardous waste. RCRA was amended in 1984 by the **Hazardous and Solid Waste Act (HSWA)**, which affirmed and extended the “cradle to grave” system of regulating hazardous wastes. The use of certain techniques for the disposal of some hazardous wastes was specifically prohibited by HSWA. Under the authority of the RCRA, the California Department of Toxic Substance Control (DTSC) regulates hazardous waste, cleans up existing contamination, and looks for ways to reduce hazardous waste production.

Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act. CERCLA, also informally known as the Superfund program, was enacted by Congress on December 11, 1980. This law provided broad federal authority to respond directly to releases or threatened releases of hazardous substances that may endanger public health or the environment. CERCLA established requirements concerning closed and abandoned hazardous waste sites; provided for liability of persons responsible for releases of hazardous waste at these sites; and established a trust fund to provide for cleanup when no responsible party could be identified. CERCLA also enabled the revision of the National Contingency Plan (NCP). The NCP provided the guidelines and procedures needed to respond to releases and threatened releases of hazardous substances, pollutants, and/or contaminants. The NCP also established the National Priorities List (NPL). CERCLA was amended by the **Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA)** on October 17, 1986.

Clean Water Act. The Clean Water Act (CWA) is the principal Federal statute protecting navigable waters and adjoining shorelines from pollution. The law was enacted with the intent of restoring and maintaining the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the waters of the United States. Since its enactment, the CWA has formed the foundation for regulations detailing specific requirements for pollution prevention and response measures. The EPA implements provisions of the CWA through a variety of regulations, including the NCP and the Oil Pollution and Prevention Regulations. Implementation of the CWA is the responsibility of each state.

As part of the Clean Water Act, the USEPA oversees and enforces the **Oil Pollution Prevention regulation** (Title 40 CFR Part 112), which is often referred to as the “SPCC rule” because the regulations describe the requirements for facilities to prepare, amend, and implement Spill Prevention, Control and Countermeasure (SPCC) Plans. A facility is subject to SPCC regulations if the total above ground oil storage capacity exceeds 1,320 gallons, or the underground oil storage capacity exceeds 42,000 gallons, and if, due to its location, the facility could reasonably be expected to discharge oil into or upon the “Navigable Waters” of the United States. The rule specifies that proactive, and not passive, measures be used to respond to oil discharges.

National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System. The NPDES permit program, created in 1972 by the CWA, helps address water pollution by regulating point sources that discharge pollutants to waters of the United States. The permit provides two levels of control: technology-based limits and water quality-based limits (if technology-based limits are not sufficient to provide protection of the water body). Under the CWA, EPA may authorize state, tribal, and territorial governments to administer the NPDES permit program, enabling them to perform many of the permitting, administrative, and enforcement aspects of the NPDES program. In states authorized to implement CWA programs, EPA retains oversight responsibilities. Within the State of California, the California SWRCB issues both general permits and individual permits under the NPDES permit program. The SWRCB delegates much of its NPDES authority and administration to nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCBs). The RWQCBs have the responsibility of granting National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits and waste discharge requirements for stormwater runoff from construction sites. The Proposed Project’s NPDES permits in California would be under the jurisdiction of the Lahontan and Colorado River Basin RWQCBs. The State of Nevada requires that projects disturbing one or more acres must obtain a Construction Stormwater General Permit (NVR100000) from the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection (NDEP) Bureau of Water Pollution Control. This Construction Stormwater General Permit is also required for projects disturbing less than one acre that are part of a larger common plan for development or sale that would ultimately disturb one acre or more.

Occupational Safety and Health Administration. OSHA is in the U.S. Department of Labor and its mission is to assure the safety and health of America's workers by setting and enforcing standards; providing training, outreach, and education; establishing partnerships; and encouraging continual improvement in workplace safety and health. OSHA staff establish protective standards, enforce those standards, and reaches out to employers and employees through technical assistance and consultation programs. OSHA standards are listed in Title 29 CFR Part 1910.

Hazardous Materials Transportation Act. The HMTA is administered by the U.S. Department of Transportation and regulates interstate transport of hazardous materials and wastes. The HMTA contains requirements for hazardous material shipments and packaging, and guidelines for marking, manifesting, labeling, packaging, placarding, and spill reporting. Specific regulations dealing with hazardous materials are covered under Title 49, Part 173 et seq. of the CFR and Title 49, Part 397.

Spark Arrester Requirements. All off-road vehicles being operated on public lands must be equipped with a properly installed spark arrester pursuant to 43 CFR §8343.1(c) and California Vehicle Code 38366(a). The spark arrester must meet either the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service standard 5100-1a or the 80 percent efficiency level standard determined by the Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE) recommended practices J335 or J350.

Federal Aviation Regulation (49 CFR Part 77). This FAA regulations establishes standards and notification requirements for objects that may impact navigable airspace. Airports and navigable airspace that are not administered by the DoD are under the jurisdiction of the FAA. This regulation includes: (a) FAA notification requirements for proposed construction, or the alteration of existing structures, that meet specific standards; (b) the standards used to determine obstructions to air navigation, and navigational and communication facilities; (c) the process for aeronautical studies of obstructions to air navigation or navigational facilities to determine the effect on the safe and efficient use of navigable airspace, air navigation facilities or equipment; and (d) the process to petition the FAA for discretionary review of determinations, revisions, and extensions of determinations.

5.9.3 Applicant Proposed Measures

The Proposed Project does not include any APMs related to Hazards and Hazardous Material impacts.

5.9.4 CEQA Significance Criteria

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR 15000 et seq.) provides guidance on assessing whether a project would have significant impacts on the environment. Consistent with Appendix G, the Proposed Project would have significant hazards and hazardous materials impacts if it would:

- a. *Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials*
- b. *Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment*
- c. *Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school*
- d. *Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment*

- e. For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area*
- f. Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan*
- g. Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires*

5.9.5 Methodology

The approach to hazards and hazardous materials analysis describes the existing and proposed hazardous material activities (hazardous material handling, storage, disposal, and excavation of potentially contaminated soil and groundwater) associated with the Project and estimates the hazard footprint for each activity (the area these activities could affect or areas of contamination that could affect the Proposed Project). Site location, project design, construction technologies and regulations, operational regulations, and emergency response plans are among the considerations for understanding and reducing potential hazard impacts.

The principal environmental impact involving hazardous materials or waste associated with the Proposed Project would relate to the potential mobilization of contaminants, resulting in exposure of workers and the public (e.g., excavation and handling of contaminated soil). Hazardous materials in the construction area may require special handling as toxic substances and hazardous waste can create an exposure risk to workers and the public due to spills or upset or from excavation and transport.

5.9.6 Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

- a. Would the project create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?*

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION. Construction activities associated with the Proposed Project would use hazardous materials such as gasoline, diesel fuel, oil, and lubricants associated with construction equipment and vehicles and would use and store hazardous materials such as mineral oil, cleaning solvents, paints, adhesives, vehicle fuels, oil, hydraulic fluid, and other vehicle and equipment maintenance fluids in the construction staging yards. A list of the anticipated hazardous materials to be used during construction is presented in Table 5.9-1, Typical Hazardous Materials Used for Construction. Normal maintenance and refueling of construction equipment would be conducted at the staging yards. Refueling of helicopters would likely occur at the airports out of which they are based; however, refueling may also occur at staging and material yard sites. Fueling and maintenance trucks may also be based in the helicopter staging yards.

Various waste materials would be removed as part of the Proposed Project, including existing wood poles, and temporarily stored in one or more staging yards as the material awaits salvage, recycling, and/or disposal; any material deemed hazardous waste would be properly disposed of per State or federal regulations (SCE, 2018). Existing wood poles would either be reused by SCE, disposed of in a Class I hazardous waste landfill, and/or disposed of in the lined portion of a RWQCB certified municipal landfill, thus reducing impacts from hazardous waste to less than significant. OHGW removed as part of the project would also be stored and recycled. (SCE, 2018).

Minor spills or releases of hazardous materials could occur due to improper handling and/or storage practices of hazardous materials during construction activities and at staging areas or work sites. The Lahontan and Colorado River Basin RWQCBs for the State of California and the NDEP for the State of Nevada would require that Project-specific SWPPPs would be prepared prior to construction in accordance with NPDES Construction General Permit requirements. All refueling, maintenance, and storage of fuels and other hazardous materials would be in accordance with the SWPPPs (SCE, 2018). In the PEA submitted to CPUC, SCE states that a Hazardous Materials Management Plan (HMMP) would be prepared for the Proposed Project pursuant to Title 24, Part 9 of the California Code of Regulations (SCE, 2018). The HMMP would include safety information regarding the transport, use, and disposal of hazardous materials in compliance with applicable laws, rules, and regulations. However, SCE has not identified preparation of the HMMP as one of its APMs nor identified specific actions that would be included in the HMMP. To ensure that hazardous materials and waste are appropriately handled, Mitigation Measure HH-1, Prepare and implement a Hazardous Materials and Waste Management Plan, is required.

Any impacts to people or the environment from leaks or spills of hazardous materials that would result from storage, transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials or hazardous waste would be addressed through compliance with these plans and all applicable federal and State laws and regulations, and SCE guidelines, thus reducing potential impacts to less than significant with mitigation.

Operation and Maintenance

NO IMPACT. Operation and maintenance activities would be incorporated into the existing O&M schedule for the existing transmission lines, substations, and associated facilities. No additional impact would occur because of operating and maintaining the project.

Mitigation Measures

HH-1 Prepare and implement a Hazardous Materials and Waste Management Plan. SCE shall prepare and implement a Project-specific Hazardous Materials and Waste Management Plan pursuant to Title 24, Part 9 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR) that identifies hazardous materials to be transported, used, and stored on site for the proposed construction activities — as well as hazardous wastes generated onsite as a result of the proposed construction activities — and appropriate management procedures according to the specifications outlined below.

- **Hazardous Materials and Hazardous Waste Handling:** The Plan will include the following components: (1) the program shall identify types of hazardous materials to be used during the project and the types of wastes that would be generated; (2) proper hazardous materials use, storage and disposal requirements as well as hazardous waste management procedures; and (3) all project personnel shall be provided with project-specific training to ensure that all hazardous materials and wastes associated with the project are handled in a safe and environmentally sound manner and disposed of according to applicable rules and regulations. Specifically, employees handling wastes shall have or receive hazardous materials training and shall be trained in hazardous waste procedures, spill contingencies, waste minimization procedures and treatment, storage and disposal facility (TSDF) training in accordance with current OSHA Hazard Communication Standard and Title 22 CCR. The Plan shall identify the landfill facilities that are authorized to accept the types of waste generated and hauled, and these landfills shall be used for hazardous waste disposal during construction.

- **Transport of Hazardous Materials:** Hazardous materials that would be transported by truck include fuel (diesel fuel and gasoline) and oil and lubricants for equipment. Containers used to store hazardous materials would be properly labeled and kept in good condition. The Plan shall include written procedures for the transport of hazardous materials used in accordance with U.S. Department of Transportation and Caltrans regulations. A qualified transporter would be selected to comply with U.S. Department of Transportation and Caltrans regulations. The Plan shall identify proposed trucking routes.
- **Fueling and Maintenance of Construction Equipment:** Written procedures for fueling and maintenance of construction equipment shall be included in the Plan. Refueling and maintenance procedures may require vehicles and equipment to be refueled on site or by tanker trucks. Procedures will require the use of drop cloths made of plastic, drip pans and trays to be placed under refilling areas to ensure that chemicals do not come into contact with the ground. Refueling would be located in areas where absorbent pad and trays would be available. The fuel tanks would also contain a lined area to ensure that accidental spillage does not occur. Drip pans or other collection devices would be placed under the equipment at night to capture drips or spills. Equipment would be inspected daily for potential leakage or failures. Hazardous materials such as paints, solvents, and penetrants would be kept in an approved locker or storage cabinet.
- **Fueling and Maintenance of Helicopters:** Written procedures for fueling and maintenance of helicopters shall be included in the Plan. Procedures may require helicopters be refueled at construction work areas, helicopter staging areas, or local airports. Procedures would include the use of drop cloths made of plastic, drip pans and trays to be placed under refilling areas to ensure that chemicals do not come into contact with the ground. Refueling areas shall be identified in the Plan and necessary spill response materials shall be available within each refueling area.
- **Emergency Release Response Procedures:** The Plan shall include emergency response procedures in the event of a release of hazardous materials. The Plan must prescribe hazardous materials handling procedures for reducing the potential for a spill during construction and would include an emergency response program to ensure quick and safe cleanup of accidental spills. Hazardous materials shall not be stored near drains or waterways. Fueling shall not take place within 200 feet of drains or waterways with flowing water or within 75 feet of drains or waterways that are dry. All construction personnel, including environmental monitors, would be made aware of state and federal emergency response reporting guidelines for accidental spills.

The Plan shall be submitted to CPUC and BLM 30 days prior to the start of construction for review and approval.

- b. Would the project create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?***

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION. As discussed above, the construction of the Proposed Project would involve the use of hazardous materials such as lubricants, oils, cleaning solvents, and fuels, and would potentially generate limited quantities of hazardous waste during construction and demolition of existing facilities. All refueling and maintenance activities and storage of fuels and other hazardous

materials would be in accordance with the SWPPPs, applicable plans, and federal and State regulations. The transport and disposal of hazardous waste would be per State or federal regulations. Compliance and implementation of the Project-specific SWPPPs, federal and State laws and regulations, and Mitigation Measure HH-1 would reduce potential impacts due to release of hazardous materials into the environment to less than significant.

Operation and Maintenance

NO IMPACT. Operation and maintenance activities would be incorporated into the existing O&M schedule for the existing transmission lines, substations, and associated facilities. No additional impact would occur because of operating and maintaining the project.

Mitigation Measures

HH-1 Prepare and implement a Hazardous Materials and Waste Management Plan (full text above under impact a).

c. Would the project emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?

Construction

NO IMPACT. There are no schools located within 0.25 miles of any of the Proposed Project components. Although hazardous materials would be used during the construction of the Proposed Project, hazardous materials to be used would consist of low toxicity materials such as vehicle fuel, oil, cleaning solvents, and lubricants associated with construction equipment and vehicles. Additionally, all transportation, use, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials will comply with project specific hazardous material plans and federal and State regulations. Therefore, there would be no impact related to hazardous emissions or hazardous materials within 0.25 miles of schools.

Operation and Maintenance

NO IMPACT. No schools are within 0.25 miles of the Proposed Project, and operation and maintenance activities would be incorporated into the existing O&M schedule for the existing transmission lines, substations, and associated facilities. No impact would occur because of operating and maintaining the project.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

d. Would the project be located on a site that is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION. A review of hazardous material databases by SCE identified 11 hazardous material sites within 1 mile of the Proposed Project, as presented in Table 5.9-2. All but one of the sites are on non-federal lands; the Laughlin Water Reclamation Facility is on BLM land. Most of the sites have no potential to impact the Proposed Project due to regulatory status and/or distance from the Proposed Project components, except as discussed below.

Two of the sites are located on the Proposed Project, the Lugo and Eldorado Substations. The Lugo Substation is listed as having a UST and are both substations listed as sites that store and dispose of hazardous materials and liquids. However, the EDR reports reviewed by SCE (SCE, 2018) did not report any releases, violations, subsurface contaminants, or current remedial actions in connection with Lugo and Eldorado Substations. Therefore, the sites do not represent a hazard to the public or the environment, and impacts would be less than significant.

Two open status sites were listed within 1 mile of the Proposed Project components/ground disturbance areas: the Casino Drive Lift Station #24 and the former Mohave Generating Station. The Casino Drive Lift Station #24 was listed in the EDR database as an open Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST) located approximately 0.9 miles from the Mohave Substation; however, due to the site's distance from the substation and the fact that this site is no longer listed on the Nevada Department of Environmental Health Site Cleanup Database, it does not represent a hazard to the public or the environment in the Proposed Project area. Therefore, impacts related to hazardous material or environmental contamination would be less than significant. The former Mohave Generating Station is located adjacent to Mohave Substation and was listed under several databases as an open hazardous site. The former plant is listed as in remediation due to the presence of subsurface contaminants associated with the former operation, decommission, and demolition of the plant. The current status of on-site remediation efforts was not specified in available documentation (SCE, 2018); however, 12 closed corrective action sites and one closed UST site are identified on the NDEP online eMap (NDEP, 2018b). SCE indicates that based on a review of USGS groundwater data, groundwater levels in the vicinity of the Mohave Substation are greater than 200 feet below ground surface. Therefore, based on the depth to groundwater being greater than 200 feet bgs (SCE, 2018), contaminated groundwater is not anticipated to be encountered during potential excavation activities near Mohave Substation. However, despite the presence of closed NDEP corrective action sites at the Mohave Generating Station site, the extent of soil impacts on and surrounding the substation is unknown and there is a potential that unknown soil contaminants could potentially be encountered during excavation activities at and near the Mohave Substation (SCE, 2018).

The former landfill site located within 0.1 miles of the Barstow fiber optic repeater site and existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line is listed as a closed landfill site. No releases or cleanup actions were reported and it is unlikely there is a potential to encounter subsurface contaminants associated with the former landfill during Proposed Project excavation activities.

Four former World War II-era practice bombing ranges occur in the Project area, as summarized in Table 5.9-3, FUDS Sites in the Vicinity of the Proposed Project. These sites were used as munitions storage, bombing practice ranges, and desert training grounds during WWII, and there is potential for unexploded ordnance (UXO) or heavy metals contamination to be present within their boundaries. However, as shown in Table 5.9-3, none of the Proposed Project components or work areas are within the boundaries of any of the FUDS sites in the project vicinity. Therefore, there would be a less than significant impact related to release of hazardous materials due to the presence of UXO or heavy metals.

One site on BLM land is listed in Table 5.9-2, the Laughlin Water Reclamation Facility; it has no environmental contamination reported and the NDEP reports one closed UST at the site (NDEP, 2018b). The Laughlin Water Reclamation Facility would not present a hazard of contamination to the Proposed Project.

No known hazardous material or environmental contamination sites are located at or adjacent to the Proposed Project on National Park Service lands.

It is possible that unanticipated soil contamination could be encountered. Implementation of Mitigation Measure HH-2, Manage discovery of unanticipated contamination, would ensure that this impact is less than significant.

Operation and Maintenance

NO IMPACT. Operation and maintenance activities for the new Proposed Project components would be incorporated into the existing O&M schedule for the existing transmission lines, substations, and associated facilities. No additional impact would occur because of operating and maintaining the project.

Mitigation Measures

HH-2 Manage discovery of unanticipated contamination. In the event that contaminated media are encountered during construction requiring excavation, SCE shall stop work, contact SCE's Safety and Environmental Specialist (SES), request a site assessment, and notify the proper authorities. The potentially contaminated soil should first be segregated into lined stockpiles, dump trucks, or roll-off containers. Samples are to be collected and analyzed to determine the appropriate handling, treatment, and disposal options. If the analytical results indicate that the soils are hazardous, the affected soils would be properly managed on location and transported to a Class I Landfill or other appropriate soil treatment or recycling facility using a Uniform Hazardous Waste Manifest. Work at the affected site would continue at that location only when given clearance by the SES.

e. For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. The Proposed Project is located within 2 miles of four public airports and one private airstrip. The closest is the Hesperia Airport, which is located approximately 0.9 miles north of the Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line. Approximately 3,700 feet of the Eldorado-Lugo and Lugo-Mohave alignments are within Safety Zone III for the Comprehensive Land Use Plan for the Hesperia Airport; however, there are no proposed work areas in this location. The runways of the remaining three airports (Laughlin/Bullhead International, Kidwell, and Searchlight) are not oriented relative to the Proposed Project so as to result in aviation hazards due to takeoff or landing. As described in Section 4.4.2 (Poles/Towers), new and modified towers/poles for the Proposed Project would range in height from 110 to 190 feet. As required by the Federal Aviation Regulation (49 CFR Part 77), SCE would file FAA notifications for Proposed Project structures. The FAA would conduct its own analysis related to Proposed Project structures in the vicinity of airports and may recommend no changes to the design of the proposed structures; or may request redesigning the proposed structures near the airports to reduce the height of such structures; or marking of the structures, including the addition of aviation lighting; or placement of marker balls on wire spans. SCE would evaluate the FAA recommendations for reasonableness and feasibility, and in accordance with Title 14 Part 77, SCE may petition the FAA for a discretionary review of its determination to address any issues with the FAA determination. FAA agency determinations for permanent structures typically are valid for 18 months, and therefore the FAA notifications would be filed upon completion of final engineering and before construction commences (SCE, 2018). Compliance with FAA regulations and recommendations reduces the potential for aviation safety hazards related to project construction to less than significant. SCE has already received a determination from FAA that marker balls and lights are not required for the Proposed Project.

Operation and Maintenance

NO IMPACT. Operation and maintenance activities for the new Proposed Project components would be incorporated into the existing O&M schedule for the existing transmission lines, substations, and associated facilities. Helicopters are periodically used to inspect existing SCE utility facilities and would continue to be used during O&M to perform aerial inspections of the Proposed Project. Helicopter flight paths would continue to follow existing flight paths, which are generally limited to SCE owned or to-be-acquired ROWs. O&M activities requiring the use of a helicopter would be coordinated with the FAA and local air traffic control prior to commencement in the same or a similar manner as is done currently (SCE, 2018). No additional impact would occur because of operating and maintaining the project.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

f. Would the project impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. A review of the San Bernardino County EOP and MAST designated evacuation routes indicated that SR-18 is a MAST evacuation route that is spanned by Proposed Project components. Additionally, the Proposed Project crosses or is near to several major routes such as Interstate 40, Highways 95 and 163, and various state and county routes that could potentially be used as evacuation routes. SCE would implement the traffic control protocols and the project specific traffic plan to reduce potential impacts related to interference with an adopted emergency response or evacuation plans. Additionally, SCE would coordinate with county and city authorities, including emergency responders implementing the EOPs, regarding appropriate procedures to maintain use of designated evacuation routes. In the event of an evacuation, Proposed Project construction would cease, and obstructed roads would be opened to traffic (SCE, 2018). Therefore, impacts from construction of the project related to interference with emergency response or evacuation plans would be less than significant.

Operation and Maintenance

NO IMPACT. Operation and maintenance activities would be incorporated into the existing O&M schedule for the existing transmission lines, substations, and associated facilities. Operation and maintenance activities would generally not occur in roadways; however, operation and maintenance activities associated with the Proposed Project facilities may infrequently require temporary lane closures to allow access to the Proposed Project. This would be the same as for existing facilities. No additional impact would occur because of operating and maintaining the project.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

g. Would the project expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires?

(Note: The topic of wildfire is addressed in detail in Section 5.20, Wildfire, which deals with lands in or near state responsibility areas classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, as defined by CAL FIRE.)

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION. Most of the Proposed Project primarily is in areas of undeveloped desert with sparse low scrub brush and grasses and scattered rural residential properties which do not have a high risk of fire. Most of the Proposed Project is located within moderate fire hazard severity zones in California (CAL FIRE, 2007a, 2007b, 2007c, and 2007d) and very, very low to low wildland fire threat (NDF, 2018) in Nevada. Proposed Project activities would generally be located within existing SCE-owned and/or to-be-acquired ROWs where vegetation has been previously cleared (SCE, 2018). However, in California a portion of the Proposed Project near Hesperia and the southern edge of Lucerne Valley is mapped as high and very high fire hazard susceptibility and in Nevada small pockets of low to moderate wildland fire threat are mapped near the community of Searchlight and wildland fire threat ranging from moderate to high is mapped at and near the Mohave Substation.

High heat or sparks from vehicles or equipment used during Proposed Project construction have the potential to ignite dry vegetation and cause fires. SCE would implement standard SCE fire protocols in addition to requiring preparation of a Fire Prevention Plan, as discussed above. Additionally, within California, SCE participates with CAL FIRE, the California Governor's OES, the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), BLM, and various city and county fire agencies in the Red Flag Program (SCE, 2018). SCE's participation in the Red Flag Program, implementation of the Fire Prevention Plan required under CPUC GO 166, and compliance with applicable State and federal laws and regulations during construction reduces potential impacts related to wildland fire. To reduce the wildland fire risk, SCE would implement standard fire prevention protocols and follow a fire prevention plan. However, the standard protocols do not require SCE to coordinate its fire prevention plan with agency fire experts nor require monitoring of the fire protocols during construction. To address this, Mitigation Measure WF-1 would require SCE to allow agency review of the plan and require a project Fire Marshal to ensure the plan is followed and the risk of wildland fire is reduced. With implementation of the mitigation measure, the impact would be less than significant.

Operation and Maintenance

NO IMPACT. Operation and maintenance activities would be incorporated into the existing O&M schedule for the existing transmission lines, substations, and associated facilities. As with current operations and maintenance, SCE would comply with all current federal and State laws related to vegetation clearance and fire prevention. No additional impact would occur because of operating and maintaining the project.

Mitigation Measures

WF-1 Prepare and implement a Fire Management Plan. (The full text of this mitigation measure is in Section 5.20, Wildfire. The measure provides that a project-specific Fire Management Plan is to be prepared by SCE and submitted to fire agencies for review and comment and to CPUC for review and approval prior to initiation of construction.)

5.9.7 References

- CAL FIRE (California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection). 2007a. Draft Fire Hazard Severity Zones in LRA Map, NE San Bernardino County. Downloaded December 2018. http://www.fire.ca.gov/fire_prevention/fire_prevention_wildland_zones_maps
- _____. 2007b. Draft Fire Hazard Severity Zones in LRA Map, NW San Bernardino County. Downloaded December 2018. http://www.fire.ca.gov/fire_prevention/fire_prevention_wildland_zones_maps

- _____. 2007c. Draft Fire Hazard Severity Zones in LRA Map, SE San Bernardino County. Downloaded December 2018. http://www.fire.ca.gov/fire_prevention/fire_prevention_wildland_zones_maps
- _____. 2007d. Draft Fire Hazard Severity Zones in LRA Map, SW San Bernardino County. Downloaded December 2018. http://www.fire.ca.gov/fire_prevention/fire_prevention_wildland_zones_maps
- NDEP (Nevada Department of Environmental Protection). 2018a. Site Cleanup Database. Accessed December 2018. <https://ndep.nv.gov/environmental-cleanup/site-cleanup-program/site-cleanup-database>
- _____. 2018b. E Map GIS data. <http://webgis.ndep.nv.gov/>. Accessed December 2018.
- NDF (Nevada Division of Forestry). 2018. Natural Resources and Fire Information Portal website. Accessed December 2018. <https://www.nevadafireinfo.org/maps/>.
- SCE (Southern California Edison). 2018. Eldorado-Lugo-Mohave Series Capacitor Project: Proponent's Environmental Assessment (PEA). Volumes 1 through 8 and Responses to Questions and Data Requests.
- SWRCB (State Water Resources Control Board). 2018. Geotracker website, Fort Cady Borate – Pilot Project (L10001645092). Accessed December 2018. http://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/profile_report.asp?global_id=L10001645092

5.10 Hydrology and Water Quality

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:				
(i) result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(ii) substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(iii) create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(iv) impede or redirect flood flows?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Significance criteria established by CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G.

5.10.1 Environmental Setting

Climate and Precipitation

The Proposed Project is in the Mojave Desert, which is characterized by high aridity, low precipitation, hot summers, and cool winters. Average maximum temperature at Victorville, near the southwest terminus of the project, is 98 degrees Fahrenheit (°F) in July. Average minimum temperature is 29.2 °F in December (WRCC, 2018). Average annual precipitation is approximately 5.5 inches, with February recording the highest monthly average of 1.05 inches and June recording the lowest monthly average of 0.04 inches. At Boulder City near the northeast terminus of the project the average maximum temperature is 102 °F in July. Average minimum temperature is 38.6 °F in January (WRCC, 2018). Average annual precipitation is approximately 5.6 inches, with January and March recording the highest monthly average of 0.66 inches and June recording the lowest monthly average of 0.09 inches. Most rainfall occurs during the winter months, or in association with summer thunder storms which tend to be of shorter duration and higher intensity than winter storms.

Surface Water

Except for one small (0.2-acre) wetland, the surface water features crossed by the project are all desert washes that are either ephemeral (flowing only in response to rainfall), or intermittent watercourses (containing water only in certain reaches). Major watercourses crossed by the project include the following (SCE, 2018):

- Argos Wash
- Black Canyon Wash
- Broadwell Wash
- Budweiser Wash
- Cottonwood Wash
- Governor Edmund G. Brown East Branch California Aqueduct
- Kelso Wash
- Mojave River
- Piute Wash
- Watson Wash
- Willow Wash
- Winston Wash
- Woods Wash

The PEA identified a total of 582 ephemeral drainages covering approximately 252.3 acres, five intermittent drainages covering approximately 8.0 acres, and one approximately 0.2-acre wetland crossed by the project. The wetland and many if not all the drainages are potentially under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), and the Nevada Department of Environmental Protection. Approximately 304.8 acres of drainages and riparian vegetation and approximately 0.2 acres of wetlands may be jurisdictional under the California Fish and Game Code (see the Regulatory Background below).

The watercourses west of a point approximately 30 miles west of the Mohave Substation drain to interior desert dry lakes with no outlet to the ocean. East of that point, drainage is generally to the Colorado River, which leads to the Gulf of California.

In California, the project area is in two Water Quality Control Board regions: the Lahontan Region (covering principally the project area from Hesperia to the middle of the Mojave National Preserve) and the Colorado River Region (covering the project area from the middle of the Preserve to the state line). Except for the Mojave River, classified as impaired for fluoride, none of the California watercourses are classified as impaired under Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act (SWRCB, 2018). Beneficial uses of the interior drainages of the Lahontan Region, mostly classified as minor surface waters, are generally agricultural supply, municipal and domestic supply, groundwater recharge, recreation, cold freshwater habitat, warm freshwater habitat, and wildlife habitat (LRWQCB, 2016). Beneficial uses of the intermittent only ephemeral streams in the Colorado River Region consist of groundwater recharge, non-contact recreation, and wildlife habitat (CRRWQCB, 2017). None of the waters crossed by the project in Nevada have been assessed for quality or beneficial uses by the NDEP (NDEP, 2016).

Floodplains

Most of the Eldorado Substation is within the 100-year floodplain, consisting of unconsolidated sheet flow associated with the Eldorado Valley. This is a Zone A floodplain with no flood depth determined (FEMA, 2002). The northern portion of the Mohave Substation is within the 100-year Zone AO floodplain of the Bridge Canyon Fan with flood depth approximately one foot. The rest of this substation is within the 500-year floodplain (FEMA, 2002). The 100-year floodplain is used for regulatory purposes. In addition, the existing Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line crosses approximately 2.3 miles of a 100-year flood zone consisting of Zone A with no flood level determined (SCE, 2018; FEMA, 2002). The existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line crosses approximately 1.9 miles of 100-year flood zones consisting of Zone AO with depth one foot (FEMA, 2002). The existing Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Trans-

mission Line crosses approximately 9.5 miles of 100-year flood zones (SCE, 2018) mostly consisting of Zone AO with 1-foot to 4-foot depth or Zone A with no flood level determined (FEMA, 2002).

The entire project crosses areas that have not been mapped for flooding but still may be subject to flooding. The existing Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line crosses 80.9 miles of area with possible but undetermined flood zones, and the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line crosses approximately 166 miles of possible but undetermined flood hazards.

The Lugo-Mohave and Eldorado-Lugo Transmission Lines cross the Mojave River approximately 1.5 miles downstream of the Mojave Dam, which provides flood-control. Lake Silverwood, contained by Cedar Springs Dam, is on the Mojave River approximately 6 miles upstream of the project. There is a potential for inundation of the Mojave River crossing if one or both dams failed.

Groundwater

Table 5.10-1, Groundwater Basins Crossed by the ELM Project, lists the groundwater basins crossed by the project (SCE, 2018). Reported depth to groundwater ranges from several feet (parts of the Lucerne Valley Groundwater Basin) to 470 feet (Kelso Valley Groundwater Basin). Table 5.10-2, Groundwater Quality, describes groundwater quality in areas crossed by the project. Contaminated groundwater is primarily found in and around urban areas or former military installations. The two Mojave River groundwater basins have superfund sites associated with military installations.

Table 5.10-1. Groundwater Basins Crossed by the ELM Project

State	Groundwater Basin	Transmission Line	Distance Crossed	Other Project Features
California	Lower Mojave River Valley Groundwater Basin	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV	5 miles	None
California	Upper Mojave River Valley Groundwater Basin	Eldorado-Lugo and Lugo-Mohave 500 kV	15 miles	Lugo Substation
California	Kelso Valley Groundwater Basin	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV	24 miles	Kelbaker repeater
California	Broadwell Valley Groundwater Basin	Eldorado-Lugo and Lugo-Mohave 500 kV	6 miles and 15 miles	None
California	Fenner Valley Groundwater Basin	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV	25 miles	Lanfair repeater
California	Lavic Valley Groundwater Basin	Eldorado-Lugo and Lugo-Mohave 500 kV	8 miles	Pisgah Substation; Newberry Springs series capacitor; Ludlow series capacitor
California	Bessemer Valley Groundwater Basin	Eldorado-Lugo and Lugo-Mohave 500 kV	2.5 miles	None
California	Lucerne Valley Groundwater Basin	Eldorado-Lugo and Lugo-Mohave 500 kV	18 miles	Barstow repeater
California	Piute Valley Groundwater Basin	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV	17 miles	None
California	Iron Ridge Area Groundwater Basin	Eldorado-Lugo and Lugo-Mohave 500 kV	4 miles	None
Nevada	Colorado River Valley Groundwater Basin	Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV	20 miles	Mojave Substation
Nevada	Piute Valley Groundwater Basin	Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV	26 miles	None
Nevada	Eldorado Valley Groundwater Basin	Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV	23 miles	Eldorado Substation

Table 5.10-2. Groundwater Quality

State	Groundwater Basin	Groundwater Quality
California	Lower Mojave River Valley	High fluoride and boron concentrations near Newberry Springs. High fluoride and boron concentrations near Camp Cady. Benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene, xylene, methyl tertiary butyl ether contamination near Barstow. 2004). Superfund sites in the Nebo and Yermo Marine Corps depots for trichloroethane (DWR, 2004).
California	Upper Mojave River Valley	High nitrate concentrations, iron and manganese at several locations. Trichloroethane contamination at a superfund site at former George Air Force Base. Benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene, xylene, methyl tertiary butyl ether near Victorville (DWR, 2004).
California	Kelso Valley	Sodium bicarbonate-sulfate character (DWR, 2004).
California	Broadwell Valley	High TDS near Ludlow (DWR, 2004).
California	Fenner Valley	Calcium bicarbonate to sodium bicarbonate character. High fluoride in some areas. Groundwater quality generally good (DWR, 2004).
California	Lavic Valley	One area exceeds drinking water standards for sulfate, chloride, and TDS (DWR, 2004).
California	Bessemer Valley	Unknown (DWR, 2004).
California	Lucerne Valley	High nitrate and TDS associated with irrigated areas in shallow portion of the aquifer (DWR, 2004).
California	Piute Valley	Locally sulfate and fluoride concentrations are high for domestic use. High sodium in areas (DWR, 2004).
California	Iron Ridge Area	Unknown (DWR, 2004).
Nevada	Colorado River Valley	The former Mohave Generating Station site is located adjacent to Mohave Substation and is currently in remediation. Because the extent of the contaminant plume and the existing contaminant levels are unknown, subsurface contaminants may exist near Mohave Substation. Leaking underground storage tanks in the same area (SCE, 2018).
Nevada	Piute Valley	Locally sulfate and fluoride concentrations are high for domestic use. High sodium in areas (DWR, 2004).
Nevada	Eldorado Valley	Unknown

5.10.2 Regulatory Background

State and Local

California

California Public Utilities Commission General Order 131-D. Pursuant to California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) General Order (G.O.) 131-D, the CPUC has sole and exclusive jurisdiction over the siting and design of electric power line projects, distribution lines, substations, or electric facilities constructed by public utilities in the State of California. Under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the CPUC is the Lead Agency with respect to such Proposed Project elements within the State of California. SCE is required to comply with G.O. 131-D and is seeking a CPCN from the CPUC for the Proposed Project.

California Fish and Game Code. Sections 1600 through 1617 of the California Fish and Game Code protects the natural flow, bed, channel, and bank of any river, stream, or lake designated by the CDFW where there is, at any time, any existing fish or wildlife resources, or benefit for the resources. A Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement (LSAA) is required between the CDFW and an entity proposing to substantially divert or obstruct the natural flow or substantially change the bed, channel, or bank of any river, stream, or lake. The LSAA is designed to protect the fish and wildlife resources of a river, stream, or lake.

Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act. The Porter Cologne Water Quality Control Act of 1967, Water Code Section 13000 et seq., requires the SWRCB to adopt water quality criteria to protect State waters. Each Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) has developed a Water Quality Control Plan (Basin Plan) specifying water quality objectives, beneficial uses, numerical standards of pollution concentrations, and implementation procedures for Waters of the State. Waters of the State is defined by the Porter Cologne Water Quality Control Act as “any surface water or groundwater, including saline waters, within the boundaries of the State.” General objectives of the Basin Plans state that all waters (of the State) shall be maintained free of toxic substances in concentrations which are toxic to, or which produce detrimental physiological responses in, human, plant, animal, or aquatic life. The water quality control plans are intended to protect designated beneficial uses of waters, avoid altering the sediment discharge rate of surface waters, and avoid introducing toxic pollutants to the water resource. The Porter Cologne Water Quality Control Act requires anyone proposing to discharge waste that could affect the quality of the waters of the State to report the waste discharge to the appropriate RWQCB.

Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board Water Quality Control Basin Plan. The majority of the Proposed Project is located within the jurisdictional boundaries of the Lahontan RWQCB. The Lahontan RWQCB is responsible for protecting the beneficial uses of surface water and groundwater resources from the Oregon border to the northern Mojave Desert, including all of those in the California east of the Sierra Nevada crest. The Lahontan RWQCB adopted the Basin Plan in 1995 with amendments through 2016. The Basin Plan designates beneficial uses for surface water and groundwater, sets standards and numeric objectives that must be attained or maintained to protect the designated beneficial uses and conform to the State’s antidegradation policy, and describes implementation programs to protect all waters in the Lahontan region. NPDES permits, WDRs, and waivers are mechanisms used by the RWQCB to control discharges and protect water quality. The Basin Plan is regularly reviewed and updated with amendments, as necessary.

Colorado River Regional Water Quality Control Board Water Quality Control Basin Plan. Portions of the Proposed Project are located within the jurisdictional boundaries of the Colorado River RWQCB. The Colorado River region covers approximately 13 million acres (20,000 square miles) in the southeastern portion of California, including all of Imperial County and portions of San Bernardino, Riverside, and San Diego Counties. The Colorado River RWQCB adopted its Basin Plan in 1994, and has made amendments through 2017. As with the Lahontan RWQCB, the purpose of the Basin Plan is to designate beneficial uses for surface water and groundwater, set standards and numeric objectives that must be attained or maintained to protect the designated beneficial uses and conform to the State’s antidegradation policy, and describe implementation programs to protect all waters in the Colorado River Basin region. The Basin Plan is regularly reviewed and updated with amendments, as necessary.

Nevada

Nevada Revised Statutes Section 704.865. Nevada Revised Statutes provides that “A person, other than a local government, shall not commence to construct a utility facility in the State without first having obtained a permit therefor from the Commission. The replacement of an existing facility with a like facility, as determined by the Commission, does not constitute construction of a utility facility.” The Public Utilities Commission of Nevada is the Lead Agency for compliance with the Nevada Utility Environmental Protection Act.

Nevada Revised Statutes 445A. The Nevada Bureau of Water Pollution Control (BWPC) Permits Branch issues and renews discharge permits, which define the quality of the discharge necessary to protect the waters of the State. Waters of the State are defined in NRS 445A.415 as “all waters situated wholly or partly within or bordering upon this State, including but not limited to:

- All streams, lakes, ponds, impounding reservoirs, marshes, water courses, waterways, wells, springs, irrigation systems and drainage systems; and,
- All bodies or accumulations of water, surface and underground, natural or artificial.”

Depending on the types of regulated discharges, the duration, and the waters that may potentially be impacted, the BWPC may issue individual, general, or temporary permits. Individual permits are issued by the BWPC in consideration of the following types of waters:

- Discharges to surface waterbodies are permitted under the NPDES program pursuant to Section 402 of the federal CWA as amended and the State of Nevada Water Pollution Control Law (NRS 445A.300-445A.730).
- Discharges that may impact subsurface waters, and other waters of the State that are not covered under the NPDES permits, are permitted pursuant to Water Pollution Control Law and referred to as the State’s Water Pollution Control permits.
- Injections of fluids underground for storage or disposal, as authorized pursuant to Section 1422 of the Safe Drinking Water Act and the State Water Pollution Control Law, are permitted under the Underground Injection Control Program.

Local

The CPUC has sole and exclusive jurisdiction over the siting and design of the Proposed Project components located in the State of California. Pursuant to CPUC G.O. 131-D, Section XIV.B, “Local jurisdictions acting pursuant to local authority are preempted from regulating electric power line projects, distribution lines, substations, or electric facilities constructed by public utilities subject to the CPUC’s jurisdiction. However, in locating such projects, the public utilities shall consult with local agencies regarding land use matters.” Consequently, public utilities are directed to consider local regulations and consult with local agencies, but the county and cities’ regulations are not applicable as the county and cities do not have jurisdiction over the Proposed Project. For informational purposes, local regulations in California jurisdictions are provided in Appendix C. The Proposed Project is subject to local regulations in the State of Nevada.

Federal

Bureau of Land Management and National Park Service

Much of the land crossed by the Proposed Project is under the jurisdiction of the BLM and the NPS, with smaller areas under the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation. The regulations and requirements below would apply to activities on federal lands.

Clean Water Act. Formerly the Federal Water Pollution Control Act of 1972, the CWA was enacted with the intent of restoring and maintaining the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the waters of the United States. The CWA, enforced by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), requires states to set standards to protect, maintain, and restore water quality through the regulation of point source and certain non-point source discharges to surface water.

Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act requires states to assess surface water quality and prepare a list of waters (known as the Section 303(d) list of water quality limited segments) considered to be impaired by not meeting water quality standards and not supporting their beneficial uses. Impairment may result from point-source pollutants or non-point source pollutants.

Section 401 of the CWA requires that any activity that may result in a discharge into waters of the U.S. be certified by the RWQCB. This certification ensures that the proposed activity follow State and/or federal water quality standards.

Section 402 of the CWA requires that direct and indirect discharges and stormwater discharges into waters of the United States be pursuant to a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit for industrial or construction activities. NPDES permits contain industry-specific, technology-based limits and may include additional water quality-based limits, and pollutant-monitoring requirements. An NPDES permit may include discharge limits based on Federal or State water quality criteria or standards. NPDES permitting authority is delegated to, and administered by, the SWRCB and its nine RWQCBs.

In California, the SWRCB Storm Water Program Construction General Permit (General Construction Storm Water Permit) required by the federal Clean Water Act regulates stormwater runoff from construction sites of one acre or more in size. The Construction General Permit is a statewide, standing permit. Qualifying construction activities, which would include the Proposed Project, must obtain coverage under the permit by filing a Notice of Intent with the Regional Water Quality Control Board, and through the development of and compliance with a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) describing Best Management Practices (BMPs) to protect stormwater runoff. The SWPPP must contain a visual monitoring program, a chemical monitoring program for “non-visible” pollutants to be implemented if there is a failure of BMPs, and a sediment monitoring plan if the site discharges directly to a water body listed on the Section 303(d) list for sediment.

The General Permit prohibits the discharge of pollutants except stormwater and non-stormwater discharges authorized by the General Permit or another NPDES permit. It also prohibits all discharges which contain a hazardous substance in excess of reportable quantities established in 40 C.F.R. §§ 117.3 and 302.4 (pursuant to Section 311 of the Clean Water Act), unless a separate NPDES Permit has been issued to regulate those discharges. In addition, the General Permit incorporates discharge prohibitions contained in water quality control plans implemented by the nine Regional Water Boards. Discharges to Areas of Special Biological Significance are prohibited unless covered by an exception that the State Water Board has approved. Authorized non-stormwater discharges must be: infeasible to eliminate; comply with BMPs as described in the SWPPP; filtered or treated using appropriate technology; meet the established numeric action levels for pH and turbidity; and not cause or contribute to a violation of water quality standards. Discharges to stormwater that cause or threaten to cause pollution, contamination, or nuisance are prohibited. Pollutant controls must use best available technology economically achievable (BAT) for toxic pollutants and non-conventional pollutants and best conventional pollutant control technology (BCT) for conventional pollutants.

The CWA provides definitions for the types of controls that can be used to satisfy BAT and BCT requirements. Specific BAT and BCT pollution controls and Best Management Practices may include runoff control, soil stabilization, sediment control, proper stream crossing techniques, waste management, spill prevention and control, and a wide variety of other measures depending on the site and situation.

In Nevada, the NDEP’s Bureau of Water Pollution Control (BWPC) issues the Construction Stormwater General Permit (NVR100000) to control and reduce pollution to Waters of the State that meet the definition of waters of the U.S. The State of Nevada requires that projects disturbing 1 or more acres must obtain a Construction Stormwater General Permit. This construction permit is also required for projects that disturb less than 1 acre and are part of a larger common plan for development or sale that would ultimately disturb 1 acre or more. In addition, if NDEP determines that a project less than 1 acre in size will impact receiving waters or tributaries within a 0.25-mile radius of the project, the owner/operator of the project will also be required to obtain a Construction Stormwater General Permit.

Section 404 of the CWA authorizes the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to regulate the discharge of dredged or fill material to the waters of the U.S. and adjacent wetlands. Discharges to waters of the U.S. must be avoided where possible and minimized and mitigated where avoidance is not possible

National Flood Insurance Act/Flood Disaster Protection Act. The National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 made flood insurance available for the first time. The Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 made the purchase of flood insurance mandatory for the protection of property located in Special Flood Hazard Areas. These laws led to mapping of regulatory floodplains and to local management of floodplain areas according to federal guidelines which include prohibiting or restricting development in flood hazard zones.

5.10.3 Applicant Proposed Measures

The Proposed Project does not include any APMs related to Hydrology and Water Quality.

5.10.4 CEQA Significance Criteria

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR 15000 et seq.) provides guidance on assessing whether a project would have significant impacts on the environment. Consistent with Appendix G, the Proposed Project would have significant hydrology and water quality impacts if it would:

- a. *Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality*
- b. *Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin*
- c. *Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:*
 - i. *result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site*
 - ii. *substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite*
 - iii. *create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or*
 - iv. *impede or redirect flood flows*
- d. *In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation*
- e. *Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan.*

5.10.5 Methodology

The Proposed Project would be located on land under various jurisdictions, including local, state and federal governments. Hydrology and water quality impact assessment methodologies and conclusions are the same for all jurisdictions. The project's impacts were compared to applicable regulations and standards.

5.10.6 Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

- a. Would the project violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?*

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION. Construction of the project will involve clearing and grading of construction sites, trenching for conduit installation, augering for wood pole installation, possible horizontal directional drilling (HDD) for installation of underground telecommunication lines, installation of new electrical equipment at four substations, installation of two new capacitors and three fiber optic repeater facilities, installation of new optical ground wire, improvement of existing access roads, and construction of new access roads. Ground-disturbing activities could expose soils to erosion and subsequent transport downstream either overland or within watercourses. Disturbed sediment could enter watercourses resulting in increased turbidity and alteration of channel characteristics that could reduce beneficial uses. Construction will involve the use of hazardous materials such as vehicle fuel, hydraulic fluid, oil, grease, solvents, paint, drilling muds, and concrete that if spilled or otherwise discharged to the ground surface could contaminate surface water or groundwater. Human wastes and trash from construction could be left and transported to watercourses to the detriment of surface water quality. If required, dewatering for trenches could encounter contaminated subsurface water that if discharged to the surface could contaminate surface waters. Foundations in soft or loose soil, or extending below the groundwater level, may require stabilization with a drilling mud slurry. HDD installation could result in frac-out that would have the potential for contamination of surface waters with drilling mud.

Development and implementation of an Erosion Control plan, including a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), would ensure no degradation of water quality resulting from disturbance of ground surfaces by construction. Construction-related spills of hazardous materials and deposition of other wastes would be addressed by the SWPPP as well as by a Hazardous Materials and Waste Management Plan. While unlikely, due to the depth of groundwater throughout the project area, any groundwater encountered during trenching would be tested for contaminants and disposed of according to RWQCB requirements. If horizontal directional drilling is used, implementation of an HDD Fluid Management Plan would serve to reduce the possibility of a frac-out (release of drilling fluid through rock fractures) and ensure clean-up of any drilling mud contamination of surface waters.

There will be one crossing of an impaired water body, the Mojave River, which is contaminated due to fluoride.

Existing regulations, including the Clean Water Act, the California Fish and Game Code, the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act, and Nevada Revised Statutes 445A, are intended to prevent the contamination of waters and avoid violating standards and waste discharge requirements. In addition, to ensure no violation occurs of water quality standards or waste discharge requirements, this analysis recommends the following mitigation measures: Mitigation Measure HWQ-1: Implement an Erosion Control Plan; MM HWQ-2: Prepare and implement an HDD Fluid Management Plan; MM HH-1: Prepare and implement a Hazardous Materials and Waste Management Plan; and MM BR-7: Restore or revegetate temporary disturbance areas. With implementation of applicable laws and these measures, construction impacts would be less than significant with mitigation.

Operations and Maintenance

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. Operations activities would be similar to those for the existing line and consist of inspections, testing, repairs of equipment, washing of equipment, brush and weed control, roadway maintenance, and other routine activities. These same activities are currently ongoing and would therefore not be a new impact. Further, under Mitigation Measure BR-7: Restore or revegetate temporary disturbance areas, these areas would be revegetated and restored to avoid leaving permanent land disturbance that would be a potential a source of erosion and sedimentation. Operations impacts would therefore be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

HWQ-1 Implement an Erosion Control Plan. SCE shall develop and submit an Erosion Control Plan to the CPUC and BLM for approval at least 60 days prior to construction. The Erosion Control Plan may be part of the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and kept onsite and readily available on request.

Soil disturbance at structures and access roads is to be minimized and designed to prevent long-term erosion. The Erosion Control Plan shall include:

- The location of all soil-disturbing activities, including but not limited to new and/or improved access and spur roads.
- The location of all streams and drainage structures that would be directly affected by soil-disturbing activities (such as stream crossings or public storm drains by the right-of-way and access roads).
- BMPs to protect drainage structures, such as public storm drains, downstream of soil disturbance activities.
- Design features to be implemented to minimize erosion during construction and during operation (if the project feature is to remain permanent after construction).
- If soil cement is proposed, the specific locations must be defined in the Plan, and evidence of approval by the appropriate jurisdiction shall be submitted to the CPUC and BLM prior to its use.
- The location and type of BMPs that would be installed to prevent off-site sedimentation and to protect aquatic resources.
- Specifications for the implementation and maintenance of erosion control measures and a description of the erosion control practices, including appropriate design and installation details.
- Proposed schedule for inspection of erosion control/SWPPP measures and schedule for corrective actions/repairs, if required. Erosion control/SWPPP inspection reports shall be provided to the CPUC EM.

Locations requiring erosion control/SWPPP corrective actions/repairs shall be tracked, including dates of completion, and documented during inspections. Inspections and monitoring shall be performed in compliance with the Federal and California Construction General Permits. The inspection reports shall be maintained and kept with their respective SWPPP, kept on site as required by the Federal and State Construction General Permits, and made available upon request to the RWQCB, CPUC, BLM, and representatives of the traversed counties

and cities. Additionally, an Annual Report shall be filed for each reporting period in compliance with Federal and California Construction General Permit reporting requirements.

SCE shall submit Grading Plans to the CPUC and BLM for approval that define the locations of the specific features listed above.

SCE shall submit to the CPUC and BLM evidence of possession of applicable required permits for the representative land disturbance prior to engaging in soil-disturbing construction/demolition activities. Such permits may include, but are not limited to, a CWA Section 402 NPDES California General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction Activities (General Permit) from the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board(s) (RWQCBs), and the Federal General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction Activities on Tribal Land.

Prior to any ground disturbance in stream channels or other waters jurisdictional to the State of California or the Federal Government, SCE shall obtain a Streambed Alteration Agreement from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, a Section 404 permit from the USACE, and a CWA Section 401 certification from the SWRCB and submit to the CPUC and BLM evidence of possession of such Agreement/permits.

HWQ-2 Prepare and implement an HDD Fluid Management Plan. If Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD) is required, an HDD Fluid Management Plan shall be prepared and implemented. The plan shall include, at a minimum, the following measures:

- Worst-case scenario development and response effort descriptions.
- Drilling pressure monitoring to ensure pressures do not exceed those needed to penetrate the formation.
- Monitoring by a minimum of two monitors (located both upstream and downstream) throughout drilling operations to ensure early detection and swift response in the event of a surface expression of drilling fluid.
- Site-specific contingency measures shall be developed for the drill site, taking into consideration terrain, access, resource sensitivities, and proximity of suitable areas for staging response equipment for the unanticipated surface expression of drilling fluid.
- Agency notification procedures.
- Training for responding personnel.
- Prevention, containment, clean up, and disposal of released drilling mud. Preventative measures shall include incorporation of the recommendations of a pre-construction geotechnical investigation to determine the most appropriate drilling depth and drilling mud mixture for the HDD bore site. Containment shall be accomplished through construction of temporary berms/dikes and use of silt fences, straw bales, absorbent pads, straw wattles, and plastic sheeting. Clean up shall be accomplished with plastic pails, shovels, portable pumps, and vacuum trucks.
- A copy of the Streambed Alteration Agreement (SAA) shall be provided in the Plan. If the SAA also requires development of a similar plan to address HDD fluid management, that plan, as approved by CDFW, may be used to satisfy this measure provided it adequately addresses the requirements identified herein, as determined by the CPUC and BLM.

HH-1 Prepare and implement a Hazardous Materials and Waste Management Plan. (The full text of this mitigation measure is provided in the Hazards and Hazardous Materials section. The plan would address materials and waste transportation and handling, equipment and helicopter fueling and maintenance, and emergency release response measures.)

BR-7 Restore or revegetate temporary disturbance areas. (The full text of this mitigation measure is provided in the Biological Resources section. This measure provides performance standards, including details of restoration planning, monitoring, and success standards. Implementation of this mitigation measure would effectively restore wildlife habitat values in temporarily disturbed work areas, or for areas that cannot be feasibly restored, would require compensation if appropriate.)

b. Would the project substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. Project construction will use water mainly for dust suppression. Water use is estimated at 124,200 gallons per day on average which, over the 15-month construction period, would amount to a total of 174 acre-feet. The project would obtain water from local municipal sources that have enough supplies to serve the project. The municipal supplies may come from either groundwater or surface water sources, or a combination of both, depending of the water agency. Potential/likely water purveyors include the City of Hesperia Water District (existing 65-million-gallon capacity), the Phelan Piñon Hills Community Service District (existing 1.4-billion-gallon capacity), the City of Victorville Water District (existing 11.4-billion-gallon capacity), the San Bernardino County Service Area 42–Oro Grande (approximately 246,000-gallon capacity), the Golden State Water Company in the City of Barstow (existing 1.7-billion-gallon capacity), EPCOR Water USA (existing 9.8-million-gallon capacity), the City of Henderson Utility Services (existing 97-billion-gallon capacity), Las Vegas Valley Water District, and the Utilities Department of North Las Vegas (existing 11.4-million-gallon capacity). The combined capacity available from these purveyors is over 100 billion gallons or 307,000 acre-feet. The project would potentially use less than 0.06 percent of that existing capacity during construction, after which a water supply related to the Proposed Project would not be required. The actual volume of water available may vary based on conditions (e.g., drought, excess rain). Even if suppliers are at half capacity, the project would use 0.12 % of available supply. The amount used during construction would not create a substantial decrease in groundwater supply. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

There is a potential for new impervious areas to impede infiltration of water. Total new impervious areas from construction of the mid-line capacitors and fiber optic repeaters would be approximately 2.1 acres across the five sites. Given the negligible impervious area in comparison to the total watershed area contributing to groundwater basins, it is concluded that the new impervious areas would have no effect on groundwater recharge. This impact is less than significant.

Operations and Maintenance

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. During project operation activities would be similar to those currently in place, leading to no new impact. O&M operations are not expected to use large amounts of water, which when needed would be obtained from municipal water suppliers, and the amount of water to be used by the project will be approximately the same as is currently used. This impact is therefore less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

c. *Would the project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner, which would:*

(i) result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. Construction of the project would cause minor alterations of terrain in a few locations that could locally alter minor drainage patterns resulting in siltation or erosion. Grading, site preparation, and installation of crushed rock would slightly decrease the permeability of the site. Equipment and structures on the sites would be impervious surfaces that would shed runoff to their surroundings. The proposed facilities are in areas with very little to no development.

The Newberry Springs and Ludlow capacitors would involve 4.1 and 4.3 acres of site development, respectively. Berms would be constructed at each site to divert stormwater run-on away from the site. Access roads would be at-grade and not disturb the overall drainage pattern.

Overall, the potential for alteration of existing drainage patterns leading to erosion and siltation is negligible. The semi-permeable and impervious surfaces introduced at project sites would be relatively small and planned berms and retention basins would be adequate for any increase in runoff that may result.

Operation and Maintenance

NO IMPACT. During O&M, workers and equipment would use existing access or spur roads. Drainage across these features is at grade. The existing drainage pattern would not be affected

Mitigation Measure

No mitigation is required.

(ii) substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. The project will not substantially alter the drainage pattern. Access roads would be at-grade in most places and not disturb the overall drainage pattern, and temporarily disturbed areas will be restored to the existing condition. The Newberry Springs and Ludlow capacitor facilities would include berms that would divert stormwater away from the sites, which are small in comparison to the overall drainage pattern. There are no existing drainage features at either of these locations that could be substantially altered by the construction, and no adjacent features that could be damaged by the alteration of drainage. Retention/detention basins would be provided to mitigate any increase in runoff caused by the new impervious areas. This impact is therefore less than significant.

Operation and Maintenance

NO IMPACT. O&M activities would involve infrequent/periodic vehicle and foot traffic at and around facilities and would not alter the drainage pattern.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

(iii) create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. New impervious areas are small relative to the large pervious area around the proposed facilities. Impervious areas are mainly limited to the Newberry Springs and Ludlow capacitors and the three optic repeater sites. Retention/detention basins would be provided at the capacitor sites to mitigate any increase in runoff caused by new impervious surfaces. The repeater sites are approximately 0.1 acres. Impervious surfaces within the repeater sites would be small and runoff would be readily absorbed by the surrounding ground surface. Aside from natural watercourses, there are no existing or planned drainageways near the project. This impact is therefore less than significant.

Operation and Maintenance

NO IMPACT. O&M activities would involve infrequent/periodic vehicle and foot traffic at and around facilities and would not create new impervious surfaces.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

(iv) impede or redirect flood flows?

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT. The only project features known to be within floodplains are the Eldorado and Mohave Substations, and a limited number of existing transmission line structure as described in Section 5.10.1. These substations and transmission line structures are existing, and the changes proposed for the project would not create new obstructions to flood flow. This impact is less than significant.

Operation and Maintenance

NO IMPACT. Operation and maintenance activities would consist of short-term periodic site visits to inspect and repair facilities. These activities would not impede or redirect flood flows.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation required.

d. In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, would the project risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT. The project is not adjacent to a lake or ocean that could produce seiche or tsunami. Portions of the project will be on slopes that range as high as 75 percent. However, these soils are in arid, well-drained areas. The substations, series capacitor sites, and optic repeater sites are all on flat land well removed from slopes that could produce floods/mudflows. Portions of the Eldorado and Mohave Substations are within mapped flood zones on Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM). Eldorado Substation is mostly in an area mapped as Zone A, where there is a 1 percent chance of flooding annually (100-year flood); no base flood elevations or depths were determined for this zone. The Mohave Substation is partially in an area mapped as Zone AO, which has an annual 1 percent chance of flooding (100-year flood). Flood depths at Mohave would be approximately 1 foot. However, the Proposed Project would not increase the risk of release of pollutants due to inundation, as any new equipment would be on pads or elevated steel structures and would contain little if any materials that would be mobilized if flooded. This impact is less than significant.

Operation and Maintenance

NO IMPACT. Operation and maintenance activities would consist of short-term periodic site visits to inspect and repair facilities. These activities would not increase the risk of pollutants being released due to inundation.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

e. Would the project conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?

Construction

NO IMPACT. Construction of the project would result in limited areas of semi-permeable and impermeable surface that would drain to adjacent permeable areas. The runoff would be contained in detention basins and ultimately infiltrated to the ground. There would be no effect on implementation of any water quality control plan or groundwater management plan. Routine operation and maintenance would not introduce additional semi-permeable or impermeable surfaces.

Operation and Maintenance

NO IMPACT. Operation and maintenance activities would consist of short-term periodic site visits to inspect and repair facilities. These activities would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

5.10.7 References

- CRRWQCB (Colorado River Regional Water Quality Control Board). 2017. Water Quality Control Plan Colorado River Basin – Region 7.
- DWR (California Department of Water Resources). 2004. California's Groundwater Bulletin 118.
- FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency). 2002. Flood Insurance Rate Map Clark County, Nevada and Incorporated Areas. Panels 3175, 3995 and 4015.
- LRWQCB (Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board). 2016. Water Quality Control Plan for the Lahontan Region.
- NDEP (Nevada Division of Environmental Protection). 2016. Nevada 2014 Water Quality Integrated Report.

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5.11 Land Use and Planning

LAND USE PLANNING

Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Physically divide an established community?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Significance criteria established by CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G.

5.11.1 Environmental Setting

Most of the Proposed Project is in undeveloped open space primarily managed by the BLM and NPS or within the jurisdiction of unincorporated San Bernardino County, California or Clark County, Nevada. See Figure 5.11-1. Small portions of the project area are under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) and the Department of Defense (DOD). In the counties, the Proposed Project crosses land with various land use designations, see Table 5.11-1, and zoning designations, see Table 5.11-2. The Proposed Project would not result in ground disturbance to all of these designations.

Table 5.11-1. Land Use Designations Crossed by the Proposed Project

Jurisdiction	Land Use Designation	Proposed Project Component and Distance Crossed (miles)
County of San Bernardino	Agricultural and Resource Management ¹	Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line – 53.2 miles Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line – 150.3 miles
	Special Purpose (Oak Hills/Institutional [OH-IN])	Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line – 1 mile Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line – 1 mile
	Residential and Rural Living ²	Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line – 12.6 miles Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line – 12.4 miles
City of Hesperia	Utilities Corridor	Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line – 2.3 miles Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line – 2.3 miles
Clark County	Major Development Projects	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line – 1.5 miles Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line – 3.2 miles
	Open Lands	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line – 6.9 miles Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line – 48.6 miles
	Public Facility	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line – 0.4 miles Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line – 0.9 miles
	Residential Suburban	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line – 0.2 miles Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line – 0.1 miles
	Road ROW	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line – < 0.1 miles Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line – 0.1 miles
	Residential Agriculture	Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line – 0.4 miles
City of Boulder City	Open Lands (Multi-Species Conservation Easement)	Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line – 6.3 miles

1 - Includes: Apple Valley/Resource Conservation [AV/RC], Floodway [FW], Floodway-Agriculture Preserve [FW-AP], Lucerne Valley/Floodway [LV/FW], Lucerne Valley/Resource Conservation [LV/RC], Resource Conservation [RC], Lucerne Valley/Agriculture [LV/AG], and Lucerne Valley/Agriculture-40 Acre Minimum [LV/AG-40]

2 - Includes: Apple Valley/Rural Living-20 Acre Minimum [AV/RL-20], Apple Valley/Rural Living-5 Acre Minimum [AV/RL-5], Lucerne Valley/Rural Living [LV/RL], Lucerne Valley/Rural Living-5 Acre Minimum [LV/RL-5], Rural Living [RL], Rural Living-10 Acre Minimum-Agriculture Preserve [RL-10-AP], Rural Living-20 Acre Minimum [RL-20], Rural Living-5 Acre Minimum [RL-5]

Source: SCE, 2018

Table 5.11-2. Zoning Designations Crossed by the Proposed Project

Jurisdiction	Land Use Designations	Proposed Project Component and Distance Crossed (miles)
County of San Bernardino	Agricultural and Resource Management (AV/RC, FW, FW-AP, LV/FW, LV/RC, RC, LV/AG, and LV/AG-40)	Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line – 53.2 miles Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line – 150.3 miles
	Special Purpose (OH-IN)	Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line – 1 mile Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line – 1 mile
	Residential (AV/RL-20, AV/RL-5, LV/RL, LV/RL-5, RL, RL-10-AP, RL-20, RL-5)	Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line – 12.6 miles Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line – 12.4 miles
City of Hesperia	Utilities Corridor	Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line – 2.3 miles Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line – 2.3 miles
Clark County	Special Districts (General Highway Frontage District [H-2])	Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line – 0.4 miles
	Manufacturing Districts (Industrial District [M-2])	Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line – 1.8 miles Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line – 1.5 miles
	Residential Districts (Rural Open Land District [R-U], Medium Density Residential District [R-2])	Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line – 50.7 miles Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line – 8.1 miles
City of Boulder City	Government Open Space/Boulder City Conservation Easement (BCCE)	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line – 6.3 miles

Source: SCE, 2018.

Federal Land Use

Bureau of Land Management

The BLM oversees management of the National Landscape Conservation System, which contains federally recognized conservation lands, such as national monuments, wilderness areas, national scenic and historic trails, and national conservation lands. The BLM also designates Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs) as special management areas to protect significant resources. The BLM-managed land use areas within 1 mile of the Proposed Project include the following.

California Desert District. The California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA) was created by Congress in 1976 and is managed by the California Desert District of the BLM. The California Desert District encompasses approximately 11 million acres.

In the California Desert District four BLM Wilderness Areas are within 1 mile of the Proposed Project:

- Rodman Mountains Wilderness abuts the existing Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line for approximately 1.6 miles. Wilderness is located adjacent to and north of the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line;
- Kelso Dunes Wilderness located less than 1 mile south of the existing Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line and less than 1 mile north of the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line;
- Bristol Mountains Wilderness located adjacent to and south of the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line; and
- Dead Mountain Wilderness located adjacent to and south of the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line near the California-Nevada border.

Mojave Trails National Monument. The Mojave Trails National Monument is located between Joshua Tree National Park and the Mojave National Preserve along Route 66 in San Bernardino County. It is managed by the BLM and covers approximately 965,000 acres. Approximately 25.3 miles of the existing

Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line and approximately 28.3 miles of the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line span the Mojave Trails National Monument. The proposed Ludlow Series Capacitor would be in the Mojave Trails National Monument near its western boundary.

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern. The BLM manages numerous ACECs along the Proposed Project. Many of the ACECs crossed by the Proposed Project were revised in the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan Land Use Amendment (DRECP LUPA) (SCE, 2018 and BLM, 2016)

- The Piute/Eldorado ACEC is in Nevada and covers 328,242 acres and contains an estimated 286,541 acres of designated desert tortoise critical habitat pursuant to the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA). Approximately 41.2 miles of the existing Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line are located within the Piute/Eldorado ACEC. Designated desert tortoise critical habitat is discussed further in Section 5.4, Biological Resources.
- The Pisgah ACEC is located east of Pisgah Substation and is crossed by an estimated 6.7 miles of the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line in San Bernardino County. This ACEC is managed to protect biological values including habitat quality, populations or sensitive species, and landscape connectivity and covers 46,500 acres.
- The Dead Mountains ACEC is located within Dead Mountains Wilderness in San Bernardino County. It was designated to provide protection of Native American values and covers 27,210 acres. Approximately 0.6 miles of the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line is located within the Dead Mountains ACEC.
- The Piute-Fenner ACEC is in San Bernardino County and is a critical portion of the Piute Valley Tortoise Management area and provides habitat linkage between the Mojave National Preserve and land managed by the BLM Las Vegas Field Office. It covers 155,710 acres. Approximately 15.3 miles of the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line are located within the Piute-Fenner ACEC.
- The Ord-Rodman ACEC is in San Bernardino County and provides high density desert tortoise habitat and critical tortoise habitat linkage. It covers 204,860 acres. Approximately 17 miles of the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line are located within the Ord-Rodman ACEC.
- The Juniper Flats ACEC is in San Bernardino County and is an extremely diverse and dense region for cultural resources, both prehistoric and historic. It covers 2,390 acres. Approximately 0.3 miles of the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line is located within the Juniper Flats ACEC.
- The Bristol Mountain ACEC is in San Bernardino County and is high value desert tortoise habitat and connectivity between the Ord-Rodman and Chemehuevi ACECs. The area is critically important for bighorn sheep, Mojave fringed-toed lizards, burrowing owl, and several bat species. It covers 214,190 acres. An estimated 4.95 miles of the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line is located within the Bristol Mountain ACEC.
- The Granite Mountain Wildlife Linkage ACEC is in San Bernardino County and provides critical links for wildlife populations to the north and south of the linkage area. It covers 39,290 acres. An estimated 6.3 miles of the Lugo-Mohave and Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Lines are located within the Granite Mountain Wildlife Linkage ACEC.

Highland Range Crucial Bighorn Habitat. Highland Range Crucial Bighorn Habitat is located west and adjacent to the existing Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line and southwest of Boulder City and covers approximately 8,880 acres. Highland Range Crucial Bighorn Habitat area was set aside for the protection and propagation of desert bighorn sheep.

California Desert National Conservation Lands. The Proposed Project crosses California Desert National Conservation Lands identified in the DRECP LUPA to the CDCA Plan. The California Desert National Conservation Lands were identified based on having nationally significant ecological, cultural and scientific values as called for under Public Law 111-11. The California Desert National Conservation Lands in the DRECP LUPA emphasize habitat connectivity and cultural-botanical resource locations. The lands are managed using ground disturbance caps which limit the amount of ground-disturbance possible without mitigation.

National Park Service

The California Desert Protection Act established the Mojave National Preserve, which covers approximately 1.6 million acres. Approximately 49.3 miles of the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line are located within the Mojave National Preserve. Providence Mountains State Recreation Area, the University of California Natural Reserve System's Sweeney Granite Mountains Desert Research Center, and California State University's Desert Studies Center at Soda Springs are also within the preserve's boundaries. Additionally, approximately 700,000 acres of the Mojave National Preserve is designated wilderness, including the Mojave Wilderness.

Bureau of Reclamation

Approximately 0.6 miles of the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line is located west of the Colorado River and within land managed by the BOR. The Lower Colorado Region of the BOR manages water and related resources in southern Nevada, Southern California, most of Arizona, a small section of southwest Utah, and a small section of west-central New Mexico. No BOR facilities are located within 1 mile of the Proposed Project.

Department of Defense

Approximately 1.1 miles of the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line are located within land managed by the DOD and adjacent to Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center (MCAGCC) Twentynine Palms. MCAGCC Twentynine Palms is the largest military training facility in the U.S. MCAGCC Twentynine Palms contains facilities and services for resident organizations, marines, sailors, and their families. It also has exclusive military use areas, as well as a shared use area that allows public access when training exercises are not being conducted.

Forest Service

The San Bernardino National Forest is in San Bernardino County, California, and it offers bicycling, camping, fishing, hiking, hunting, picnicking, and winter sports. There are eight designated wilderness areas in the San Bernardino National Forest. It is located approximately 0.8 miles south the Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line.

State

California

California State Lands Commission. The existing Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line and the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line cross undeveloped small parcels of land managed by the CSLC, totaling approximately 5.3 miles. The CSLC was created to protect and manage natural and cultural resources and public access on certain public lands in California. The public lands under the jurisdiction of the CSLC are divided into two types: sovereign and proprietary lands. The Proposed Project crosses proprietary School Lands granted by the U.S. to California in 1853 to benefit public education (CSLC, 2015).

Nevada

Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. The existing Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line and the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line cross approximately 0.7 miles of Big Bend of the Colorado State Recreation Area, managed by Nevada State Parks. The lines are within existing ROW owned by SCE.

Local

The Proposed Project crosses several local jurisdictions. The land use designations and zoning for all of them are listed in Tables 5.11-1 and 5.11-2.

County of San Bernardino, California

The unincorporated area of San Bernardino County in the vicinity of the Proposed Project is largely managed by the BLM, NPS, and DOD. The project also crosses the community of Lucerne Valley.³ The remaining area of San Bernardino County in the vicinity of the existing Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line and the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line has land uses that are mostly undeveloped and open lands, with some low-density residential including the Arrowhead Equestrian Estates and agricultural uses, infrastructure, and industrial (mining).

City of Hesperia, California

The City of Hesperia is bordered to the west by unincorporated areas of San Bernardino County, to the north by the City of Victorville, to the east by the Town of Apple Valley, and to the south by unincorporated areas of San Bernardino County and the San Bernardino National Forest. The City of Hesperia contains a mix of residential, agricultural, industrial, and commercial uses. Lugo Substation is located within the Oak Hills Community Plan in the western portion of the City of Hesperia's sphere of influence (Hesperia, 2017). The area surrounding the existing Lugo Substation to the north and east is mostly residential development. The existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line runs through the City of Hesperia's sphere of influence and through the City of Hesperia, itself. The Proposed Project crosses mostly undeveloped lands, with some residential uses and public facilities.

Clark County, Nevada

The eastern portion of the Proposed Project is in southern Clark County in primarily undeveloped open lands in the Laughlin Planning Area. The existing Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line and the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line traverse Clark County in mostly BLM-managed land and the unincorporated communities of Searchlight and Laughlin. The Mohave Substation is identified as Major Development Project in the Laughlin Land Use Plan (Clark County, 2017) and is near existing residential, commercial, and public/institutional land uses.

City of Boulder City, Nevada

The City of Boulder City is surrounded by unincorporated Clark County and the City of Henderson to the northwest. The existing Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line and Eldorado Substation are in the southern half of the City of Boulder City in the Eldorado Valley area. The land uses near the Proposed Project are energy resources (mainly solar energy) and government open space/conservation easement.

³ A Revised Draft Lucerne Valley Community Plan/Action Guide is being prepared to replace the 2007 Plan for the area. It has not been finalized at the time of this report. However, the Proposed Project crosses the proposed community boundary for the Lucerne Valley Community Plan/Action Guide.

5.11.2 Regulatory Background

State and Local

Land use is regulated at the local level, where land use planning also occurs, consistent with state guidance.

The CPUC has sole and exclusive jurisdiction over the siting and design of the Proposed Project components located in the State of California. Pursuant to CPUC G.O. 131-D, Section XIV.B, “Local jurisdictions acting pursuant to local authority are preempted from regulating electric power line projects, distribution lines, substations, or electric facilities constructed by public utilities subject to the CPUC’s jurisdiction. However, in locating such projects, the public utilities shall consult with local agencies regarding land use matters.” Consequently, public utilities are directed to consider local regulations and consult with local agencies, but the county and cities’ regulations are not applicable as the county and cities do not have jurisdiction over the Proposed Project. For informational purposes, local regulations in California jurisdictions are provided in Appendix C. The Proposed Project is subject to local regulations in the State of Nevada.

Nevada Revised Statutes Section 704.865 provides that “A person, other than a local government, shall not commence to construct a utility facility in the State without first having obtained a permit therefor from the Commission. The replacement of an existing facility with a like facility, as determined by the Commission, does not constitute construction of a utility facility.” The Public Utilities Commission of Nevada is the Lead Agency for compliance with the Nevada Utility Environmental Protection Act.

Southern Nevada Regional Planning Coalition. The Southern Nevada Strong Regional Plan is implemented by local jurisdictions and organizations. The purpose of the Southern Nevada Strong Regional Plan is to develop regional support for long-term economic success and stronger communities. The Aboveground Utility Plan is intended to be part of the Southern Nevada Strong Regional Plan, and includes policies requiring aboveground utility corridors to be consistent with local jurisdictions and BLM.

Clark County Comprehensive Plan and Municipal Code. The Clark County Comprehensive Plan is a policy document for the physical development of unincorporated Clark County. Title 30 – Unified Development Code of Clark County’s Municipal Code implements the county’s Comprehensive Plan. Key policies include:

- Utilities 3: Utility providers are to locate transmission lines and pipelines within Clark County’s existing utility corridors when technically feasible
- Utilities 4: Support increasing capacity of existing utility corridors over establishing new ones
- Utilities 6: Encourage the development of transmission capability and interconnectivity for distributed energy, cogeneration and alternative energy sources, including regional interconnectivity and transmission capability
- Utilities 12: Use the Aboveground Utility Corridor Map for review of proposed Aboveground Utility Projects.

South Clark County Land Use Plan. The South Clark County Land Use Plan is the land use plan for the South Clark County planning and consists of goals, policies, and maps, and identifies development patterns. Key policies include:

- Policy 30.3: Encourage the upgrade and use of existing corridors whenever possible to minimize the overall number of corridors established within South Clark County communities.

Laughlin Land Use Plan. The Laughlin Land Use Plan is the land use plan for the Laughlin planning area and consists of goals, policies, and maps, and identifies development patterns. Key policies include:

- Policy 34.1: Encourage the installation of public and quasi-public infrastructure (e.g., electrical substations, water pumping stations, etc.) with enhanced designs which utilize low profile equipment, decorative block walls, drought-tolerant landscaping and features which integrate with adjacent development.
- Policy 34.2: Discourage the use of low voltage overhead electric distribution lines. The Unified Development Code (Title 30) mandates that electric distribution lines be installed underground.
- Policy 35.3: Encourage the upgrade and use of existing corridors whenever possible to minimize the overall number of corridors established within Laughlin.

Boulder City Master Plan and Municipal Code. The Land Use Element of the Boulder City Master Plan is intended guide the location and design of land uses within the City of Boulder City. Title 11: Zoning and Subdivisions of the City of Boulder City's municipal code implements the city's Master Plan. The Eldorado Substation and the existing Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line are surrounded by the Open Lands (Multi-Species Conservation Easement) land use designation; however, the future and existing land use map displays the Proposed Project alignment as a power line easement.

Clark County Desert Conservation Program: Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan. The Clark County Desert Conservation Program manages federal ESA compliance for Clark County and the City of Boulder City, among others. In doing so, the program implements the MSHCP and associated Section 10(a)(1)(B) incidental take permit to provide a streamlined process for federal ESA compliance by private landowners. The Boulder City Conservation Easement is a unit of the Clark County reserve system under the MSHCP managed by the Conservation Easement Management Plan. The Proposed Project crosses approximately 6.3 miles of land within the Boulder City Conservation Easement boundary.

Federal

Bureau of Land Management

Federal Land Policy and Management Act. The Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) provides a regulatory framework for the management and use of BLM resources. An important aspect of the FLPMA is that it supports multiple uses on public lands. In addition, under the FLPMA, the BLM regulates rights-of-way (ROWs) for electrical power generation, transmission and distribution systems, systems for the transmission and reception of electronic signals and other means of communication, pipelines (other than oil and gas), railroads, highways, and other facilities or systems developed in the interest of the public. The FLPMA also designated the approximately 26-million-acre CDCA in Southern California, of which approximately 10.4 million acres are administered by the BLM. Lands in the CDCA are also managed by the NPS, DOD, and the USFS.

California Desert Conservation Area Plan. The CDCA Plan is a comprehensive, long-range plan for the management, use, development, and protection of lands within the CDCA, and it is required as part of the FLPMA and implemented by the BLM. The CDCA Plan contains an Energy Production and Utility Corridors Element, in which the BLM encourages applicants for utility ROWs to use designated corridors.

The Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan Land Use Plan Amendment (DRECP LUPA) is focused on 10.8 million acres of public lands in the desert regions of seven California counties – Imperial, Inyo, Kern, Los Angeles, Riverside, San Bernardino, and San Diego. It is a landscape-level plan that streamlines renewable energy development while conserving unique and valuable desert ecosystems and providing outdoor recreation opportunities. The BLM signed the Record of Decision approving its Land Use Plan

Amendment to the CDCA Plan on September 14, 2016. The BLM Plan Amendment covers the 10 million acres of BLM-managed lands in the DRECP plan area and supports the overall renewable energy and conservation goals of the DRECP. The DRECP designated multiple land use designations that include Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs) and National Conservation Lands.

Public Law 111-11, the Omnibus Public Lands Management Act of 2009, formally established the National Landscape Conservation System, which is made up of BLM lands with nationally significant ecological, cultural and scientific values, and is managed to conserve, protect and restore these values. Public Law 111-11 states that public land within the CDCA administered by the BLM for conservation purposes is a component of the NLCS. The BLM identified lands as part of the NLCS through the DRECP LUPA to the CDCA Plan.

California Historic Route 66: Needles to Barstow Corridor Management Plan. The California Historic Route 66: Needles to Barstow Corridor Management Plan (CMP) was developed to secure a nomination for the route as a National Scenic Byway. The plan identifies that high-voltage electric transmission line corridors (either the expansion of existing or the introduction of new corridors in designated areas) represent a significant level of change that may have significant negative impact on the Historic Route 66 context. It recommends ways to reduce visual contrast.

Las Vegas and Pahrump Field Offices Draft Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (Proposed). The Las Vegas and Pahrump Field Offices Draft Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement was released in the fall of 2014 as a revision to the 1998 Las Vegas Resource Management Plan, which provides management direction on resource issues for all public lands managed by the Las Vegas Field Office within Clark County. The public review and comment period closed on March 9, 2015. An additional Public Input Opportunity was held between December 2017 and March 2018.

National Park Service

California Desert Protection Act of 1994. The California Desert Protection Act of 1994 is a federal law that established Death Valley National Park, Joshua Tree National Park, and the Mojave National Preserve in California. Section 511 Utility Rights of Way states that Southern California Edison Company (SCE) activities within the ROW of the Mojave National Preserve are to remain valid. This includes upgrades to the existing electrical transmission line to increase capacity. In the existing Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line ROW and existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line ROW, no additional land would be issued, granted, or permitted for such an upgrade unless an addition would reduce the impacts to resources in the Mojave National Preserve.

Mojave General Management Plan. The Mojave General Management Plan, the management strategy for the Mojave National Preserve, was developed as a requirement of the California Desert Protection Act of 1994 and is implemented by the NPS. The Mojave General Management Plan notes that some existing land uses such as electric transmission lines do not conform well with the preservation mission and management goals but are authorized pre-existing uses. The Plan identifies these resources to recognize their existence as non-conforming uses that dissect the park and at times may interfere with the visitor experience. The management philosophy towards these developments is to minimize their intrusion and manage towards their eventual elimination, either through technological improvements or acquisition. Many of these uses will likely remain intact throughout the life of this plan, but as opportunities arise to minimize or eliminate them, the park would work towards that end (NPS, 2002).

Clark County Conservation of Public Land and Natural Resources Act of 2002. The federal Clark County Conservation of Public Land and Natural Resources Act of 2002 establishes wilderness areas, promotes conservation, improves public land, and provides for high-quality development in Clark County, Nevada. It established Bridge Canyon Wilderness within the Lake Mead National Recreation Area as part of the National Wilderness Preservation System.

Bureau of Reclamation

The Bureau of Reclamation Manual Directives and Standards provide policies for BOR-managed lands; ~~however, local offices may implement these standards at their discretion.~~ Land Use Authorizations Directives and Standards provides procedures for issuing use authorization documents for use of BOR lands.

5.11.3 Applicant Proposed Measures

The Proposed Project does not include any APMs related to Land Use and Planning.

5.11.4 CEQA Significance Criteria

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR 15000 et seq.) provides guidance on assessing whether a project would have significant impacts on the environment. Consistent with Appendix G, the Proposed Project would have significant land use and planning impacts if it would:

- a. Physically divide and established community*
- b. Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.*

5.11.5 Methodology

This analysis reviewed the existing land use designations along the Proposed Project alignment primarily at the location of ground disturbance. It then reviews whether the Proposed Project would permanently convert or temporarily impact land uses and land use designations. It also reviews whether the Proposed Project would conform with the land use plans and regulations.

5.11.6 Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

- a. Would the project physically divide an established community?*

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. The Proposed Project crosses unincorporated San Bernardino County, unincorporated Clark County, the City of Hesperia, the City of Boulder City, and the unincorporated communities of Laughlin and Searchlight. Each of these jurisdictions includes residential areas although the bulk of the land is undeveloped open space. Communities are not established on federal land managed by the BLM and NPS. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not divide any communities and there would be no impact with regard to dividing established communities on federal lands.

Construction would occur primarily on existing and to-be-acquired franchise areas and ROWs, and within existing access roads or new permanent access roads for the mid-line series capacitors. The nearest residential communities are located adjacent to the Lugo Substation, approximately 0.7 miles north of existing the Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line in San Bernardino County and adjacent to the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line and Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line in

Clark County. These neighborhoods would not be physically divided by the Proposed Project because the Proposed Project would not cross any of the residential neighborhoods except within existing ROW and the construction activities would occur within existing or to-be-acquired franchise areas and ROWs. The impact would be less than significant.

Operation

NO IMPACT. O&M activities associated with the Proposed Project would be similar to those currently performed for the existing facilities, with additional O&M activities associated with the proposed mid-line series capacitors and fiber optic repeater facilities. Because O&M activities would be similar to current practices and no impact would result from the Proposed Project.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

b. Would the project cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?

Construction

State and Local

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. In California, the CPUC's jurisdictions over electric power line projects and substations exempts the Proposed Project from local land use regulations under G.O. 131-D. However, the CPUC generally reviews local regulations for consistency. The Proposed Project is subject to local regulations in the State of Nevada.

Approximately 177.6 miles of the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line is in unincorporated areas of San Bernardino County within existing or to-be-acquired franchise areas and ROWs. The majority of the Proposed Project ROW is designated as Resource Management and is land managed by either the BLM or the NPS. On private land, the Proposed Project would be located within areas designated as Agricultural,⁴ Special Purpose, and Residential. For each of the zones that the Proposed Project crosses, Section 85.02.050 of the County of San Bernardino Development Code states that pipelines, transmission lines, and control station uses are regulated and approved by the CPUC.

Local jurisdictions in California acting pursuant to local authority are preempted from regulating electric power line projects, distribution lines, substations, or electric facilities constructed by public utilities subject to the CPUC's jurisdiction. However, in locating such projects, the public utilities shall consult with local agencies regarding land use matters. Because the Proposed Project is in existing ROW, the local agencies are aware of the ROW and have incorporated it into their general plans and ordinances. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not conflict with relevant County of San Bernardino land use plans and goals.

Approximately 2.7 miles of the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line is in the City of Hesperia. The Proposed Project would be located within an area designated as Utilities Corridor and would not conflict with relevant City of Hesperia land use plans and goals.

⁴ Section 5.2, Agricultural and Forestry Resources contains discussion on potential impacts associated with land uses and zoning designated as agricultural use.

Approximately 72.1 miles of the existing Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line and the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line is in unincorporated Clark County within an existing or to-be-acquired ROWs. The Proposed Project would be located within areas designated as Special Districts, Manufacturing Districts, and Residential Districts. The Special District (General Highway Frontage District) establishes a variety of residential, office, and commercial uses. The Manufacturing Districts zone is intended to permit a broad range of industrial development. The Rural Open Land District and Medium Density Residential District are both Residential Districts. The Rural Open Land District provides for very low-density residential use and other appropriate uses of the vast areas of rural land. The Medium Density Residential District provides for the development of compact single-family residential development and prohibits the development of incompatible uses that are detrimental to the residential environment.

Public utility structures (including transmission lines that are 34.5 kV or greater) are allowed within each of the designations crossed by the Proposed Project as a conditional use if the structures are located within an aboveground transmission line corridor designated in the Public Facilities and Services Element of the Clark County Comprehensive Plan. Electric substations or other public utility structures located in the Industrial District are permitted only if equipment is not visible from streets or residential development, is screened with enhanced walls and landscaping, and is located at least 200 feet from a residential development. The Proposed Project is located within an existing aboveground transmission line corridor. Additionally, Mohave Substation is existing and is not located within 200 feet of a residential development. While equipment is visible from Bruce Woodbury Drive and Edison Way, there is an existing security fence surrounding Mohave Substation and the Proposed Project would not have any changes to the general visual character of the area. The Proposed Project would not conflict with relevant Clark County land use plans and goals.

The Eldorado Substation and 6.5 miles of the existing Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line are in the City of Boulder City. The Proposed Project would be located within an area designated as Government Open Space/BCCE (Boulder City Conservation Easement). The Proposed Project includes the modification and upgrade of existing facilities within an existing BCCE ROW and along an existing transmission line corridor, and all use rights in these corridors are excluded from the BCCE. The Proposed Project would not conflict with relevant City of Boulder City land use plans and goals.

Bureau of Land Management

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. The Proposed Project would cross BLM managed lands having various land designations. The BLM land in California is managed under the CDCA Plan as amended by the DRECP LUPA. As such, it would be subject to the Conservation and Management Actions as determined by the BLM in its review of the project under the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA). The DRECP LUPA recognizes valid existing rights such as existing transmission lines. The BLM will evaluate the applicability of valid existing rights on a case-by-case basis, and in situations where the BLM retains authority to require design features or specific actions, the BLM will apply DRECP LUPA decisions to the extent authorized by the relevant statutes and regulations. Because the BLM will require the Proposed Project to comply with the applicable management actions under the CDCA Plan, it does not conflict with the existing plans and policies.

The Ludlow Series Capacitor and other ground wire modification work would occur within the Mojave Trails National Monument and result in an estimated 2.9 acres of permanent disturbance and 40.5 acres of temporary disturbance.

The Ludlow and Newberry Series Capacitors and other ground wire modification work and pole work would occur within lands identified as National Conservation Lands and would result in an estimated almost 5.2 acres of permanent disturbance and 68.3 acres of temporary disturbance.

Both temporary and permanent impacts would occur on BLM land within ACECs. Direct ground disturbance impacts would occur in ACECs managed by the BLM including raising towers, ground wire peak modification, helicopter landing zones, temporary structure work areas, stringing sites, and temporary yards. The Ludlow and Newberry Series Capacitors are within the Pisgah ACEC. Impacts to ACECs are:

- 20.6 acres of temporary disturbance to Piute/Eldorado,
- 5.9 acres of permanent and 39.7 acres of temporary disturbance to Pisgah,
- 13.3 acres of temporary disturbance to Piute-Fenner,
- 15.8 acres of temporary disturbance to Ord-Rodman,
- 5.2 acres of temporary disturbance to Bristol Mountain, and
- 15.7 acres of temporary disturbance to Granite Mountain Wildlife Linkage.

Indirect impacts to land use include visual impacts, dust, and noise. The Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line runs between numerous wilderness areas. While the project has been designed to avoid direct impacts to the wilderness areas, indirect impacts would occur.

As noted, the Proposed Project would result in direct and indirect impacts within several BLM land designations managed under the CDCA Plan as amended. The only permanent impact to BLM land is to 5.9 acres in the Pisgah area for the series capacitor sites which includes permanent disturbance within the ACEC, National Conservation Lands, and Mojave Trails National Monument, all of which overlap. The CDCA Plan as amended by the DRECP LUPA allows for such impacts when the project adheres to the appropriate Conservation and Management Actions as determined by the BLM. SCE's ROW grants for lands currently and formerly under BLM administration have expired. As part of the Proposed Project, the utility would renew the ROW Grant for lands under BLM jurisdiction. The Proposed Project would be required to comply with the CDCA Plan as amended and any other BLM stipulations. Complying with the plan and stipulations would ensure that there is no conflict with the CDCA Plan and the impact would be less than significant.

National Park Service

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. The Proposed Project would cross NPS managed land in the Mojave National Preserve and would result in 0.2 acres of permanent and 24.3 acres of temporary disturbance. The Mojave General Management Plan is the management strategy for the Preserve. The Plan notes that some existing land uses such as electric transmission lines do not conform well with the preservation mission and management goals but are authorized pre-existing uses. The Park's philosophy toward these developments is to minimize their intrusion and manage toward their elimination although the Plan recognizes that the uses will likely remain intact.

SCE's ROW grant for lands currently and formerly under BLM administration have expired. The utility would need to obtain a Special Use Permit from NPS on lands formerly under BLM jurisdiction but now administered by the NPS as the Mojave National Preserve. On the Mojave National Preserve, an NPS Special Use Permit would be needed for ROW and a separate Special Use Permit would be required for construction.

The two repeater sites located in the Mojave National Preserve would be within the ROW Permit for the Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line and would be low profile facilities adjacent to existing tall LSTs. The transmission line is a permitted use in the Preserve. The sites, while visible, are part of the needed infrastructure for the transmission line. The NPS Mojave General Management Plan recognizes that many existing uses will remain intact through the life of the plan. As such, the sites would not conflict with the existing General Management Plan and the impacts would be less than significant.

Operation

NO IMPACT. O&M activities associated with the Proposed Project would be similar to those currently performed for the existing facilities, with additional O&M activities associated with the proposed mid-line series capacitors and fiber optic repeater facilities. Because O&M activities would be similar to current practices, the Proposed Project would not result land use impacts.

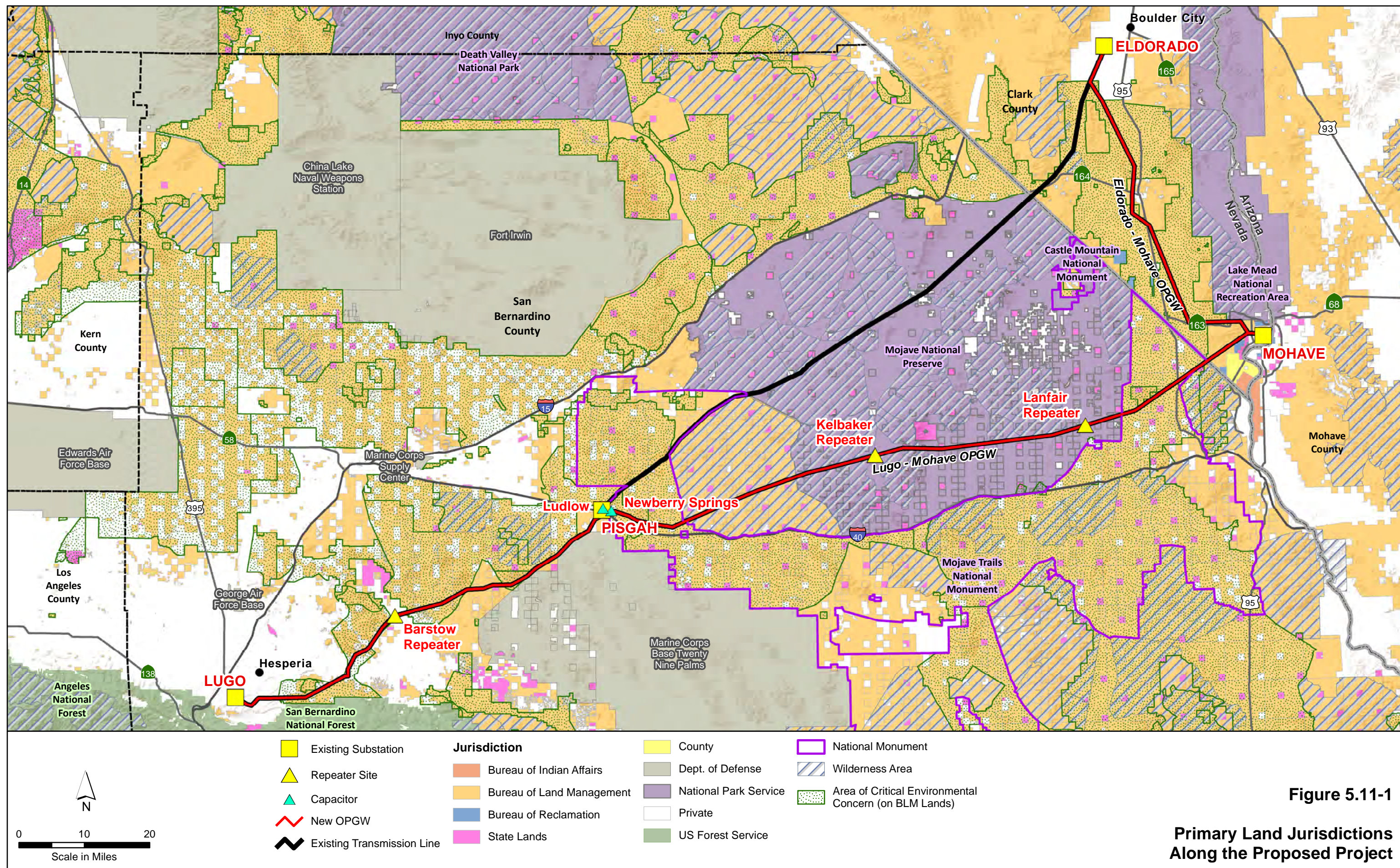
Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

5.11.7 References

- BLM (Bureau of Land Management). 2016. Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan Land Use Plan Amendment. Appendix B, Areas of Critical Environmental Concern – Special Unit Management Plans.
- CSLC (California State Lands Commission). 2015. Land Types. http://www.slc.ca.gov/Info/Land_Class.html. Accessed January 2, 2019.
- NPS (National Park Service). 2002. Mojave National Preserve: General Management Plan: Use of the Preserve. https://www.nps.gov/moja/learn/management/upload/MOJA_GMP71-88.pdf. December 20, 2018.
- SCE (Southern California Edison). 2018. Eldorado-Lugo-Mohave Series Capacitor Project: Proponent's Environmental Assessment (PEA). Volumes 1 through 8. April.

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5.12 Mineral Resources

MINERAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

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

Significance criteria established by CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G.

5.12.1 Environmental Setting

According to the United States Geological Survey (USGS), a mineral resource is defined as a concentration of naturally occurring solid, liquid, or gaseous materials in or on the earth's crust in such a form and quantity, and of such a grade or quality, that it has reasonable prospects for economic extraction, either currently or in the future. Mineral resources include oil, natural gas, and metallic and non-metallic deposits.

The Proposed Project is in California and Nevada, within the Mojave Basin and Range. Federal lands constitute most of the land in the Mojave, including lands under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), National Park Service (NPS), Bureau of Reclamation, and Department of Defense. The Proposed Project would modify three existing transmission lines that extend between Lugo Substation in San Bernardino County, California and Eldorado Substation in the City of Boulder City, Nevada, between Lugo Substation and Mohave Substation in southern Clark County, Nevada, and between Mohave Substation and Eldorado Substation. Portions of the Proposed Project would also cross the City of Hesperia, California, the unincorporated community of Lucerne Valley in California, as well as the unincorporated communities of Searchlight and Laughlin in Nevada.

There are 48 mineral sites identified as producers, past producers, or mineral prospects within 1 mile of the Proposed Project. These are primarily on BLM land but also occur on private and NPS land (SCE, 2018). Producers are defined by the USGS as mines that produce on demand or seasonally with variable durations of activity. Past producers are formerly operating mines that have closed and the equipment or structures may have been removed or abandoned. Mineral prospects are deposits that have gone beyond the occurrence stage but may or may not have undergone feasibility studies that would lead to a decision on whether to go into production. The mineral sites are listed in Table 5.12-1, Mineral Resource Producers, Past Producers, and Prospects within 1 Mile of the Proposed Project. Of these locations, the BLM identifies the Hector Clay Mine as a high priority operation and as locatable minerals (BLM, 2015).

The Department of Conservation's (DOC) Office of Mine Reclamation (OMR) provides oversight for local governments as they administer the California Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (SMARA) within their respective jurisdictions. Based on a review of existing mining operations from the DOC's OMR, no active mines were located within 1 mile of the Proposed Project (SCE, 2018). Active mines are defined as U.S. mineral and metal operations that are monitored by the National Minerals Information Center of the USGS, surveyed by the USGS, and considered to be currently active as of 2003.

The DOC Division of Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources (DOGGR) oversees the drilling, operation, maintenance, and plugging and abandonment of oil, natural gas, and geothermal wells in California, and tracks all known oil and gas wells in the state. Based on a review of data from the DOC DOGGR, there are no oil, natural gas, or geothermal wells located within 1 mile of the Proposed Project (DOGGR, 2018).

Mineral Resources Zones (MRZs), as classified by the California State Mining and Geology Board (SMGB), were established to designate lands that contain mineral deposits. A small portion of the Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line and Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line are in areas classified as MRZ-2a and MRZ-3a. MRZ-2a areas are classified as areas that contain significant measured or indicated reserves. MRZ-3a areas are classified as areas likely to contain undiscovered mineral deposits similar to known deposits in the same producing district or region (i.e., hypothetical resources).

Areas classified as MRZ-2a are located south of the Pisgah Substation near the Hector Mine. Areas classified as MRZ-3a are located west of the Rodman Mountains; east of Ludlow; and west of the SR 95 just west of the California-Nevada border. Within the MRZ areas, the Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line and Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line do not cross any areas formally designated by the SMGB for lands containing mineral resources of regional or Statewide economic significance that are needed to meet future demand.

Table 5.12-1. Mineral Resource Producers, Past Producers, and Prospects within 1 Mile of the Proposed Project

Mineral Prospect/ Past Mining Activity	Development Status	Commodity	Approx. Distance to Nearest Project Component	Relative Location and Nearest Proposed Project Component
California				
Argos Deposit	Past Producer	Strontium	0.1 miles	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Due Group Prospect	Prospect	Gold	0.1 miles	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Foshay Pass Barite	Occurrence	Barium-barite	0.1 miles	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Heather Pumice Prospect	Occurrence	Pumice	0.1 miles	Newberry Springs series capacitor
La Douceur	Prospect	Strontium	0.1 miles	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Mountain Flat	Prospect	Gold	0.1 miles	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Unnamed Strontianite Occurrence	Occurrence	Strontium	0.1 miles	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Bonanza King	Past Producer	Silver, lead, copper, gold	0.2 miles	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Dupont, Rowe and Buehler	Past Producer	Strontium	0.2 miles	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Hansen Barite Deposit	Past Producer	Barium-barite	0.2 miles	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Providence	Past Producer	Lead, silver, copper	0.2 miles	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Unnamed Pit	Past Producer	Stone, crushed/broken	0.2 miles	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Unnamed Strontianite Prospect	Occurrence	Strontium	0.2 miles	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Copper Chief	Past Producer	Copper, gold, silver	0.3 miles	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Crucero Group	Occurrence	Gold	0.3 miles	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Fort Cady Process Plant	Prospect	Boron-borates, gypsum-anhydrite	0.3 miles	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line

Table 5.12-1. Mineral Resource Producers, Past Producers, and Prospects within 1 Mile of the Proposed Project

Mineral Prospect/ Past Mining Activity	Development Status	Commodity	Approx. Distance to Nearest Project Component	Relative Location and Nearest Proposed Project Component
Fort Cady Solution Mine	Prospect	Boron-borates, gypsum-anhydrite	0.3 miles	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Goldstone Spring Adit	Prospect	Gold, silver, copper	0.3 miles	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Unnamed Barite Deposit	Occurrence	Barium-barite	0.3 miles	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Unnamed Prospect	Occurrence	Iron	0.3 miles	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
East Burro Prospect	Occurrence	Iron	0.4 miles	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Dupont Strontianite Group	Occurrence	Strontianite, strontium	0.4 miles	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Kelso Dunes	Past Producer	Silica, gold, iron, titanium	0.4 miles	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Kit Fox	Prospect	Barium-barite	0.4 miles	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Mountain Flat	Past Producer	Gold, copper	0.4 miles	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Parker Mill Site	Producer	Silica, iron, feldspar	0.4 miles	Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Reinerth Prospect	Past Producer	Manganese	0.4 miles	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Sunrise Prospect	Prospect	Gold, copper	0.4 miles	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Unnamed Pit	Past Producer	Sand and gravel, construction	0.4 miles	Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line
Unnamed Prospect	Prospect	Copper	0.4 miles	Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line
Unnamed Shaft	Prospect	Silver	0.4 miles	Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line
Adams-Anna Ore	Prospect	Gold, silver	0.6 miles	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Blue Danube	Prospect	Gold, silver	0.6 miles	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Burro No. 31 Prospect	Prospect	Gold, copper	0.6 miles	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Iron Mountain-Bessemer-Lava Bed	Producer	Iron	0.6 miles	Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line
Red Hills	Past Producer	Gold	0.6 miles	Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line
Peterson Limestone Deposit	Past Producer	Limestone, general	0.7 miles	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line; Barstow fiber optic repeater
Silver Cliff	Occurrence	Silver, lead	0.7 miles	Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line
Silver Reef Mine	Prospect	Zinc, silver, lead	0.7 miles	Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line

Table 5.12-1. Mineral Resource Producers, Past Producers, and Prospects within 1 Mile of the Proposed Project

Mineral Prospect/ Past Mining Activity	Development Status	Commodity	Approx. Distance to Nearest Project Component	Relative Location and Nearest Proposed Project Component
Star Dust Group	Occurrence	Tungsten	0.7 miles	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line; Barstow fiber optic Repeater
Star Dust Group	Prospect	Tungsten	0.8 miles	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line; Barstow fiber optic repeater
Tip Top Prospect	Prospect	Copper, silver	0.7 miles	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Copper Strand Mine	Past Producer	Copper	0.8 miles	Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line
Newberry Hectorite Mine	Past Producer	Clay	0.8 miles	Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line
Pennsylvania	Prospect	Gold, silver, copper	0.8 miles	Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Unnamed Prospect	Prospect	Gold, copper, silver	0.8 miles	Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line
Vulcan Mine – Burro Prospect	Past Producer	Iron	0.8 miles	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Burro Nos. 54 and 55 Prospect	Prospect	Copper	0.9 miles	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Fort Cady Deposit	Prospect	Boron-borates, gypsum-anhydrite, strontium, halite, sodium	0.9 miles	Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line
Lee Yim	Producer	Psilomelane, manganese	0.9 miles	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Lee Yim Deposit	Past Producer	Silica, manganese, iron, calcium, barium-barite, aluminum, phosphorus-phosphates	0.9 miles	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Mt. Pisgah Volcanic Cinders	Past Producer	Pumice	0.9 miles	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Star Dust Group	Occurrence	Tungsten	0.9 miles	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Unnamed Strontium Occurrence	Occurrence	Strontium	0.9 miles	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Vulcan Mine Dolomite	Occurrence	Magnesite, dolomite	0.9 miles	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Center Prospect	Prospect	Gold, silver	1.0 miles	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Riley Mine	Past Producer	Gold	1.0 miles	Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line; Barstow fiber optic repeater
Unnamed Prospect	Prospect	Gold, silver, copper	1.0 miles	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Nevada				
Searchlight M&M	Producer	Gold	0.2 miles	Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Searchlight Parallel Mine	Occurrence	Silver, gold	0.3 miles	Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Golden Dawn's Mine	Occurrence	Gold	0.4 miles	Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line

Table 5.12-1. Mineral Resource Producers, Past Producers, and Prospects within 1 Mile of the Proposed Project

Mineral Prospect/ Past Mining Activity	Development Status	Commodity	Approx. Distance to Nearest Project Component	Relative Location and Nearest Proposed Project Component
Searchlight District	Producer	Vanadium, zinc, copper, lead	0.4 miles	Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Cyrus Noble	Past Producer	Silver, gold	0.5 miles	Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Oro Plata Mine	Occurrence	Silver	0.5 miles	Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Searchlight Parallel Mine	Past Producer	Gold, silver	0.5 miles	Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Continental Heap Leach	Producer	Silver, gold	0.6 miles	Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Coyote Mine and Mill	Unknown	Gold	0.6 miles	Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Cyrus Noble Mine	Past Producer	Silver, gold	0.6 miles	Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Search Light Insulation Prod. Mine	Past Producer	Perlite	0.6 miles	Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Blossom Mine	Past Producer	Gold, silver	0.7 miles	Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Blossom Mine	Past Producer	Gold, silver, lead, copper	0.7 miles	Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Pompeii Mine	Past Producer	Silver, gold	0.7 miles	Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Pompeii Mine	Past Producer	Gold, silver, zinc	0.7 miles	Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Santa Fe	Occurrence	Gold, silver	0.7 miles	Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Santa Fe Mine	Prospect	Gold, silver	0.7 miles	Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Searchlight M&M Mine	Past Producer	Gold, zinc, silver	0.7 miles	Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Southern Nevada Mine	Past Producer	Gold, copper, lead, silver	0.8 miles	Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Good Hope Mine	Past Producer	Gold, copper, lead, silver, zinc	0.9 miles	Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Quartette Mine	Past Producer	Gold, lead, molybdenum, silver, zinc, copper	0.9 miles	Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Southern Nevada Mine	Occurrence	Silver, gold	0.9 miles	Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Good Hope Mine	Past Producer	Cuprite, galena, hematite, wulfenite, gold, silver	1.0 miles	Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Red Bird Mine	Past Producer	Gold	1.0 miles	Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line

Source: SCE, 2018.

The Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology (NBMG) is a research and public service unit of the University of Nevada and is responsible for the State geological survey. The NBMG conducts research and publishes reports on mineral resources, engineering geology, environmental geology, hydrogeology, and geologic

mapping. The NBMG collaborates with numerous state and federal agencies in conducting research and in providing geologic and resource information.

5.12.2 Regulatory Background

State and Local

California

Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975. The California Geological Survey designates MRZs where access to important mineral resources may be threatened, according to the provisions of the SMARA of 1975. The SMARA requires that all jurisdictions incorporate mapped mineral resource designations — as approved by the SMGB — into their general plans. The SMGB and the DOC's OMR are jointly charged with ensuring proper administration of the SMARA's requirements. The SMGB promulgates regulations to clarify and interpret the SMARA's provisions, as well as to serve as a policy and appeals board. The OMR provides an ongoing technical assistance program for lead agencies and operators, maintains a database of mine locations and operational information Statewide, and is responsible for compliance-related matters.

Nevada

Nevada Administrative Code Chapters 445A.350 through 445A.447, and 519A.010 through 519A.415. Mining activities in Nevada are regulated by the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection Bureau of Mining Regulation and Reclamation (BMRR), in cooperation with other federal, State, and local agencies under regulations adopted in 1989 (Nevada Administrative Code Chapters 445A.350 through 445A.447, and 519A.010 through 519A.415). The BMRR has regulation, closure, and reclamation branches; and its mission is to ensure that mining operations do not degrade Nevada's waters and that land disturbed by mining operations is reclaimed in a manner to ensure productive post-mining use.

Local

The CPUC has sole and exclusive jurisdiction over the siting and design of the Proposed Project components located in the State of California. Pursuant to CPUC G.O. 131-D, Section XIV.B, "Local jurisdictions acting pursuant to local authority are preempted from regulating electric power line projects, distribution lines, substations, or electric facilities constructed by public utilities subject to the CPUC's jurisdiction. However, in locating such projects, the public utilities shall consult with local agencies regarding land use matters." Consequently, public utilities are directed to consider local regulations and consult with local agencies, but the county and cities' regulations are not applicable as the county and cities do not have jurisdiction over the Proposed Project. For informational purposes, local regulations in California jurisdictions are provided in Appendix C. The Proposed Project is subject to local regulations in the State of Nevada.

Clark County Comprehensive Plan. The Conservation Element of the Clark County Comprehensive Plan contains the following policy that is relevant to the Proposed Project:

- **Policy CON 2.2:** Encourage preservation of unique geologic and mineral formations for educational, scientific, recreational and aesthetic value

Federal

Bureau of Land Management

General Mining Law of 1872 (30 United States Code [USC] 21 et seq.). The General Mining Law, as amended, grants citizens (and those seeking citizenship) of the United States the right to enter public lands and reserve interests for the exploration and development of minerals, subject to this mining law. The law specifically includes minerals such as gold, silver, copper, lead, zinc, and uranium; nonmetallic minerals such as asbestos, barite, gypsum, and mica; and uncommon varieties of stone (43 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 3800). This law sets forth rules and procedures for the exploration, location, and patenting of lode, placer, and mill site mining claims. Claimants must file notice of the original claim with the BLM, as well as either an annual notice of the intention to hold, an affidavit of assessment work, or a similar notice.

Mineral Leasing Act of 1920 (30 USC 181 et seq.). The Mineral Leasing Act authorizes and governs the leasing of public lands to develop deposits of coal, oil, gas, and other hydrocarbons, sulfur, phosphate, potassium, and sodium. The BLM issues right-of-way (ROW) grants for oil and natural gas gathering, distribution pipelines, and related facilities, as well as oil and natural gas transmission pipelines and related facilities.

Materials Sales Act of 1947 (30 USC 601–604). The Materials Sales Act provides for materials disposal on public lands. The Secretary of the Department of the Interior (DOI) is authorized to develop and implement rules and regulations to dispose of mineral materials (including, but not limited to, common varieties of sand, stone, gravel, pumice, pumicite, cinders, and clay) on public lands in the United States. These materials can be disposed of upon adequate payment to the DOI. The Secretary of the Interior has the authority and discretion to permit any federal, state, or territorial agency, unit, or subdivision, including municipalities, or any other association or corporation not organized for profit, to take and remove, without charge, materials and resources for uses other than commercial or industrial purposes or resale (43 CFR 3600).

National Park Service

Mining in the Parks Act of 1976 (P.L. 94-429). The Mining in the Parks Act of 1976 (P.L. 94-429) prescribes that all activities resulting from the exercise of valid existing rights on patented and unpatented mining claims within any unit of the national park system shall be subject to regulations developed and administered by the National Park Service. The regulations governing mining on all patented and unpatented claims in park units are found at 36 CFR Part 9A, which requires operators to file a plan of operations with the National Park Service for all mineral related activities. Currently there are no active mining operations inside the Mojave National Preserve (NPS, 2002).

5.12.3 Applicant Proposed Measures

The Proposed Project does not include any APMs related to Mineral Resources.

5.12.4 CEQA Significance Criteria

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR 15000 et seq.) provides guidance on assessing whether a project would have significant impacts on the environment. Consistent with Appendix G, the Proposed Project would have significant mineral resource impacts if it would:

- a. *Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the State*
- b. *Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan*

5.12.5 Methodology

The analysis considers the proximity of the Proposed Project ground disturbance to the existing mineral resources and whether the ground disturbance would deter existing or future mining activities. It considers whether any ground disturbance near mineral resources would be temporary or permanent and whether the Proposed Project would block access to any mineral potential.

5.12.6 Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

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

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. There are no active mining and/or mineral plant sites reported in the state databases within 1 mile of the Proposed Project in California or Nevada. There are 48 mineral resource producers, past producers, or prospects within 1 mile of the Proposed Project. The Proposed Project components closest to mineral resource producers, past producers, or prospects include the OPGW slicing location at Tower M42-T4 and OPGW modifications and splicing Tower M53-T1 on BLM land and Tower M118-T2 on NPS land. The OPGW modifications and splicing Tower M163-T4 would be located within an area designated as MRZ-3a and near the Mountain Flat past producer and prospect on BLM land. The Proposed Project would raise Tower M64-T2 and be located within an area designated as MRZ-2a near the Hector Mine on BLM and private land. This would result in an estimated 100 by 100 feet disturbance. While there would be minor ground disturbance caused by the Proposed Project at or near mineral resources, the disturbance would be temporary in nature and would not limit access to these locations. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not prevent current or future extraction of these mineral resources. There would be no loss of availability of regionally valuable resources and the impact would be less than significant.

Operation and Maintenance

NO IMPACT. Operation and Maintenance (O&M) activities associated with the Proposed Project would be similar to those currently performed by SCE for existing facilities. They include repairing conductors, washing or replacing insulators, repairing or replacing other hardware components, repairing or replacing poles and towers, tree trimming, brush and weed control, and access road maintenance, among other things. O&M practices would also include routine inspections and emergency repair within substations and ROWs, which would require the use of vehicles and equipment. SCE also inspects the transmission and subtransmission overhead facilities in a manner consistent with CPUC G.O. 165, which requires observation a minimum of once per year, but inspection typically occurs more frequently to ensure system reliability. Following construction of the Proposed Project, additional O&M activities would consist of monthly and annual inspections, as well as equipment testing and maintenance of emergency generators, ranging from once a year to once every five years. Because routine O&M activities would occur within existing or to-be-acquired franchise areas and ROWs and would not reduce the availability of known mineral resources, no impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

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

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. The Proposed Project would require Tower M64-T2 to be raised. This tower is located within an area designated as MRZ-2a near the Hector Mine on BLM and private land. The San Bernardino General Plan Policy CO 7.2, Implement the state Mineral Resource Zone (MRZ) designations to establish a system that identifies mineral potential and economically viable reserves, would also recognize this area as a locally important mineral recovery site. As noted, this would result in an estimated 100 by 100 feet disturbance but the disturbance would be temporary in nature and would not limit access to this location. No other Proposed Project construction activities would occur on important mineral resource recovery sites delineated on local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not result in loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site and the impact would be less than significant.

Operation and Maintenance

NO IMPACT. As previously described, O&M activities associated with the Proposed Project would be similar to those currently performed for the existing facilities, with additional O&M activities associated with the proposed mid-line series capacitors and fiber optic repeater sites. As routine O&M activities would occur within existing and/or to be acquired franchise areas and ROWs, these activities would not reduce the availability of locally important mineral resource recovery sites. As a result, no impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

5.12.7 References

- BLM (Bureau of Land Management). 2015. Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan Proposed Land Use Plan Amendment and Final Environmental Impact Statement. BLM/CA/PL-2016/03+1793+8321. Section III.15, Mineral Resources.
- DOGGR (Department of Conservation, Division of Oil, Gas & Geothermal). 2018. Well Finder. <https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/doggr/wellfinder/#close>. Accessed November 28, 2018.
- NPS (National Park Service). 2002. Mojave National Preserve General Management Plan: Use of the Preserve. https://www.nps.gov/moja/learn/management/upload/MOJA_GMP71-88.pdf. Accessed November 28, 2018.
- SCE (Southern California Edison). 2018. Eldorado-Lugo-Mohave Series Capacitor Project: Proponent's Environmental Assessment (PEA). Volumes 1 through 8. April.

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5.13 Noise

NOISE					
Would the project:		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a.	Result in the generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b.	Result in the generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c.	For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Significance criteria established by CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G.

5.13.1 Environmental Setting

The project area includes primarily undeveloped land or low-density areas with open space, utility corridors, transportation corridors, and some isolated rural residences. Proposed Project activities would occur in California and Nevada, extending from Lugo Substation in San Bernardino County, California to Eldorado Substation in the City of Boulder City, Nevada and the Mohave Substation in Laughlin, Nevada, and between Mohave Substation and Eldorado Substation. Portions of the project area would also cross through the City of Hesperia, California, as well as the unincorporated areas of Lucerne Valley, California, and Searchlight and Laughlin in Nevada (SCE, 2018).

Fundamentals of Community Noise. Analysis of environmental noise and project impacts on areas that are sensitive to community noise relies on a measurement scale that simulates human perception of noise. The A-weighted scale of frequency sensitivity accounts for the sensitivity of the human ear, which is less sensitive to low frequencies, and correlates well with human perceptions of the annoying aspects of noise. The A-weighted decibel scale (dBA) is cited in most noise criteria. Decibels are logarithmic units that can be used to conveniently compare wide ranges of sound intensities.

Community noise levels can be highly variable from day to day as well as between day and night. For simplicity, sound levels are usually best represented by an equivalent level over a given time period (Leq) or by an average level occurring over a 24-hour day-night period (Ldn). The Leq, or equivalent sound level, is a single value (in dBA) for any desired duration, which includes all of the time-varying sound energy in the measurement period, usually one hour. The L50, is the median noise level that is exceeded fifty per cent of the time during any measuring interval. The Ldn, or day-night average sound level, is equal to the 24-hour A-weighted equivalent sound level with a 10-decibel penalty applied to nighttime sounds occurring between 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) is another metric that is the average equivalent A-weighted sound level during a 24-hour day, obtained after addition of five decibels to sound levels in the evening from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. and after addition of 10 decibels to sound levels in the night from 10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. To easily estimate the day-night level caused by any noise source emitting steadily and continuously over 24-hours, the Ldn is 6.4 dBA higher than the source's Leq. For example, if the expected continuous noise level from equipment is 50.0 dBA Leq for every hour, the day-night noise level would be 56.4 dBA Ldn.

Community noise levels are usually closely related to the intensity of human activity. Noise levels are generally considered low when below 45 dBA, moderate in the 45 to 60 dBA range, and high above 60 dBA. In wilderness areas, the Ldn noise levels can be below 35 dBA. In small towns or wooded and lightly used residential areas, the Ldn is more likely to be around 50 or 60 dBA. Levels around 75 dBA are more common in busy urban areas, and levels up to 85 dBA occur near major freeways and airports. Although people often accept the higher levels associated with very noisy urban residential and residential-commercial zones, they nevertheless are considered to be adverse to public health.

Surrounding land uses dictate what noise levels would be considered acceptable or unacceptable. Lower levels are expected in rural or suburban areas than what would be expected for commercial or industrial zones. Nighttime ambient levels in urban environments are about seven decibels lower than the corresponding daytime levels. In rural areas away from roads and other human activity, the day-to-night difference can be considerably less. Areas with full-time human occupation and residency are often considered incompatible with substantial nighttime noise because of the likelihood of disrupting sleep. Noise levels above 45 dBA at night can result in the onset of sleep interference. At 70 dBA, sleep interference effects become considerable (U.S. EPA, 1974).

Fundamentals of Vibration. Vibration is an oscillatory motion through a solid medium. Ground-borne vibration, in contrast to airborne noise, is not a common environmental problem, and it is uncommon for vibration caused by heavy vehicles, such as trucks and buses, to be perceptible even close to major roads. However, the Federal Transit Administration notes that “ground-borne vibration can be a serious concern for nearby neighbors of a transit system route or maintenance facility, causing buildings to shake and rumbling sounds to be heard” (FTA, 2006). Another common source of vibration is certain construction activities, such as pile-driving and the operation of heavy earthmoving equipment. The effects of energy transferred through the soils to building foundations can include perceptible movement of building floors or rumbling sounds. Most construction-related vibration would not be capable of structural damage, with the exception of an impact activity such as pile driving (not part of the Proposed Project). Annoyance from vibration often occurs when the vibration exceeds the threshold of perception by only a small margin. The vibration level that causes annoyance is well below the damage threshold for normal buildings. Receptors sensitive to vibration include certain structures (especially older masonry structures), people (especially residents, the elderly, and sick), and vibration-sensitive equipment.

Several different methods may be used to quantify vibration. The peak particle velocity (PPV) is defined as the maximum instantaneous peak of the vibration signal in inches per second. The PPV is most frequently used to describe vibration impacts to buildings. The root mean square (RMS) amplitude is most frequently used to describe the effect of vibration on the human body. The RMS amplitude is defined as the average of the squared amplitude of the signal. Decibel notation (VdB) is commonly used to measure RMS (relative to 10^{-6} inches per second) for the assessment of vibration that is perceptible and likely to cause annoyance. The decibel notation acts to compress the range of numbers required to describe vibration. Typically, ground-borne vibration generated by man-made activities attenuates rapidly with distance from the source of the vibration.

Typical Noise Environment. Baseline noise levels in the project area are typical of those for quiet rural lands. Typically, environmental noise levels vary from around 30 dBA for a quiet rural nighttime, when located away from traffic, up to about 60 dBA or higher for the daytime in urban or commercial areas with persistent traffic or other noise sources near the receptor (Caltrans, 2013).

Table 5.13-1 shows typical sound levels of various environmental noises sources.

Existing Noise Levels. Project-specific ambient noise levels were measured in April 2016 (Eilar, 2017) for this analysis. Table 5.13-2 summarizes the results of the noise measurements taken in the project area.

Each existing transmission line creates corona noise that sounds like crackling and humming due to ionization of the air near the conductor surface, and the resulting localized air-pressure changes create a notable noise source in the corridor. The noise from corona discharge and similar electrical phenomena associated with high-voltage power transmission is heard near an energized line or other high-voltage equipment as a crackling or hissing sound. This noise increases with higher voltages, irregularities on the conductor surface caused either by age or moisture, and wet ambient meteorological conditions, such as when high humidity, fog, or rain occur. Baseline noise levels in the vicinity of the existing 500 kV transmission lines are typically around 49 dBA L50, plus or minus two decibels, during rain at the edge of a typical right-of-way or 65 feet from the base of the tower. For 500 kV transmission lines operating at these levels continuously, the equivalent constant noise levels would be 55 dBA Ldn (Eilar, 2017).

Table 5.13-1. Typical Sound Levels Measured in the Environment and Industry

Noise Source and Distance	A-Weighted Sound Level (dBA)	Subjective Impression
Civil defense siren (100 ft)	130	Pain threshold
Jet takeoff (200 ft)	120	
Rock music concert (50 ft)	110	
Pile driver (50 ft)	100	Very loud
Ambulance siren (100 ft)	90	
Diesel locomotive (25 ft)	85	Loud
Pneumatic drill (50 ft)	80	
Freeway (100 ft)	70	Moderately loud
Vacuum cleaner (10 ft)	60	
Light traffic (100 ft)	50	
Large transformer (200 ft)	40	Quiet
Soft whisper (5 ft)	30	Threshold of hearing

Table 5.13-2. Existing Ambient Noise Levels

Monitoring Location	Jurisdiction	Minimum Measured 1-hour Leq (dBA)	Maximum Measured 1-hour Leq (dBA)
Lugo Substation	San Bernardino County	42.3	49.5
Arrowhead Lake Road	San Bernardino County	34.6	50.2
Deep Creek Road	San Bernardino County	32.7	50.7
Ocotillo Way	San Bernardino County	40.3	66.4
Barstow Road	San Bernardino County	44.4	62.7
Pisgah Substation (I-40 west of Ludlow)	San Bernardino County	49.0	63.7
U.S. Route 95 (west of Laughlin, Nevada)	Clark County	57.8	72.6

Source: Measurements taken in April 2016 (Eilar, 2017); presented in PEA Appendix K (SCE, 2018).

Noise-Sensitive Areas. Noise-sensitive receptors are areas where excessive noise may conflict with the intended use, examples include residential areas, schools, hospitals, day care centers, places of worship, campgrounds, and certain outdoor recreation areas. Wilderness areas and certain other outdoor recreation areas are “lands on which serenity and quiet are of extraordinary significance and serve an important public need, and where the preservation of those qualities is essential for the area to continue to serve its intended purpose” (23 CFR 772.11).

Noise sensitive receptors include several occupied residences approximately 300 to 500 feet from Proposed Project activities, and also recreational or wilderness areas that are adjacent to or spanned by the

existing transmission lines (SCE, 2018). Areas with residential land use designations are listed in Section 5.11, Land Use and Planning, Table 5.11-1.

The locations of sensitive land uses near Proposed Project components include:

- Low-density residential land uses throughout unincorporated San Bernardino County in the vicinity of the Eldorado-Lugo and Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Lines.
- Residential development north of Lugo Substation.
- Residential development west of Mohave Substation near Needles Highway in Laughlin, Nevada.
- Residential development in the northern portion of the City of Boulder City, Nevada.

5.13.2 Regulatory Background

State and Local

Regulating environmental noise generally is the responsibility of local governments. The U.S. EPA once published guidelines on recommended maximum noise levels to protect public health and welfare (U.S. EPA, 1974), and the State of California maintains recommendations for local jurisdictions in the General Plan Guidelines published by the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR, 2017).

The CPUC has sole and exclusive jurisdiction over the siting and design of the Proposed Project components located in the State of California. Pursuant to CPUC G.O. 131-D, Section XIV.B, "Local jurisdictions acting pursuant to local authority are preempted from regulating electric power line projects, distribution lines, substations, or electric facilities constructed by public utilities subject to the CPUC's jurisdiction. However, in locating such projects, the public utilities shall consult with local agencies regarding land use matters." Consequently, public utilities are directed to consider local regulations and consult with local agencies, but the county and cities' regulations are not applicable as the county and cities do not have jurisdiction over the Proposed Project. However, because noise is regulated only at the local level, the CPUC considers local regulations when evaluating project impacts. The Proposed Project also is subject to local regulations in the State of Nevada.

The following summarizes the local requirements, because the environmental analysis in Section 5.13.6 (Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures) considers local requirements and applicable standards of other agencies when determining potential noise impacts under CEQA.

San Bernardino County General Plan, Noise Element

The County of San Bernardino 2007 General Plan, Noise Element, identified goals and policies to manage noise and identify when land uses would be compatible with ambient noise levels (San Bernardino, 2007). The following goals and policies may be relevant to the Proposed Project:

- **Noise Element Goal N1.** *The County will abate and avoid excessive noise exposures through noise mitigation measures incorporated into the design of new noise-generating and new noise-sensitive land uses, while protecting areas within the County where the present noise environment is within acceptable limits.*
- **Noise Element Goal N1, Policy N1.3.** *When industrial, commercial, or other land uses, including locally regulated noise sources, are proposed for areas containing noise sensitive land uses, noise levels generated by the proposed use will not exceed the performance standards within outdoor activity areas [i.e., 55 dBA Leq during daytime hours (7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.) or 45 dBA Leq during nighttime hours*

(10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.) for residences as in Development Code Chapter 83.01.080(c)]. If outdoor activity areas have not yet been determined, noise levels shall not exceed the performance standards listed in Chapter 83.01 of the Development Code at the boundary of areas planned or zoned for residential or other noise-sensitive land uses.

- **Noise Element Goal N1, Policy N1.5.** Limit truck traffic in residential and commercial areas to designated truck routes; limit construction, delivery, and through-truck traffic to designated routes; and distribute maps of approved truck routes to County traffic officers.
- **Noise Element Goal N1, Policy N1.6.** Enforce the hourly noise-level performance standards for stationary and other locally regulated sources, such as industrial, recreational, and construction activities as well as mechanical and electrical equipment.
- **Noise Element Goal N2.** The County will strive to preserve and maintain the quiet environment of mountain, desert and other rural areas.
- **Noise Element Goal N2, Policy N2.1.** The County will require appropriate and feasible on-site noise attenuating measures that may include noise walls, enclosure of noise generating equipment, site planning to locate noise sources away from sensitive receptors, and other comparable features.
- **Noise Element Goal N2, Policy N2.2.** The County will continue to work aggressively with federal agencies, including the branches of the military, the U.S. Forest Service, BLM, and other agencies to identify and work cooperatively to reduce potential conflicts arising from noise generated on federal lands and facilities affecting nearby land uses in unincorporated County areas.

San Bernardino County Development Code

The San Bernardino County Development Code includes general performance standards to promote compatibility with surrounding areas and land uses (Chapter 83.01) by protecting the health and safety of businesses, nearby residents, and workers and preventing damaging effects to surrounding properties, including those of noise (Chapter 83.01.080) and vibration (83.01.090).

Noise-sensitive land uses include residential uses, schools, hospitals, nursing homes, religious institutions, libraries, and similar uses (Development Code Chapter 83.01.080(b)). According to the stationary source noise standards [Chapter 83.01.080(c)], industrial facility related noise must not exceed 55 dBA Leq during daytime hours (7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.) at the property line of any residential use receiving the noise. For a noise source that consists of a simple tone, such as a “hum,” then the applicable standard is reduced by five dBA to 50 dBA Leq [Chapter 83.01.080(f)]. During nighttime hours (10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.), stationary noise sources must not exceed 45 dBA Leq at the property line of a residential use. The standard is 60 dBA Ldn for exterior noise levels at residential uses adjacent to roadways and sources of traffic or mobile noise sources [Chapter 83.01.080(d)].

Vibration that is not due to construction sources must be confined, according to the vibration performance standard (Chapter 83.01.090), as follows: No ground vibration shall be allowed that can be felt without the aid of instruments at or beyond the lot line, nor shall any vibration be allowed which produces a particle velocity greater than or equal to 0.2 inches per second measured at or beyond the lot line.

Construction noise and vibration, including maintenance, repair or demolition, is exempt from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday, except Federal holidays (Chapter 83.01.080(g) and 83.01.090(c)).

City of Hesperia

The City of Hesperia Development Code (Section 16.20.125) specifies noise limits based on the land use of the properties receiving noise. Properties zoned A-1 (Limited Agricultural), A-2 (General Agricultural), R-1 (Single-Family Residential), R-3 (Multi-Family Residential) and RR (Rural Residential) are protected by a maximum daytime noise standard of 60 dBA and nighttime standard of 55 dBA. Noise from temporary construction, repair, or demolition activities is exempt from the standards in the Hesperia noise ordinance provided that the activities occur between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. on days except Sundays and federal holidays.

Clark County, Nevada

The Clark County Code of Ordinances (Section 30.68, Site Environmental Standards) identifies standards to protect adjacent properties against objectionable noise, and the ordinance limits the maximum permitted sound levels from continuous or regular sources of noise with standards for each octave band for sounds received by residential, business or industrial districts. The standards in the ordinance do not apply to aircraft noise or construction and/or demolition activity during daytime hours, where “daytime” is from 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., as defined by the Unified Development Code (Section 30.08).

Federal

Bureau of Land Management and National Park Service

There are no federal noise standards that directly regulate environmental noise caused by the types of sources associated with the Proposed Project. Federally sponsored highway projects, aviation, and transit are subject to noise analysis procedures and abatement requirements. Regulating environmental noise is generally the responsibility of local government. The U.S. EPA has published guidelines on recommended maximum noise levels to protect public health and welfare (U.S. EPA, 1974). With regard to noise exposure and workers, the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) establishes regulations to safeguard the hearing of workers exposed to occupational noise or equipment noise (29 CFR Section 1910.95, Code of Federal Regulations), and these safeguards help to avoid excessive noise at construction sites.

5.13.3 Applicant Proposed Measures

The Proposed Project includes two APMs related to Noise.

APM NOI-01: Duration of Helicopter Use. Active helicopter operation at landing zones within 700 feet of occupied residences would be limited to 2 hours per day. Helicopter use may be extended if required to ensure that electrical service is maintained for customers or for safety reasons.

APM NOI-02: Helicopter Use in Residential Areas. Helicopters would be required to maintain a height of at least 500 feet when passing over residential areas, except at temporary construction areas or when actively assisting with conductor stringing. All helicopters would be required to maintain a lateral distance of at least 500 feet from all schools.

5.13.4 CEQA Significance Criteria

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR 15000 et seq.) provides guidance on assessing whether a project would have significant impacts on the environment. Consistent with Appendix G, the Proposed Project would have significant noise impacts if it would:

- a. *Result in the generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies*
- b. *Result in the generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels*
- c. *For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels*

5.13.5 Methodology

This analysis relies on previous studies and modeling of noise sources to quantify the temporary noise levels caused by the Proposed Project's construction activities and permanent sources of noise caused by the operation and maintenance of the Proposed Project. The modeled noise levels are compared with the standards established in the applicable local general plan or noise ordinance, and the increases in noise levels are also assessed against the existing ambient noise levels in the project vicinity. The procedure for modeling the outdoor noise environment and the standard approach for consideration of the attenuation of sound during outdoor propagation are described in detail in a Noise Technical Report prepared on behalf of the Applicant for the Proposed Project (Eilar, 2017).

The combined maximum (Lmax) and average hourly (Leq) noise levels for construction work sites are predicted assuming the overlapping or combined use of equipment such as a grader, dozer, and compactor along with trucks. The noise level estimates take into account a reference maximum noise level for each piece of equipment, the quantity of equipment, a usage factor percentage, the distance to receptor, and a ground effect factor. The results are the sum of noise levels that would be experienced by typical receptors at a certain distance, usually 50 feet. Calculations account for the reduction of noise with distance due to geometric divergence and determine the levels for receptors at other specific distances.

State and Local

Significance of noise impacts depends on whether the project would increase noise levels above the existing ambient levels by introducing new sources of noise. Given that environmental noise levels vary widely over time, a 3 dBA change is the minimum change in environmental noise that is perceptible and recognizable by the human ear. Permanent increases in day-night environmental noise levels of more than 5 dBA (Ldn or CNEL) are considered to be a potentially significant impact. Intermittent noise sources, such as those typical during construction, are temporary or periodic and normally cease after a short duration. Factors to be considered in determining the significance of an adverse impact caused by an intermittent source include: (1) the resulting noise level, (2) the duration and frequency of the noise, (3) the number of people affected, and (4) the land use designation of the affected receptor sites

Federal

Bureau of Land Management

The information provided above under State and Local applies to BLM-managed lands.

National Park Service

The analysis describes the consistency of Proposed Project activities and noise sources with the NPS policy for managing ambient noise conditions. As found in the NPS Soundscape Management Policy 4.9 (2006), it is NPS policy to:

- Preserve, to the greatest extent possible, the natural soundscapes of parks;
- Restore to the natural condition wherever possible those park soundscapes that have become degraded by unnatural sounds (noise); and
- Protect natural soundscapes from unacceptable impacts.

5.13.6 Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

- a. Would the project result in the generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?***

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION. Construction of the Proposed Project would create short-term construction noise levels that could impact existing residents near project work areas or yards. Depending on the timing and nature of construction, the resulting noise levels could cause a substantial temporary increase in ambient noise levels or be in excess of applicable agency standards.

The Proposed Project would require approximately 15 months of construction activities that include mobilizing construction equipment, crews, and materials, site preparation, installation of the series capacitors, substation modifications, OPGW, telecommunications, transmission tower and distribution modifications, and final cleanup. The construction activities would require use of vehicles and heavy-duty equipment capable of generating noise along the ROW, at the proposed staging and work areas, and along the roadways used to access these locations. The types of construction equipment used at work sites would include helicopters, trucks, backhoes, compactors, concrete mixers, dozers, drill rigs/augers, loaders, cranes, lifts, rock crushers, and other tools. On area roadways, increased traffic noise would be caused by vehicles transporting equipment and supplies to the sites, trucks hauling water or removing debris, and workers commuting to and from the activities.

Construction would temporarily increase the noise levels at various locations throughout the project area by creating both intermittent and steady noises. Intermittent noise would be caused by periodic, short-term use of equipment at sites. For example, the series capacitors and fiber optic repeaters would require site preparation involving grading and some ground surface improvements prior to installation of the new facilities. Some underground cable trenches and foundations would require ordinary excavation, trenching and backfilling techniques, and potentially a temporary concrete batch plant.

While most construction activities would intermittently increase noise as they move across the project area, fixed equipment such as a concrete batch plant, would remain at one location for much of the 15-month duration. Sites near staging areas (including helicopter base location and yards) would experience the most persistent noise.

The sources of highest noise levels would be the drill rigs or augers and helicopters. No impact hammers, pile drivers, explosives or blasting would be necessary for the Proposed Project; micropiles could be installed at some 500 kV LSTs to strengthen foundations, which could cause noise comparable with

trenching for underground project components. The maximum intermittent noise levels from construction work areas using a drill rig or auger would typically range up to 84 dBA Lmax at 50 feet. Higher noise levels of up to 90 dBA Lmax would be expected near work areas where multiple pieces of equipment are used. These would be the highest noise levels expected for development of the Proposed Project. Because sound fades over distance, these levels would diminish with increased distance between the source and the receptor. Table 5.13-3 summarizes the typical noise levels for individual pieces of construction equipment.

Construction would also cause noise away from project components, primarily from helicopters or trucks needed to bring materials to the sites and from the traffic of commuting workers. Haul trucks would make trips to bring equipment, water, and materials to the sites and remove waste. The noise levels associated with passing trucks and commuting worker vehicles would be approximately 71 to 76 dBA at 50 feet and would be concentrated along area highways and the access roads leading to individual work areas.

Helicopters would be used primarily to support construction activities through the transportation of construction workers and delivery of equipment and materials between designated landing zones at work sites. This work will be completed using medium-size model helicopters. Typical light utility helicopter models have a five-person capacity, and the preliminary Helicopter Work Plan indicates that either a MD (Hughes) 530F or a Hughes 500E would be used. Up to four helicopters will be operated at any time during construction (SCE, 2018). Based on noise exposure curves for the Hughes 500C as typical of helicopters in this class, the ground-level peak noise would range up to about 89.8 dBA Lmax for continuous hovering at 200 feet elevation above the receptor (Eilar, 2017; MDHI, 2014; U.S. DOT, 1982). The receptors that would be exposed to the highest levels of helicopter noise would be a horizontal distance of 475 feet from the Arrowhead Lake helipad where up to 78.8 dBA Leq would occur over the course of a workday, based on a helicopter operating at the helipad 50 percent of the day (Eilar, 2017). Receptors near other sites of helicopter activity could experience between 71 and 75 dBA Leq over the course of a typical workday of helicopter activity (Eilar, 2017). To limit noise from helicopter activity near occupied residences, SCE would implement APMs NOI 01 and NOI 02 as part of the Proposed Project. Even with implementation of the APMs related to helicopter noise, the construction activities could lead to an increase in ambient noise levels that could be substantial. Accordingly, this analysis recommends mitigation in addition to the two APMs.

The Proposed Project and APMs do not include any limitations on the daily hours of construction. However, SCE would be expected to normally conduct most construction activity during daytime hours, with

Table 5.13-3. Typical Noise Levels for Individual Construction Equipment

Equipment	Typical Lmax (dBA, at 50 ft)	Typical Leq (dBA, at 50 ft)
Drill rig, Auger	84	77
Rock drill, Crane	81	74
Backhoe	78	74
Concrete Batch Plant	83	75
Dozer, Front end loader	82-79	78
Excavator, Trenching	81-80	77
Compactor	83	76
Generator, Compressor	81-78	78
Forklift, Man lift	75	68
Puller, Tensioner	79	74
Dump truck, haul truck, concrete mixer truck, crane truck	76-79	73-76
Pickup truck, crew truck	75	62-71
Helicopter, Hughes 500C (for crews, equipment, and lifting)	Ground-level Lmax 89.8 dBA for hovering at 200 feet	

Source: FHWA, 2006; Eilar, 2017.

Lmax: Maximum noise level from Actual Measured in Roadway Construction Noise Model (RCNM).

Leq: Equivalent noise level for one hour incorporating the Acoustical Usage Factor.

the possibility of some construction activities occurring during nighttime hours, if required to facilitate outages. The stationary source noise standards in local ordinances could be exceeded by typical construction activities. For example, the standard in San Bernardino County Development Code, Chapter 83.01.080(c), of 55 dBA Leq during daytime hours could be exceeded by the maximum intermittent noise levels from construction work areas at up to 84 dBA Lmax or due to helicopter activity at 75 dBA Leq. With construction activities confined to daytime hours, the activities would be exempt from the standard in the local ordinances.

By limiting activities to daytime hours, the construction noise would comply with the noise standards of the San Bernardino County Development Code. Construction noise is exempt from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday, except Federal holidays (County Development Code Chapter 83.01.080 and 83.01.090; Hesperia Development Code Section 16.20.125). For activity in Nevada, construction noise in Clark County is exempt between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. The County general plan and local noise ordinances do not specify a maximum dBA limit for construction noise sources, as long as construction activities occur during the time periods indicated by the ordinance.

Construction noise would affect the receptors closest to project work areas and along access routes used by haul trucks and other construction traffic. The homes nearest the project site and other rural residences along the access routes would experience a temporary increase in noise above the conditions that exist without the project. The nearest occupied residences at 300 feet from a typical work area would experience noise levels up to 70 dBA Leq, and residences near the Arrowhead Lake helipad up would experience up to 79 dBA Leq at 475 feet away from the helicopter landing zone (Eilar, 2017). Construction would cause maximum intermittent noise levels ranging from 84 dBA to 90 dBA Lmax at 50 feet from a work area or due to typical helicopter activity at 75 dBA Leq. As a result, the ambient noise levels would temporarily increase by more than 5 dBA above the levels existing without the project.

Construction noise would occur in a setting of low ambient noise levels without the project. The temporary increase in noise caused by construction would vary day to day and would not present any permanent impact to the surrounding area. Although construction activity would be variable and limited in duration, use of construction equipment would result in a readily perceptible, but temporary, increase in daytime environmental noise.

This analysis recommends Mitigation Measure N-1 to ensure that construction noise would be confined to daytime hours and reduced through typical noise reduction methods. This analysis also recommends Mitigation Measure N-2 to notify residents in advance of the noise, which would facilitate reducing the potential annoyance of perceptible noise. Although readily perceptible in the setting of low ambient noise, the increase would not be considered substantial because the construction activity would not involve all equipment in simultaneous use at any single location closest to the nearest residences. Additionally, the number of receptors in the vicinity is limited, and the intermittent and variable nature of construction noise limits the potential for adverse effects such as annoyance to be experienced by off-site receptors. Sleep interference would be less likely with the recommended Mitigation Measure N-1 because nighttime construction would be avoided.

Given a perceptible increase in noise levels at times under the anticipated and worst-case conditions, mitigation would reduce the effects to ensure a less than significant impact. Implementation of Mitigation Measure N-1 would limit the daily hours of construction to avoid noise levels in excess of local standards and ordinances, and notification requirements under Mitigation Measure N-2 would help to reduce the annoyance caused by perceptible noise. The measures include precautionary methods to reduce the effects of noise caused by construction equipment, vehicles and traffic to levels that would not be substantial in the context of the project surroundings and existing noise levels. In addition, under

Mitigation Measure T-1 Prepare and implement a final helicopter use plan, limitations would be placed on flights near noise-sensitive receptors. This impact would be less than significant with mitigation.

Operation and Maintenance

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. The Proposed Project would include stationary sources of noise in the form of the mid-line series capacitors, air conditioners, and emergency-use standby generators along the existing 500 kV transmission line corridors in San Bernardino County, at the capacitor and repeater sites. For these areas, corona noise that sounds like crackling and humming from the 500 kV transmission lines is the most notable existing noise source.

After construction, the noise levels resulting from the operation phase of the Proposed Project would be limited to noise from the modified transmission and subtransmission lines, modified capacitor banks at existing substation sites and the two new mid-line series capacitor sites, air conditioners at the three fiber optic repeater sites, and emergency-use standby generators. Other ongoing activities such as vegetation management activities, security patrols, and other routine O&M would cause noise at levels that would not change from the existing conditions.

Corona discharge associated with high-voltage power transmission is heard near an energized line as a crackling or hissing sound. The amount of corona produced by a power line is a function of several factors, including: line voltage; conductor diameter; conductor locations in relation to each other; condition of conductors and hardware; and local weather conditions including power line elevation above sea level. Corona and audible noise from the corona effect are a design concern for transmission lines at 230 kV and higher and generally not audible at lower voltages. Audible noise from the corona effect typically occurs around 50 dBA for a 500 kV line. Along the existing transmission ROW, corona noise is audible, especially during wet or rainy conditions. When compared with the existing high-voltage facilities, the Proposed Project would not change the baseline noise levels of roughly 55 dBA Ldn near the right-of-way edge (Eilar, 2017). Modifications under the Proposed Project would not alter the corona from the existing lines. For locations far from other stationary sources of noise associated with the Proposed Project (discussed below), the existing corona noise would be the only notable, permanent source of operational-phase noise from transmission lines.

The Proposed Project would modify or replace the existing capacitors banks at the Lugo, Mohave, and Eldorado Substations. The noise levels from this equipment would be similar to the corona noise from the transmission lines, and noise from the new capacitors would not change notably from the levels measured in the existing conditions (see Table 5.13-2).

The proposed mid-line series capacitor banks would also generate noise at their proposed locations. Noise generated at the sites of the proposed Newberry Springs Series Capacitor and Ludlow Series Capacitor would be similar to those measured at the Lugo Substation in the existing conditions (see Table 5.13-2). The permanent stationary noise sources would contribute to an increase in ambient noise levels by causing up to 53 dBA Leq at the boundaries of each mid-line series capacitor site (Eilar, 2017). Other locations of new noise sources include the air conditioners at the three fiber optic repeater sites and emergency-use standby generators, which would be inside equipment shelters. Noise from this equipment included among the Proposed Project components would be about 75 dBA at the source and about 51 dBA at the nearest edges of ROW. Noise from these sites would attenuate over a distance of about 150 feet to 43 dBA (Eilar, 2017), which would be comparable to daytime existing ambient levels measured at the Lugo Substation.

These stationary sources would not substantially change the surrounding day-night ambient noise levels which includes the existing corona noise at levels up to 55 dBA Ldn. Other locations farther from the sites of new noise sources would experience lower noise levels due to the greater distances from the sources. The existing ambient noise levels in the area would not experience a permanent increase of more than 5 dBA. As such, the noise from the Proposed Project stationary sources would not contribute substantially to day-night noise levels for any sensitive receptors near the project.

Noise caused by the occasional traffic due to O&M crews performing maintenance and security would not notably change with the Proposed Project. Noise from routine O&M would be created by traffic and mobile sources along the ROW and on area roadways. The Proposed Project would be operated by existing utility staff, causing occasional additional worker-vehicle trips that would not notably increase the average daily traffic noise on area roadways accessing the project components. Project operations, including inspection and maintenance activities, would normally involve only a small crew, and the O&M traffic would be sporadic so that it would result in a barely perceptible noise increase of less than 3 dBA over conditions that exist without the project.

The stationary sources of noise under the Proposed Project would be required to comply with the stationary source noise standards of the County Development Code [Chapter 83.01.080(c)], namely that the equipment must not exceed 55 dBA Leq during daytime hours (7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.) or 45 dBA Leq during nighttime hours (10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.) at the property boundary of a residential use receiving the noise.

The proposed noise sources would be well separated from residential uses. The mid-line series capacitors would be 8 miles away from the closest residential receptor, and at this distance the equipment noise has no potential to exceed the standards of the County Development Code. The fiber optic repeater sites would also be far from receptors or within the Mojave National Preserve. These sites would generate noise up to about 43 dBA for locations at least 150 feet from the sources. At these levels, the Proposed Project would not generate noise levels in excess of any applicable standards.

Accordingly, operations and maintenance would not result in exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies, and this impact would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

N-1 Limit construction noise levels. SCE shall ensure that all construction activities occur within the following hours, during which construction noise would be exempt from local ordinances: in San Bernardino County and City of Hesperia, between 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday, except Federal holidays; in Clark County, Nevada, between 6:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday, except Federal holidays. Additionally, SCE shall implement the following construction noise reduction methods as precautionary measures, as identified in the Noise Technical Report (Appendix K to SCE's PEA (Eilar, 2017)):

- Turn off equipment when not in use.
- Limit the use of enunciators or public address systems, except for emergency notifications.
- Equipment used in construction should be maintained in proper operating condition, and all loads should be properly secured, to prevent rattling and banging.
- Schedule work to avoid simultaneous construction activities that both generate high noise levels.

- Use equipment with effective mufflers.
- Minimize the use of backup alarms.

N-2 Provide advance notification of construction noise. Sixty days prior to construction, SCE shall prepare and submit a public notice mailer format to the CPUC for approval. The details of notification may be modified in consultation with CPUC as warranted by the circumstances.

No less than 15 days prior to construction that would occur within 500 feet of residences, businesses, or other occupied structures, SCE shall distribute a public notice mailer. The notice shall state the type of construction activities that will be conducted, and the location and duration of construction. The notice shall identify and SCE shall provide a public liaison person before and during construction to respond to concerns of residents about construction noise. SCE shall also establish a toll-free telephone number for receiving questions or complaints during construction and develop procedures for responding to callers. SCE shall address all complaints within one week of when the complaint is filed, and shall provide to the CPUC, within 15 days of the end of each month, a monthly report with records of all complaints and responses. SCE shall mail the notice to all residents or property owners within 500 feet of the right-of-way or within 1,000 feet of helicopter fly yards and flight paths.

T-3 Prepare and implement a final helicopter use plan. (The full text of this measure is in Section 5.17, Transportation. A Helicopter Use Plan will reduce adverse noise impacts by defining flight paths and area restrictions.)

b. Would the project result in the generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. Vibration from routine construction equipment and activities might be perceptible to people in the immediate vicinity of construction activities. Tamping of ground surfaces, the passing of heavy trucks on uneven surfaces, and drilling for the foundations of structures would each create perceptible vibration in the immediate vicinity of the activity. Other possible sources of substantial vibration, such as an impact activity like pile driving or use of explosives for rock blasting, are not a part of the Proposed Project.

The level of groundborne vibration that could reach sensitive receptors depends on the distance to the receptor, the equipment type that is creating vibration (e.g., the frequency being produced), and the soil conditions surrounding the construction site. Installing structures or conduit could cause vibration levels potentially resulting in temporary annoyance to people within 50 feet of construction equipment. Because the temporary use of routine construction equipment generating groundborne vibrations would be localized around project components, which would be more than 50 feet from occupied buildings, vibration would not be noticeable to receptors in the project area. No Proposed Project activity during construction, or equipment or facilities during operation, are likely to create substantial vibration over a wide area or likely to result in vibration levels great enough to create physical damage of nearby structures. Because Proposed Project activities and facilities would not expose people to excessive groundborne vibration, this impact would be less than significant.

Operation and Maintenance

NO IMPACT. Routine O&M would not create any groundborne vibration.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

- c. For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?**

Construction

NO IMPACT. The Proposed Project would include work along 500 kV transmission line corridors that are near two private airstrips, both of which appear to be inactive (SCE, 2018). The Dick Taylor Airstrip, south of Kelso, California, and Rabbit Ranch Airport, west of Lucerne Valley, are within 0.2 and 0.6 miles of the Proposed Project 500 kV transmission line corridors. Because the Proposed Project would not introduce new residents or workers to areas near any active airstrip or expose people to noise from any airstrip, no impact would occur.

The public-use, privately owned Hesperia Airport is 0.9 miles northwest of one proposed 500 kV transmission line–related work area, between Tower M4-T2 and Tower M4-T3 on the Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line. This proposed work area would be in the airport Comprehensive Land Use Plan area and near the edge of the safety zone, one-mile from the runway, but not within any noise impact zone (San Bernardino County, 1991). Additional public airport facilities within 2 miles of the Proposed Project include Laughlin/Bullhead International Airport, Kidwell Airport, and Searchlight Airport. Aside from work near Hesperia Airport, no Proposed Project construction would be located in any airport land use plan area or within the noise impact zone of the Laughlin/Bullhead International Airport. Once construction is complete and operation begins, the Proposed Project would be unstaffed, and the project would not expose people to noise from these airports. Similarly, no excessive noise would result from project operations that could impact people residing or working near airports. As such, there would be no impact.

Operation and Maintenance

NO IMPACT. The project would not establish residences or places of employment within 2 miles of an airport. Routine O&M activities would not be affected by an airport.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

5.13.7 References

- Caltrans (California Department of Transportation). 2013. *Technical Noise Supplement, to the Traffic Noise Analysis Protocol*. September.
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- FHWA (Federal Highway Administration). 2006. FHWA Roadway Construction Noise Model (RCNM) User's Guide (DOT-VNTSC-FHWA-05-01). January.
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5.14 Population and Housing

POPULATION AND HOUSING

Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Significance criteria established by CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G.

5.14.1 Environmental Setting

Population

The Proposed Project is located in San Bernardino County, California and Clark County, Nevada, within the Mojave Basin and Range (Mojave). Federal lands constitute a majority of the land area in the Mojave, including lands under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, Bureau of Reclamation, and Department of Defense. The Proposed Project would modify three existing transmission lines between Lugo Substation in San Bernardino County, California and Eldorado Substation in the City of Boulder City, Nevada, between Lugo Substation and Mohave Substation in Clark County, Nevada, and between Mohave Substation and Eldorado Substation. Portions of the Proposed Project would also cross the City of Hesperia, California, the unincorporated community of Lucerne Valley in California, as well as the unincorporated communities of Searchlight and Laughlin in Nevada.

Table 5.14-1, Population, Housing, and Employment 2017, provides a summary of the existing population, housing, and employment conditions in the counties and communities crossed by the project alignment.

Table 5.14-1. Population, Housing, and Employment 2017

Location	Population	Housing Units		Employment	
		Total Units	Vacancy Rate	Total Employed ¹	Unemployment Rate
California					
San Bernardino County	2,174,938	1,210,138	5.8%	904,200	4.9%
City of Hesperia	94,829	29,601	7.6%	33,900	6.2%
Lucerne Valley	5,472	2,847	29.5%	1,787	21.7%
Nevada					
Clark County	2,112,436	877,617	14.6%	1,070,874	8.3%
City of Boulder City	15,648	6,403	15.8%	6,968	10.6%
Searchlight	310	386	49.0%	145	2.1%
Laughlin	7,758	5,543	29.6%	2,664	13.8%

¹ - Accounts for population greater than 16 years of age and in Labor Force.
Source: CA DOF, 2018a; CA EDD, 2018; U.S. Census Bureau 2018a through 2018o.

Population estimates, future projections, and average annual growth rates for San Bernardino and Clark Counties are summarized in Table 5.14-2, Population Estimates, Projections, and Average Annual Growth Rates. The population growth in both San Bernardino County and Clark County is expected to increase

slowly during the next three decades, with both San Bernardino County and Clark County projected to have similar growth rates during the period between 2015 to 2020. During the period between 2015 and 2020, Clark County is projected to have a growth rate over 2.5 times that of San Bernardino County.

Table 5.14-2. Population Estimates, Projections, and Average Annual Growth Rates

	San Bernardino County, CA	Clark County, NV
Population, 2015	2,128,499	2,147,641
Projected Population, 2020	2,230,602	2,389,000
Average Annual Growth Rate, 2015-2020	0.96%	2.25%
Projected Population, 2025	2,352,322	2,530,000
Average Annual Growth Rate, 2020-2025	1.09%	1.18%
Projected Population, 2035	2,606,040	2,672,000
Average Annual Growth Rate, 2025-2035	1.08%	1.12%
Projected Population, 2045	2,829,159	2,766,000
Average Annual Growth Rate, 2035-2045	0.86%	0.70%

Source: CA DOF, 2018b; Center for Business and Economic Research University of Nevada, Las Vegas. 2018.

Housing

The current total and vacant housing estimates are presented in Table 5.14-1 for communities and counties crossed by the project alignment. The vacancy rate of the communities in Clark County crossed by the project is high compared to those in San Bernardino County, with about 16 to 49 percent of the total housing units vacant. Clark County has a vacancy rate about 2.5 times that of San Bernardino County (approximately 15 and 6 percent, respectively).

Temporary Housing

California

There are a variety of temporary housing options available, including hotels and resorts, lodges, campgrounds, and rental units within San Bernardino County (County of San Bernardino, 2014). The majority of temporary housing options in the vicinity of the Proposed Project in California are concentrated in the Cities of Barstow, Hesperia, and Victorville. According to the Barstow Chamber of Commerce (Barstow Area Chamber of Commerce, 2018) and the Hesperia Chamber of Commerce (2018), there are various temporary housing options available, including hotels, motels, and lodges in this part of San Bernardino County.

Nevada

The Clark County Business Resource Center reported that more than 150,000 hotel and motel rooms were available to visitors within Clark County (Clark County, 2015). The majority of these accommodations are found approximately 15 miles north within and near the City of Las Vegas. However, the Proposed Project area is remote, and there are no temporary housing facilities within 1 mile of the Proposed Project in Nevada. The majority of temporary housing options in the vicinity of the Proposed Project are concentrated in the Cities of Henderson, Las Vegas, and Boulder City, as well as the unincorporated community of Searchlight and Laughlin. According to the City of Henderson Department of Economic Development and Tourism (City of Henderson, 2018), the City of Henderson offers over 4,000 hotel rooms to accommodate its visitors. According to the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority (LVCVA, 2018), the City of Las Vegas offers nearly 150,000 hotel rooms to accommodate its visitors.

5.14.2 Regulatory Background

State and Local

California and Nevada

There are no specific laws and regulations relating to unplanned population growth or displacement of people and housing at the state level. These issues are addressed by local plans and ordinances.

The CPUC has sole and exclusive jurisdiction over the siting and design of the Proposed Project components located in the State of California. Pursuant to CPUC G.O. 131-D, Section XIV.B, “Local jurisdictions acting pursuant to local authority are preempted from regulating electric power line projects, distribution lines, substations, or electric facilities constructed by public utilities subject to the CPUC’s jurisdiction. However, in locating such projects, the public utilities shall consult with local agencies regarding land use matters.” Consequently, public utilities are directed to consider local regulations and consult with local agencies, but the county and cities’ regulations are not applicable as the county and cities do not have jurisdiction over the Proposed Project. For informational purposes, local regulations in California jurisdictions are provided in Appendix C. The Proposed Project is subject to local regulations in the State of Nevada.

Clark County Comprehensive Plan. The Housing Element of the Clark County Comprehensive Plan establishes policies to meet the diverse housing needs within Clark County (Clark County Department of Comprehensive Planning, 2015). The Housing Element does not contain any specific goals or policies that are relevant to the Proposed Project.

South Clark County Land Use Plan. The South Clark County Land Use Plan includes goals and policies for communities in South Clark County, Nevada, including the unincorporated community of Searchlight (Goodsprings & Sandy Valley Citizens Advisory Councils & Searchlight Town Advisory Board, 2012). The South County Land Use Plan does not contain any specific goals or policies that are relevant to the Proposed Project.

Laughlin Land Use Plan. The Laughlin Land Use Plan guides decisions by the Laughlin Town Advisory Board, Planning Commission, and Board of County Commissioners concerning growth and development (Clark County Planning Commission, 2017). The policies of the Land Use Element of the Clark County Comprehensive Plan are incorporated by reference in the Laughlin Land Use Plan and are the adopted policies of the Laughlin Land Use Plan. There are no specific goals or policies that are relevant to the Proposed Project.

City of Boulder City Master Plan. The Housing and Neighborhoods Element of the Boulder City Master Plan establishes policies that represent the community’s values and vision regarding the neighborhood and housing choices (City of Boulder, 2015). The Housing and Neighborhoods Element does not contain any specific goals or policies that are relevant to the Proposed Project.

Federal

There are no federal regulations related to population and housing that are relevant to the Proposed Project.

5.14.3 Applicant Proposed Measures

The Proposed Project does not include any APMs related to Population and Housing.

5.14.4 CEQA Significance Criteria

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR 15000 et seq.) provides guidance on assessing whether a project would have significant impacts on the environment. Consistent with Appendix G, the Proposed Project would have significant population and housing impacts if it would:

- a. Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)*
- b. Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere*

5.14.5 Methodology

CEQA regulations state that economic or social factors of a project may be included in a CEQA document but shall not be treated as significant effects on the environment. However, economic or social effects of a project may be used to determine the significance of physical changes caused by a project. Additionally, economic, social, and housing factors should be considered by public agencies together with technological and environmental factors in deciding whether changes in a project are feasible to reduce or avoid the significant effects on the environment.

To determine whether the Proposed Project would induce population growth, the availability of the local workforce and population in the region was analyzed. It was assumed that most construction workers would be drawn from San Bernardino and Clark Counties, which are crossed by the Proposed Project and have a combined workforce of over 2 million. Nearby eastern Los Angeles County and western Riverside County also are within commute distance and could be sources of additional labor. It is anticipated that most of the project construction workforce would likely commute from their homes when project work is in the vicinity and would seek housing closer to the Proposed Project area (within an hour driving distance) or seek temporary housing (such as seasonal, recreational, or occasional use housing; long-term visitor areas; and hotel and motels) when project work is far from their home base, and return home on weekends.

5.14.6 Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

- a. Would the project induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?*

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. During the 15-month construction period of the Proposed Project, SCE anticipates as many as 15 to 346 (or an average of 159) construction personnel would be working on the Proposed Project at any given time during peak construction periods. Crews would be dispersed throughout the project area. Most SCE construction crews or contractor crews would likely commute from their homes in San Bernardino County and Clark County to construction sites or would relocate to temporary housing when construction activity is remote from their homes. The populations of communities crossed by and near the project alignment may increase slightly during the construction phase due to the temporary relocation of crews, but the increase would be temporary and would not cause a permanent increase in population.

If the need for temporary accommodations arose, adequate lodging options are available in San Bernardino and Clark Counties, including hotels and resorts, lodges, and campgrounds. Because construction would be temporary and last approximately 15 months and because the workforce would be relatively small and would likely commute to work sites, construction of the Proposed Project would not result in a permanent increase in the populations in the vicinity of the project alignment. The Proposed Project would therefore not significantly induce substantial population growth in the project areas. Impacts would be less than significant.

Operation and Maintenance

NO IMPACT. Operation and Maintenance (O&M) activities associated with the Proposed Project would be similar to those currently performed by SCE for existing facilities. These activities generally include, among others, repairing conductors, washing or replacing insulators, repairing or replacing other hardware components, repairing or replacing poles and towers, vegetation trimming, brush and weed control, and access road maintenance. O&M practices would include routine inspections and emergency repair within substations and rights-of-way (ROWs), which would require the use of vehicles and equipment. SCE also inspects the transmission and subtransmission overhead facilities in a manner consistent with CPUC G.O. 165, which requires observation a minimum of once per year, but inspection typically occurs more frequently to ensure system reliability.

Following construction of the mid-line series capacitors (Newberry Springs Series Capacitor and Ludlow Series Capacitor), additional O&M activities would consist of monthly and annual inspections, as well as equipment testing, and maintenance of emergency generators, ranging from once a year to once every five years. Additional testing, inspections, and maintenance of the building, site, generator, and fuel tank would also be required at the new fiber optic repeater facilities every six months to once a year.

O&M of the Proposed Project facilities require no new full-time staffing; the facilities would be operated and maintained by staff based at Lugo and/or Eldorado Substations. As a result, the Proposed Project is not expected to cause a direct or indirect increase in population growth in the project areas and there would be no impact on population due to O&M activities. There would be no induced population growth impacts due to O&M activities.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

b. Would the project displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

Construction

NO IMPACT. The Proposed Project itself would not displace people or housing. The residential communities are located approximately north of the Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line in Hesperia and in Lucerne Valley in San Bernardino County. A residential area is adjacent to the Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line in Clark County. As illustrated in Table 5.14-1, Population, Housing, and Employment 2017, vacancy rates in the study areas are mostly high, ranging from about 8 to 30 percent in communities crossed by the Project in San Bernardino County and 16 to 49 percent in communities crossed by the Project in Clark County. San Bernardino County as a whole has approximately 70,188 vacant units and Clark County as a whole has approximately 128,132 vacant units. During construction, there are sufficient vacant housing units within the local communities to support the number of construction workers that may temporarily seek housing during this period.

Construction would temporarily increase the number of people in the vicinity of the Proposed Project; however, construction of the Proposed Project would not result in a permanent increase in the populations in the area and would not require displacement of any existing housing units. As a result, no persons or houses would be displaced and none would be built elsewhere. No impact would therefore occur as a result of construction of the Proposed Project.

Operation and Maintenance

NO IMPACT. As previously described under (a) above, O&M activities associated with the Proposed Project would be similar to those currently performed for the existing facilities, with additional O&M activities associated with the proposed mid-line series capacitors and fiber optic repeater facilities. O&M activities currently occur for the existing SCE facilities and would generally remain the same as a result of the Proposed Project. O&M of the Proposed Project facilities require no new full-time staffing; the facilities would be operated and maintained by staff based at Lugo and/or Eldorado Substations. As a result of O&M of project facilities, no existing housing would be displaced and none would be built elsewhere. There would be no impact from O&M of the Proposed Project.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

5.14.7 References

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5.15 Public Services

PUBLIC SERVICES

Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for any of the public services:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Fire protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Police protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Schools?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Parks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Other public facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Significance criteria established by CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G.

5.15.1 Environmental Setting

The Proposed Project is located in San Bernardino County, California and Clark County, Nevada, within the Mojave Basin and Range (Mojave). Federal lands constitute a majority of the land area in the Mojave, including lands under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), National Park Service (NPS), Bureau of Reclamation (BOR), and Department of Defense (DoD). The Proposed Project would modify three existing transmission lines between Lugo Substation in San Bernardino County, California and Eldorado Substation in the City of Boulder City, Nevada, between Lugo Substation and Mohave Substation in Clark County, Nevada, and between Mohave Substation and Eldorado Substation. Portions of the Proposed Project would also cross the City of Hesperia, California, the unincorporated community of Lucerne Valley in California, as well as the unincorporated communities of Searchlight and Laughlin in Nevada.

Figure 5.15-1, Public Services within the Vicinity of the Proposed Project, shows the locations of the public service facilities discussed below that are in the vicinity of the Proposed Project alignment.

Fire Protection

Federal

The California Desert District of the BLM provides fire protection to the area covered in the California Desert Conservation Area and is comprised of two zones — the north zone and the south zone. The Proposed Project is located within the north zone. Additionally, dispatching services are consolidated and provided by the Federal Interagency Communications Center (FICC), established for the BLM California Desert District, Death Valley National Park, Joshua Tree National Park, Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument, Mojave National Preserve, San Bernardino National Forest, and Southern California Agency Bureau of Indian Affairs (FICC, 2018). The FICC is located in the San Bernardino National Forest Supervisor's Office in the City of San Bernardino, approximately 18.5 miles south of the Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line. The area served by the FICC covers approximately 30 million acres in five separate counties, reaching to the borders of Arizona, Nevada, and Mexico (FICC, 2018).

Hole in the Wall Interagency Fire Center, an interagency station staffed by firefighters from the BLM and NPS, is located approximately 8.6 miles north of the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line in the Mojave National Preserve. The goal of the Hole in the Wall Interagency Fire Center is fire suppression within the Needles Resource Area and Mojave National Preserve. The center also assists San Bernardino County with providing medical services in the Mojave Desert (BLM, 2013).

The BLM's Southern Nevada District Office provides fire protection for federally managed public land and maintains three fire stations. The stations are equipped with three Type 3 fire engines, two Type 6 fire engines, one interagency Type 6 fire engine, one interagency helicopter, one Type 2 initial attack hand crew, and one support water tender (BLM, 2015b). The BLM, NPS, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and U.S. Forest Service (USFS) fire suppression resources are dispatched from the Las Vegas Interagency Communication Center. The BLM's Southern Nevada District Office also coordinates with the DoD, Department of Energy, Bureau of Indian Affairs, BOR, Nevada Division of Forestry, Nye County, and Clark County on wildland fire suppression (BLM, 2015b).

Owing to the remote location of much of the Proposed Project, no BLM stations are located within 1 mile of the Proposed Project. The closest BLM station to the Proposed Project is the Red Rock Canyon Fire Station located off State Route 159 near Red Rock Campground, and approximately 31.4 miles northwest of Eldorado Substation. The primary response area for the Red Rock Canyon Fire Station is Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area, Sloan Canyon National Conservation Area, the east side of Spring Mountains National Recreation Area, and Sandy Valley (BLM, 2015a).

California

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) maintains fire stations in San Bernardino County. However, due to the remote location of the Proposed Project, no CAL FIRE stations are located within 1 mile of the Proposed Project. The closest CAL FIRE station to the Proposed Project is the Lucerne Valley Station in the San Bernardino Unit on Highway 247 in the community of Lucerne Valley, California (CAL FIRE, 2018). The Lucerne Valley Station is approximately 4.8 miles southeast of the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line.

Nevada

The Nevada Division of Forestry (Division) provides wildfire protection statewide in Nevada through the Wildland Fire Protection Program. The Division maintains an air operations program that includes access to Nevada National Guard helicopters, wildland fire engines, crews and equipment, and experienced wildland firefighting personnel and leadership. The Division also assists local government with response and recovery efforts for floods, earthquakes, and other natural disasters (Nevada Division of Forestry, 2018).

Due to the remote location of the Proposed Project, no Nevada Division of Forestry stations are located within 1 mile of the Proposed Project. The closest Nevada Division of Forestry station to the Proposed Project is the Las Vegas Office, which is located at 4747 Vegas Drive in the City of Las Vegas and approximately 28.8 miles northwest of Eldorado Substation.

Local

San Bernardino County. Fire protection services are collaboratively provided through various agencies in San Bernardino County. The San Bernardino County Fire Department (SBCFIRE) provides fire protection and life safety services to San Bernardino County. SBCFIRE's jurisdiction encompasses approximately 19,293 square miles, providing services to more than 2 million residents in 24 incorporated cities and all unincorporated areas of the county. SBCFIRE maintains 65 active fire stations and employs approximately

1,052 fire and 681 fire suppression personnel. There are six divisions of SBCFIRE — the West Valley, East Valley, Mountain, South Desert, High Desert, and North Desert Divisions (San Bernardino County Fire Department, 2018a). However, due to the remote location of the Proposed Project, no SBCFIRE stations are located within 1 mile of the Proposed Project. The closest SBCFIRE station to the Proposed Project is Hesperia Station 305 (San Bernardino County Fire Department, 2018b), located on Caliente Road in Hesperia, approximately 2.9 miles northwest of Lugo Substation.

Hesperia Station 305 is funded by both the County of San Bernardino and the City of Hesperia, and is managed by the City of Hesperia Fire Department (HFD). Hesperia Station 305 is staffed by four personnel and one Battalion Chief daily, and its equipment includes one paramedic fire engine, one paramedic ambulance, one water tender, one brush patrol vehicle, and two reserve engines (City of Hesperia, 2018a).

City of Hesperia. City of Hesperia Fire Department provides fire safety and emergency medical services to residents within the city limits. HFD maintains four stations (City of Hesperia, 2018a). Due to the remote location of the Proposed Project, no HFD stations are located within 1 mile of the Proposed Project. The closest HFD station to the Proposed Project is Hesperia Station 305, described above.

Clark County. The Clark County Fire Department (Clark County FD) provides emergency response services, including emergency medical services, fire and rescue, and special operations (e.g., aircraft rescue and fire investigation). The fire department serves over 900,000 Clark County residents over approximately 7,420 square miles (Clark County, 2018a; 2018b). The Clark County FD is comprised of approximately 697 full-time personnel at 30 fire stations, as well as approximately 170 volunteers who serve at 13 volunteer fire stations in the rural parts of the County (Clark County, 2018a).

Due to the remote location of the Proposed Project, no Clark County FD stations are located within 1 mile of the Proposed Project. The closest Clark County FD station to the Proposed Project is Station 75 (Searchlight Station), a volunteer station located on South Nevada Street approximately 1.4 miles east of the existing Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line (Clark County, 2018c). Each station is equipped with an engine, water tender, squad vehicle, and rescue vehicle (Clark County, 2018c).

City of Boulder City. Fire protection and emergency response in the City of Boulder City is provided by the Boulder City Fire Department (BCFD). The BCFD operates out of one station and houses 18 response personnel. There are three 6-person shifts, three front-line apparatus, and four reserve units (Boulder City, 2018a). The BCFD station is located on Elm Street in Boulder City, approximately 14.8 miles from Eldorado Substation.

Police Protection

Federal

Within the Mojave National Preserve, the NPS provides law enforcement services, including front-country and backcountry patrols, criminal investigations, case management, and wildlife enforcement (NPS, 2018).

The BLM has resource protection and law enforcement responsibilities for BLM-managed lands and resources. Approximately 200 law enforcement rangers and 70 special agents enforce laws affecting public land resources on a national level (BLM, 2018).

State

California

The California Highway Patrol (CHP) provides uniform traffic law enforcement throughout the State of California. The CHP is divided into eight divisions, and the Proposed Project is located within the Inland Division. The Inland Division contains three communications and dispatch centers and 11 offices. The closest CHP office to the Proposed Project is the Victorville Office, located on Amargosa Road in the City of Victorville, approximately 10 miles north of the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line. The CHP Victorville Office serves the communities of Apple Valley, Victorville, Hesperia, Phelan, Pinon Hills, Lucerne Valley, Wrightwood, Silver Lakes, Helendale, Ore Grande, Spring Valley Lake, Oak Hills and Adelanto and patrols portions of Interstate 15; State Routes 138, 2, 173 18, and 247; U.S. Route 395; and hundreds of miles of unincorporated county roadways within San Bernardino County (CHP, 2018).

Nevada

The Nevada Highway Patrol (NHP) provides law enforcement traffic services to the motoring public on Nevada highways. The NHP has northern and southern command substations. The closest NHP office to the Proposed Project is the Laughlin Substation (Nevada Highway Patrol, 2018), located on South Pointe Circle in the community of Laughlin, approximately 1.6 miles south of the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line and Mohave Substation.

Local

San Bernardino County. The San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department (SBCSD) provides law enforcement to over 2.1 million residents with 15 patrol stations and 3800 employees (San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department, 2018). The SBCSD headquarters are located on Third Street in San Bernardino. Due to the remote location of the Proposed Project, no patrol stations are located within 1 mile of the Proposed Project. The closest SBCSD patrol station is the Hesperia Police Station, which is discussed below.

City of Hesperia. The City of Hesperia contracts for police services with the SBCSD to maintain the Hesperia Police Department. The Hesperia Police Department is comprised of approximately 54 sworn law enforcement, and 18 non-sworn personnel (City of Hesperia, 2018b) The Hesperia Police Station is located on Smoke Tree Street, approximately 4.3 miles north of Lugo Substation.

Clark County. Clark County receives law enforcement services from eight departments within the vicinity of Clark County. The Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department (LVMPD) serves the City of Las Vegas and unincorporated areas of Clark County. LVMPD has approximately 3,182 police officers and 1,310 civilian employees spread over five divisions (LVMPD, 2017). However, due to the remote location of the Proposed Project, no police stations are located within 1 mile of the Proposed Project. The closest police station to the Proposed Project is the Laughlin Substation, located on Civic Way in Laughlin, approximately 1.9 miles northeast of Mohave Substation.

City of Boulder. The Boulder City Police Department provides police protection throughout an approximately 210-square-mile patrol territory. The department consists of full-time patrol officers and specialized patrols broken into four shifts, with each patrol commanded by a patrol sergeant (Boulder City, 2018b). The Boulder City Police Department headquarters is located on Arizona Street in Boulder City, approximately 15.6 miles northeast of the Eldorado Substation.

Schools

San Bernardino County. Within San Bernardino County, the Proposed Project crosses the following school districts (San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools, 2017):

- Silver Valley Unified School District
- Needles Unified School District
- Baker Valley Unified School District
- Apple Valley Unified School District
- Montebello Unified School District
- Lucerne Valley Unified School District
- Hesperia Unified School District

Due to the remote location of the Proposed Project, only one school within these districts is located within 1 mile of the Proposed Project. The Krystal School of Science, Math and Technology, a kindergarten through 6th grade school in the Hesperia Unified School District. It is located approximately 1 mile north of the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line.

Clark County. Within the State of Nevada, the Proposed Project crosses through the Clark County School District (CCSD). The CCSD is the fifth largest school district in the country, serving over 320,000 students from kindergarten through 12th grade in 358 schools across the County (Clark County School District, 2018a). Despite the large population throughout the rest of Clark County, the Proposed Project location is remote; only two CCSD schools are located within 1 mile of the Proposed Project (Clark County School District, 2018b). Both are in Laughlin. William Bennet Elementary School is located approximately 0.5 miles south of the Proposed Project on Needles Highway along the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line. Laughlin Junior/Senior High School is located approximately 0.8 miles north of the existing Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line.

Other Services

Hospitals

San Bernardino County. No hospitals are located within 1 mile of the Proposed Project in California. The closest hospital to the Proposed Project is the Desert Valley Hospital, on Bear Valley Road in Victorville, approximately 7.3 miles north of the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line. The Desert Valley Hospital is an acute care hospital with medical, surgical, and diagnostic services and with inpatient, outpatient, and day treatment (Desert Valley Hospital, 2018).

Clark County. No hospitals are located within 1 mile of the Proposed Project in Nevada. The closest hospital to the Proposed Project in Nevada is the Western Arizona Medical Center, which is located across the Colorado River on Silver Creek Road in Bullhead City, Arizona. The Western Arizona Medical Center is a general medical and surgical hospital with inpatient, outpatient, and emergency room facilities (Western Arizona Medical Center, 2018). It is located approximately 3.3 miles southeast of Mohave Substation. The Boulder City Hospital, a general medical and surgical hospital with inpatient, outpatient, and emergency room facilities (Boulder City Hospital, 2018). It is located on Adams Boulevard in Boulder City, approximately 14.7 miles northeast of Eldorado Substation.

Parks

In California and Nevada, there are 14 federally managed parks, recreational areas, and preserves within 1 mile of the Proposed Project and one State Park, and two local parks within 1 mile of the Proposed

Project. These areas are shown in Figure 5.15-1, Public Services within the Vicinity of the Proposed Project. Section 5.16, Recreation, provides more information on the parks and recreational facilities near the Proposed Project.

Libraries

San Bernardino County. No libraries are located within 1 mile of the Proposed Project. The closest library to the Proposed Project is the Hesperia Branch Library, on 7th Avenue in Hesperia, California (San Bernardino County, 2018), approximately 4.2 miles north of the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line.

Clark County. In Clark County, the public libraries within 1 mile of the Proposed Project include Laughlin Library and Searchlight Library, which are operated by the Las Vegas–Clark County Library District (Las Vegas–Clark County Library District, 2018a; 2018b). The Laughlin Library is located on South Needles Highway in the unincorporated community of Laughlin, approximately 0.5 miles south of the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line. The Searchlight Library is on Michael Wendell Way in the unincorporated community of Searchlight, approximately 2.1 miles east of the existing Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line.

5.15.2 Regulatory Background

State and Local

California

California Public Utilities Commission General Order 95, Section 35. Section 35 of CPUC G.O. 95 covers all aspects of design, construction, and Operation and Maintenance (O&M) of electrical power lines, as well as fire safety hazards.

California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Sections 1250 to 1258. Title 14, Sections 1250 to 1258 of the California Code of Regulations provide specific clearance standards to be maintained by utility companies between electric power lines and all vegetation.

California Public Resources Code Sections 4292 and 4293. California Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 4292 states:

“... any person that owns, controls, operates, or maintains any electrical transmission or distribution line shall, during such times and in such areas as are determined to be necessary by the director or the agency, has primary responsibility for fire protection of such areas, maintain around and adjacent to any pole or tower which supports a switch, fuse, transformer, lightning arrester, line junction, or dead end or corner pole, a firebreak which consists of a clearing of not less than 10 feet in each direction from the outer circumference of such a pole or tower.”

California PRC Section 4293 states:

“... any person that owns, controls, operates, or maintains any electrical transmission or distribution line upon any mountainous land, or in forest-covered land, or grass-covered land shall, during such times and in such areas as are determined to be necessary by the director or the agency which has primary responsibility for the fire protection of such area, maintain a clearance of the respective distances which are specified in this section in all directions between all vegetation and all conductors which are carrying electric current:

- (a) For any line which is operating at 2,400 or more volts, but less than 72,000 volts, 4 feet*
- (b) For any line which is operating at 72,000 or more volts, but less than 110,000 volts, 6 feet*
- (c) For any line which is operating at 110,000 or more volts, 10 feet*

In every case, such distance shall be sufficiently great to furnish the required clearance at any position of the wire, or conductor when the adjacent air temperature is 120 degrees Fahrenheit, or less. Dead trees, old decadent or rotten trees, trees weakened by decay or disease and trees or portions thereof that are leaning toward the line which may contact the line from the side or may fall on the line shall be felled, cut, or trimmed so as to remove such hazard.”

2010 Strategic Fire Plan for California. The 2010 Strategic Fire Plan for California was developed in coordination with the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection and CAL FIRE to reduce and prevent the impacts of fire in California. Goal 6 of the Plan sets objectives to determine the level of suppression resources (staffing and equipment) needed to protect private and public state resources. Specific objectives include, but are not limited to, maintaining an initial attack policy which prioritizes life, property, and natural resources; determining suppression resources allocation criteria; analyzing appropriate staffing levels and equipment needs in relation to the current and future conditions; increasing the number of CAL FIRE crews for fighting wildfires and other emergency response activities; maintaining cooperative agreements with local, state, and federal partners; and implementing new technologies to improve firefighter safety, where available (State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection).

Nevada

Nevada Revised Statutes Section 704.865. Nevada Revised Statutes Section 704.865 provides that “A person, other than a local government, shall not commence to construct a utility facility in the State without first having obtained a permit therefor from the Commission. The replacement of an existing facility with a like facility, as determined by the Commission, does not constitute construction of a utility facility.” The Public Utilities Commission of Nevada is the Lead Agency for compliance with the Nevada Utility Environmental Protection Act.

Local

The CPUC has sole and exclusive jurisdiction over the siting and design of the Proposed Project components located in the State of California. Pursuant to CPUC G.O. 131-D, Section XIV.B, “Local jurisdictions acting pursuant to local authority are preempted from regulating electric power line projects, distribution lines, substations, or electric facilities constructed by public utilities subject to the CPUC’s jurisdiction. However, in locating such projects, the public utilities shall consult with local agencies regarding land use matters.” Consequently, public utilities are directed to consider local regulations and consult with local agencies, but the county and cities’ regulations are not applicable as the county and cities do not have jurisdiction over the Proposed Project. For informational purposes, local regulations in California jurisdictions are provided in Appendix C. The Proposed Project is subject to local regulations in the State of Nevada.

Clark County Comprehensive Plan. The Public Facilities and Services Element of the Clark County Comprehensive Plan contains goals and policies for schools. The Safety Element contains policies for fire and emergency services, as well as police protection. The following policies from the Safety Element are relevant to the Proposed Project (Clark County Department of Comprehensive Planning, 2015):

- **Fire and Emergency Services Policy 1:** Ensure that all developments provide adequate access for fire and other emergency vehicles and equipment (including fire hydrants)
- **Fire and Emergency Services Policy 4:** New development in Rural Areas must address additional water storage needs for the community prior to approval.
- **Fire and Emergency Services Policy 6:** Ensure that emergency services are provided in Wildland Interface Areas through mission sensitive reciprocal agreements with federal and state agencies.
- **Police Protection Policy 3:** Ensure that all developments provide adequate access to police and other emergency vehicles and equipment.

South Clark County Land Use Plan. The South Clark County Land Use Plan does not contain any specific goals or policies that are relevant to the Proposed Project.

Laughlin Land Use Plan. The Laughlin Land Use Plan guides decisions by the Laughlin Town Advisory Board, Planning Commission, and Board of County Commissioners concerning growth and development (Clark County Planning Commission, 2017). The policies of the Land Use Element of the Clark County Comprehensive Plan are incorporated by reference in the Laughlin Land Use Plan and are the adopted policies of the Laughlin Land Use Plan. Policies that are relevant to the Proposed Project are listed above under *Clark County Comprehensive Plan*.

Boulder City Master Plan. The Public Facilities chapter of the Boulder City Master Plan includes policies for fire and police protection (City of Boulder, 2015). However, the Public Facilities Element does not contain any specific goals or policies that are relevant to the Proposed Project.

Federal

There are no Federal or local regulations, plans, and standards for public services and utilities that apply to the Proposed Project.

5.15.3 Applicant Proposed Measures

The Proposed Project does not include any APMs related to Public Services.

5.15.4 CEQA Significance Criteria

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR 15000 et seq.) provides guidance on assessing whether a project would have significant impacts on the environment. Consistent with Appendix G, the Proposed Project would have significant public services impacts if it would:

Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for any of the public services:

- a. Fire protection*
- b. Police protection*
- c. Schools*
- d. Parks*
- e. Other public facilities.*

5.15.5 Methodology

Impacts to public services were evaluated with respect to potential adverse effects that implementation of the Proposed Project may have on local and regional public services and facilities. The methodology involves comparing actions included under the Proposed Project against the environmental setting presented in this section, with consideration to the significance criteria identified in Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines.

5.15.6 Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for any of the public services:

a) Fire protection?

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. Construction of the Proposed Project would not directly interfere with fire protection services in the immediate project area nor would it require construction of new or altered facilities. While several emergency providers are located in the vicinity of the Proposed Project, none are located within 1 mile. As a result, the Proposed Project would not cause direct impacts to fire stations or to their access. Construction is not anticipated to affect response times due to road closures, because any road closures that may be necessary would be temporary, and alternative routes would be coordinated with emergency services prior to construction. Although temporary lane closures would be necessary during construction activities completed within public street ROWs, traffic controls would be implemented as required by local jurisdictions through the encroachment permit process and all lane closures would be conducted in accordance with applicable requirements.

Increases in long-term demand for fire protection services typically are associated with substantial increases in population. As discussed in Section 5.14, Population and Housing, during the 15-month construction period of the Proposed Project, SCE anticipates as many as 15 to 346 (or an average of 159) construction personnel would be working on the Proposed Project at any given time during peak construction periods. Construction crews would likely commute from the surrounding areas in San Bernardino County and Clark County or would otherwise temporarily relocate to the project areas during construction. The populations of communities crossed by and near the project alignment may increase slightly during the construction phase due to the temporary relocation of construction crews, but the increase would be temporary and would not cause a permanent increase in population and would not adversely affect service response rates or ratios.

Additionally, the Proposed Project would include emergency access and other safety features and plans for fire protection, and impacts would be less than significant. Overall, the project's impact to fire protection services in the project area would be minimal and would not significantly impact the abilities of the fire, police, and other service providers to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives.

Operation and Maintenance

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. Routine maintenance of access roads would be conducted on an as-needed basis. This would include maintaining vegetation-free access roads to facilitate facility access and for fire prevention. O&M for the Proposed Project includes regular vegetation clearing or trimming to minimize fire potential. Vehicles would use existing roads and access routes for operation activities, which would reduce the potential for vehicle undercarriage heat to ignite dry vegetation and start fires. Consistent with CPUC G.O. 95 and other applicable federal and State laws, SCE would maintain an area of cleared brush around equipment, minimizing the potential for fire. SCE also participates in the Red Flag Program, limiting certain work activities during Red Flag days, and complies with California PRC Sections 4292 and 4293 related to vegetation management in transmission line corridors. As a result, the risk of fire and the subsequent need for fire services would be minimized.

In addition, O&M activities would not require additional full-time personnel and would not cause a permanent increase in population that would cause an increase in the use of existing fire services or a need for new fire protection services. Overall, the Proposed Project area would continue to be adequately supported by the existing fire protection services during O&M of the Proposed Project since the operation of the Proposed Project would not induce growth in the project area and the fire risk from the Proposed Project would not create the need for new or physically altered fire protection facilities.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

b) Police Protection?

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. The Proposed Project would not cause direct effects on police stations or their access since none are located within 1 mile of the Proposed Project route nor would it require construction of new or altered police facilities. Any road closures during construction would be temporary and traffic controls would be implemented as required by local jurisdictions through the encroachment permit process. The temporary increase in construction workers could increase demands on police services. Although the presence of up to 346 additional construction personnel would alter the current protection service ratio, because Project construction is not anticipated to permanently increase the local population and crews would be at dispersed work locations, no new or expanded law enforcement facilities or increased staff levels within the Project regional area would be required.

Construction of the Proposed Project would generate truck and employee traffic along haul routes and in the Project area, which could temporarily increase the potential for accidents in these areas or affect response times or other service performance over the approximate 15-month construction period. However, the additional volume of traffic associated with workers commuting to the sites during construction would be dispersed and temporary. Many workers would be ferried to distant work sites by helicopter. Once off of paved roads, crews and equipment would encounter little or no traffic. In addition, project construction is not expected to adversely affect the ability of highway patrol officers to police the highways. Overall, Project construction would not result in the need for new or physically altered police or sheriff protection facilities in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives. Impacts would be less than significant.

Operation and Maintenance

NO IMPACT. Once operational, the proposed Newberry Springs Series Capacitor and Ludlow Series Capacitor would include security cameras and perimeter fencing, which would minimize the potential need for the police assistance. As discussed above in (a), O&M activities would not require additional full-time personnel and would not cause a permanent increase in population that would cause an increase in the use of existing public services or a need for new police protection services.

Overall, the Proposed Project area would continue to be adequately supported by the existing police protection services during O&M of the Proposed Project. The operation of the Proposed Project would not induce growth in the project area and the Proposed Project would not create the need for new or physically altered police protection facilities.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

c) Schools?

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. As discussed above, SCE anticipates from 15 to 346 construction personnel would be working at any given time, and many of these crew members would likely commute from within San Bernardino and Clark Counties. It is possible that during construction some of the construction workforce could temporarily relocate to the communities crossed by the Proposed Project. However, construction of the Proposed Project would not result in a permanent increase in the area's population and the temporary addition of construction workers to the Project area's population is not anticipated to increase school enrollment sufficiently to require new schools to be constructed or existing schools to be physically altered to allow for a Project-related increase in enrollment, where the physical alteration of the school could result in adverse environmental impacts. Impacts would therefore be less than significant.

Operation and Maintenance

NO IMPACT. As discussed previously, O&M activities would not require additional full-time personnel; therefore, O&M would not cause an increase in the use of existing public services, nor would they result in a need for new schools. As a result, there would be no impact to schools as a result of O&M of the Proposed Project.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

d) Parks?

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. The required construction workforce for the Project would be hired principally from the available regional workforce. There would potentially be temporary in-migration that would increase the local population during construction; however, it would not warrant the need for new or expanded parks and recreational facilities within the project area. Although some workers may use recreational areas during project construction, increased use would be minimal and/or temporary and would not

contribute substantially to the physical deterioration of existing facilities. Less than significant impacts would occur. (Parks and other recreational facilities are discussed in detail in Section 4.15, Recreation.)

Operation and Maintenance

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. As discussed previously, O&M activities would not require additional full-time personnel. Although some workers may use recreational areas during project O&M, increased use would be minimal and/or temporary and would not contribute substantially to the physical deterioration of existing facilities. Less than significant impacts would occur.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

e) Other Public Facilities?

Construction

Health Services. *LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT.* While a high number of construction employees would be located at various sites along the project corridor, local area emergency medical facilities are expected to adequately handle any worksite accidents requiring their attention. Project construction would therefore not require new or physically altered hospital facilities or personnel or result in the increase in emergency responder staff levels within the Project area; impacts would be less than significant.

Libraries. *LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT.* Consistent with the impacts previously discussed for other public service facilities, although Project construction would potentially temporarily increase the number of people in communities in the project vicinity, it would not increase the local populations permanently. New or expanded library facilities within the area are therefore not required and impacts would be less than significant.

Operation and Maintenance

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. O&M activities for the new project facilities would not require additional full-time personnel. Although some O&M employees may use local area emergency medical facilities or libraries during project O&M, increased use would be minimal and would not contribute substantially to the physical deterioration of existing facilities. Less than significant impacts would occur.

Mitigation Measures

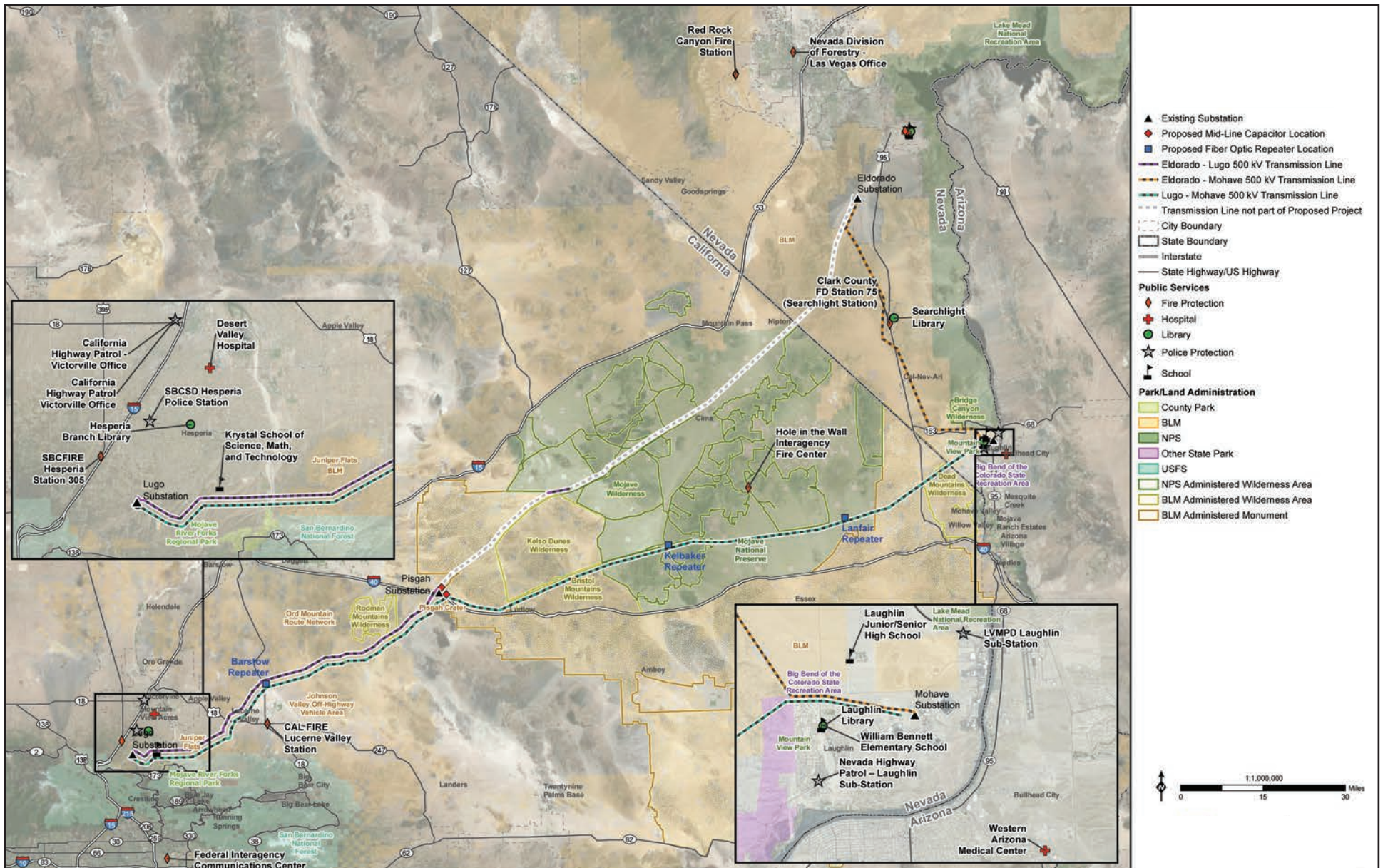
No mitigation is required.

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Source: SCE, 2018.

Figure 5.15-1
Public Services within the Vicinity
of the Proposed Project

5.16 Recreation

RECREATION

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities, which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Significance criteria established by CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G.

5.16.1 Environmental Setting

Most of the Proposed Project routes cross undeveloped open space that is managed by either the BLM or NPS, or is within the jurisdiction of San Bernardino County and Clark County Nevada. Recreational resources in the project area include open areas, Special Recreation Management Areas (SRMA), Extensive Recreation Management Areas (ERMAs), and Off-highway Vehicle (OHV) Areas all managed by BLM; the Mojave National Preserve managed by the NPS; and several wilderness areas managed by the BLM and NPS. Table 5.16-1 lists the recreational areas that are either crossed or within 1 mile of the Proposed Project. Figures 5.16-1a through 5.16-1c illustrate the recreational areas.

Table 5.16-1. Recreational Areas within 1 Mile of the Proposed Project

Facility	Jurisdiction	Size (acres)	Amenities	Distance to Nearest Project Component (miles)	Nearest Proposed Project Component
California					
Crucero Valley ERMA	BLM	23,748	Campgrounds, hunting, backcountry touring, and open space	Spanned	Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line
Stoddard/Johnson SRMA	BLM	277,000	Subdivided into four Recreation Management Zones (Granite Mountain, Stoddard Valley, Johnson Valley OHV Area, and Ord Rodman). OHV areas, hiking, trails. Includes many organized recreational events	Spanned	Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line; Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Juniper Flats	BLM	—	OHV area, open space, and hiking trails	Spanned	Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line; Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Open Access BLM Land	BLM	—	Open space and hiking trails	Spanned	Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line; Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line; Newberry Springs series capacitor
Open Access BLM Land	BLM	—	Open space and hiking trails	0.4	Barstow fiber optic repeater

Table 5.16-1. Recreational Areas within 1 Mile of the Proposed Project

Facility	Jurisdiction	Size (acres)	Amenities	Distance to Nearest Project Component (miles)	Nearest Proposed Project Component
Ord Mountain Route Network	BLM	—	OHV area and hiking trails	Spanned	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Mojave Trails National Monument	BLM	965,000	Hiking trails, campgrounds, picnic areas, fossil sites, historic sites, rock collecting, and four-wheel drive trails	Spanned/Adjacent	Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line; Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line/Ludlow series capacitor
Mojave National Preserve	NPS	1,600,000	Campgrounds, food service, stores, picnic areas, and hiking trails	Spanned	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line; Kelbaker fiber optic repeater
National Trails SRMA	BLM	417,129	Historic sites, campgrounds, and hiking trails	Spanned	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Rodman Mountains Wilderness	BLM	34,264	Open space and hiking trails	Spanned/Adjacent	Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line; Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Dead Mountains Wilderness	BLM	47,158	Open space and hiking trails	Adjacent	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Mojave Wilderness	NPS	695,200	Campgrounds, picnic areas, self-guided trails, and hiking trails	Adjacent	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line; Kelbaker fiber optic repeater
Kelso Dunes Wilderness	BLM	144,915	Open space, hiking trails, and roadside camping	<0.1	Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line and Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Bristol Mountains Wilderness	BLM	71,389	Open space and hiking trails	0.1	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Mojave River Forks Regional Park	County of San Bernardino	2,393	Tent, recreational vehicle, and group camping areas, showers and restrooms, equestrian area, hiking trails, and horse trails	0.1	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Pacific Crest Trails SRMA	BLM	111,006	Hiking trails, equestrian trails, and campgrounds	0.3	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
San Bernardino National Forest	U.S. Forest Service	679,380	Campgrounds, picnic areas, recreational shooting sites, hiking trails, and equestrian trails	0.8	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Pisgah Crater	BLM/Private	—	Rock collecting	1.0 ¹	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Nevada					
Open Access BLM Land	BLM	—	Open space and hiking trails	Spanned/0.3	Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line; Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line/Mohave Substation

Table 5.16-1. Recreational Areas within 1 Mile of the Proposed Project

Facility	Jurisdiction	Size (acres)	Amenities	Distance to Nearest Project Component (miles)	Nearest Proposed Project Component
Big Bend of the Colorado State Recreation Area	Nevada State Parks	1,966	Campgrounds, hiking trails boat launch, picnic areas, historic sites, swimming, and fishing	Spanned within the SCE ROW	Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line; Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Lake Mead National Recreation Area	NPS	1,500,000	Picnic areas, marinas, boat launches, campgrounds, and stores	0.2	Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Bridge Canyon Wilderness	NPS	7,761	Open space and hiking trails	0.2	Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Mountain View Park	Clark County	20	Tennis courts, basketball courts, and hiking trails walking trail, horseshoe pits, volleyball courts, and picnic areas	0.2	Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line; Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
Old Spanish National Historic Trail	BLM and NPS	—	Historic sites, wayside exhibits, and markers	Spanned	Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line

1 - Boundary data was not available for Pisgah Crater; thus, the approximate distance to the nearest Proposed Project component is an approximation determined by aerial images.
Source: SCE, 2018. BLM, 2016.

Federal

Bureau of Land Management

California Desert Conservation Area. The California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA) was created by the U.S. Congress in 1976, and approximately 10.4 million acres of the 26-million-acre area is managed by the California Desert District of the BLM. The California Desert District of the BLM is the southernmost BLM district of California and there are field offices in the cities of Ridgecrest, Palm Springs, El Centro, Barstow, and Needles. Recreational activities in the CDCA include hiking, hunting, camping, land sailing, sightseeing, and the use of recreational OHVs. The existing Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line spans approximately 63.9 miles and the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line spans approximately 81.8 miles of BLM-managed land within the California Desert District.

SRMAS and ERMAS. Special Recreation Management Areas (SRMAS) are areas designated on BLM-administered lands that are recognized and managed for their recreation opportunities, unique value and importance. They are high-priority areas for outdoor recreation. Extensive Recreation Management Areas (ERMAs) are areas that require specific management consideration to address recreation use and demand. They are managed to support and sustain the principal recreation activities and associated qualities and conditions.

Wilderness Areas. Wilderness areas are designated to preserve and protect their undeveloped natural condition. They provide recreational opportunities that include hiking, backpacking, climbing, horse packing, bird watching, stargazing, and opportunities for solitude. The following four wilderness areas are within 1 mile of the Proposed Project and managed by the California Desert District of the BLM:

- Dead Mountain Wilderness located adjacent to and south of the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line

- Rodman Mountains Wilderness spanned by the existing Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line for approximately 1.6 miles and located adjacent to and north of the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
- Kelso Dunes Wilderness located less than 1 mile north of the existing Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line and less than 1 mile north of the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
- Bristol Mountains Wilderness located adjacent to and south of the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line

In 2014, approximately 1,785 people visited the Rodman Mountains Wilderness and approximately 15 people visited the Kelso Dunes Wilderness.¹ Visitor statistics for the Dead Mountains Wilderness and Bristol Mountains Wilderness were not available. (SCE, 2018)

Johnson Valley OHV Area. The Johnson Valley OHV Area is part of the Stoddard/Johnson SRMA and is located north of the unincorporated community of Johnson Valley. This OHV area offers opportunities for four-wheel-drive travel, hiking, rockhounding, and wildlife watching. Approximately 5.4 miles of the existing Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line and approximately 5.5 miles of the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line are located within the Johnson Valley OHV Area. In 2014, approximately 162,497 people visited the Johnson Valley OHV Area.² (SCE, 2018)

An approximately 53,000-acre section of the community of Johnson Valley — the Johnson Valley Shared Use Area — is managed by the BLM; however, the Marine Corps occupy the Shared Use Area for two 30-day periods annually. During these times, the Johnson Valley Shared Use Area is closed to the public and the adjacent Johnson Valley OHV Area remains open to the public. The Johnson Valley Shared Use Area is located approximately 4.2 miles from the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line.

Ord Mountain Route Network. The Ord Mountain Route Network is part of the Stoddard/Johnson SRMA located south of the City of Barstow and links the BLM-managed open areas of Stoddard Valley OHV Area to the north and Johnson Valley OHV Area to the south. This road network offers hunting, hiking, and four-wheel-drive travel. The nearest open route of the Ord Mountain Route Network is spanned by the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line.

Juniper Flats. Juniper Flats is a route network located in the northern foothills of the San Bernardino Mountains, north of San Bernardino National Forest and southeast of Victor Valley. Approximately 6.9 miles of the existing Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line and approximately 7 miles of the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line are located within Juniper Flats. Juniper Flats offers opportunities for vehicle touring, camping, hiking, horseback riding, and hunting.

Pisgah Crater. Pisgah Crater is located within the Pisgah Lava Field, south of Interstate (I-) 40, off of Route 66 in San Bernardino County. Pisgah Crater, located approximately 1 mile south of the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line, offers opportunities for rockhounding, wildlife viewing, and hiking.

Mojave Trails National Monument. The Mojave Trails National Monument is located between Joshua Tree National Park and the Mojave National Preserve along Route 66 in San Bernardino County. The Mojave Trails National Monument is managed by the BLM and covers approximately 965,000 acres.

¹ Visitation rates are not recorded for these wilderness areas, and these numbers are estimates based on an average of visits recorded in BLM-managed areas nearby.

² Visitation rates are not recorded for these wilderness areas, and these numbers are estimates based on an average of visits recorded in BLM-managed areas nearby.

Approximately 25.3 miles of the existing Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line and 28.3 miles of the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line span the Mojave Trails National Monument. The proposed Ludlow Series Capacitor would be located adjacent to the Mojave Trails National Monument. The Mojave Trails National Monument offers opportunities for camping, hiking, and hunting.

Old Spanish National Historic Trail. The Old Spanish National Historic Trail runs through New Mexico, Colorado, Arizona, Utah, Nevada and California. The BLM and the NPS administer the trail together to encourage preservation and public use. The Old Spanish National Historic Trail is crossed by the existing Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line between Tower M29-T2 and M29-T3 on land administered by the BLM. The Old Spanish National Historic Trail is not a constructed contiguous trail with a demarcated alignment, and there are very few officially designated hiking trails along the trail corridor. The trail has a variety of trail-related historic sites, wayside exhibits, and markers.

Mojave Trail/Mojave Road. The Mojave Trail/Mojave Road (Mojave Road) is an east-west route that enters the Mojave National Preserve near Piute Spring on the east side and on Soda Dry Lake near Zzyzx on the west side and routes extend southeast through Nevada to the Colorado River. The Mojave Road is a popular four-wheel drive road and it crosses the Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line in Nevada on land administered by the BLM, east of the existing Tower M166-T1.

Open Space Areas. Most the BLM-managed lands along the Proposed Project alignment are open access lands in California and Nevada and include areas for four-wheel-drive travel, hiking, hunting, and dispersed camping.

National Park Service

Mojave National Preserve. The Mojave National Preserve is located east of the City of Barstow in Southern California, between I-15 and I-40. The Mojave National Preserve was established by the California Desert Protection Act and offers four-wheel-drive roads, backcountry camping, wildflower viewing, and hunting. The Mojave National Preserve covers approximately 1.6 million acres, and approximately 49.3 miles of the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line spans the Mojave National Preserve.

Providence Mountains State Recreation Area, the University of California Natural Reserve System's Sweeney Granite Mountains Desert Research Center, and California State University's Desert Studies Center at Soda Springs are within the preserve's boundaries. Approximately 700,000 acres of the Mojave National Preserve are designated as wilderness, including the Mojave Wilderness. In 2015, approximately 589,155 people visited the Mojave National Preserve.

The Mojave Wilderness is managed by the NPS and is located within the Mojave National Preserve. The Mojave Wilderness covers approximately 695,200 acres and is adjacent to the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line.

Lake Mead National Recreation Area. Lake Mead National Recreation Area is in Clark County, Nevada, and Mohave County, Arizona. Lake Mead National Recreation Area offers boating, fishing, hiking, photography, picnicking, and sightseeing. This recreation area is located approximately 0.2 miles north of the existing Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line. In 2015, approximately 7,298,465 people visited Lake Mead National Recreation Area.

Bridge Canyon Wilderness is managed by the NPS and is located in the Lake Mead National Recreation Area, northwest of the unincorporated community of Laughlin in Nevada. This wilderness area offers backpacking, camping, fishing, hunting, and equestrian activities. Bridge Canyon Wilderness is located approximately 0.2 miles north of the existing Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line.

U.S. Forest Service

San Bernardino National Forest. San Bernardino National Forest is in San Bernardino County, California. The national forest offers bicycling, camping, fishing, hiking, hunting, picnicking, and winter sports. There are eight designated wilderness areas in the San Bernardino National Forest. The San Bernardino National Forest is located approximately 0.8 miles south of the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line.

State

California

Kelso Peak and Old Dad Mountains Wildlife Area. The Kelso Peak and Old Dad Mountains Wildlife Area is approximately 102,400 acres of dunes playa (dry lake), lava beds, and mountains of lime and granite. It is cooperatively managed by BLM and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). It allows wildlife viewing and hunting (CDFW, 2018).

Nevada

Big Bend of the Colorado State Recreation Area. Big Bend of the Colorado State Recreation Area offers picnicking, boating, fishing, swimming, camping, hiking, and group facilities that are open to the public. Approximately 0.7 miles of the existing Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line and the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line span Big Bend of the Colorado State Recreation Area but within the SCE ROW. An average of approximately 75,000 people visit Big Bend of the Colorado State Recreation Area annually.

Local

Mojave River Forks Regional Park. Mojave River Forks Regional Park is located at 17891 State Route 173 near the City of Hesperia and offers camping, equestrian camping, hiking, and equestrian trails. Mojave River Forks Regional Park is located approximately 0.1 miles south of the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line.

Mountain View Park. Mountain View Park is managed by the Clark County Department of Parks and Recreation. The park offers tennis, basketball, and volleyball courts; a walking trail; and picnic areas. Mountain View Park is located approximately 0.2 miles south of the existing Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line and existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line.

5.16.2 Regulatory Background

State and Local

State

There are no state recreation regulations in California or Nevada that are applicable to the Proposed Project.

Local

The CPUC has sole and exclusive jurisdiction over the siting and design of the Proposed Project components located in the State of California. Pursuant to CPUC G.O. 131-D, Section XIV.B, “Local jurisdictions acting pursuant to local authority are preempted from regulating electric power line projects, dis-

tribution lines, substations, or electric facilities constructed by public utilities subject to the CPUC's jurisdiction. However, in locating such projects, the public utilities shall consult with local agencies regarding land use matters." Consequently, public utilities are directed to consider local regulations and consult with local agencies, but the county and cities' regulations are not applicable as the county and cities do not have jurisdiction over the Proposed Project. No pertinent local regulations related to recreation were identified. The Proposed Project is subject to local regulations in the State of Nevada.

Clark County Comprehensive Plan. Clark County Comprehensive Plan contains the following policy, which is relevant to the Proposed Project and is addressed in Section 5.10, Land Use and Planning:

- **Utilities 13:** *Explore opportunities with utility providers to locate trails within existing and future utility corridors wherever possible.*

South Clark County Land Use Plan. The South Clark County Land Use Plan contains the following policy, which is relevant to the Proposed Project and addressed in Section 4.10, Land Use and Planning:

- **Policy 30.2:** *Promote the joint use of high voltage transmission line corridors and transportation systems that allow for the development of pedestrian, equestrian, and bicycle trails within existing and planned transmission line corridors. Incorporate strategies that take into consideration access for routine and emergency transmission line maintenance.*

Federal

Bureau of Land Management

The Wilderness Act of 1964. As codified by Title 16, Chapter 23 of the U.S. Code, the Wilderness Act of 1964 defines "wilderness" as an area where "the earth, and its community of life, are untrammelled by man and where man himself is a visitor who does not remain." This act also established the National Wilderness Preservation System that coordinates the wilderness activities of four federal agencies: the USFS, BLM, NPS, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). The National Wilderness Preservation System provides a system by which land is evaluated and can be added to the list of wilderness areas. With some exceptions (e.g., existing private rights), the Wilderness Act prohibits motorized equipment or mechanized transport in designated wilderness areas, timber harvest, or development.

Federal Land Policy and Management Act. The Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) provides a regulatory framework for the management and use of BLM resources. An important aspect of the FLPMA is that it supports multiple uses on public lands. In addition, under the FLPMA, the BLM regulates rights-of-way (ROWs) for electrical power generation, transmission and distribution systems, systems for the transmission and reception of electronic signals and other means of communication, pipelines (other than oil and gas), railroads, highways, and other facilities or systems developed in the interest of the public. The FLPMA also designated the approximately 26-million-acre CDCA in Southern California, of which approximately 10.4 million acres are administered by the BLM. Lands in the CDCA are also managed by the NPS, DoD, and the USFS.³

California Desert Conservation Area Plan. The CDCA Plan is a comprehensive, long-range plan for the management, use, development, and protection of lands within the CDCA, and it is required as part of the FLPMA and implemented by the BLM. The CDCA Plan contains an Energy Production and Utility Corridors Element, in which the BLM encourages applicants for utility ROWs to use designated corridors.

³ The Proposed Project is located 0.8 miles from San Bernardino National Forest and does not cross USFS land.

The Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan is focused on 10.8 million acres of public lands in the desert regions of seven California counties – Imperial, Inyo, Kern, Los Angeles, Riverside, San Bernardino, and San Diego. It is a landscape-level plan that streamlines renewable energy development while conserving unique and valuable desert ecosystems and providing outdoor recreation opportunities. The BLM signed the Record of Decision approving its Land Use Plan Amendment to the CDCA Plan on September 14, 2016. The BLM Plan Amendment covers the 10 million acres of BLM-managed lands in the DRECP plan area and supports the overall renewable energy and conservation goals of the DRECP. The DRECP designated two types of recreation designations: SRMAs and ERMAs. It designated multiple other land use designations that include recreational activities such as Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs).

National Park Service

California Desert Protection Act of 1994. The California Desert Protection Act of 1994 is a federal law that established Death Valley National Park, Joshua Tree National Park, and the Mojave National Preserve in California. Section 511 Utility Rights of Way states that Southern California Edison Company (SCE) activities within the ROW of the Mojave National Preserve are to remain valid. This includes upgrades to the existing electrical transmission line to increase capacity. In the existing Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line ROW and existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line ROW, no additional land would be issued, granted, or permitted for such an upgrade unless an addition would reduce the impacts to resources in the Mojave National Preserve.

Mojave General Management Plan. The Mojave General Management Plan, the management strategy for the Mojave National Preserve, was developed as a requirement of the California Desert Protection Act of 1994 and is implemented by the NPS. The Mojave General Management Plan notes that some existing land uses such as electric transmission lines do not conform well with the preservation mission and management goals but are authorized pre-existing uses. The Plan identifies these resources to recognize their existence as non-conforming uses that dissect the park and at times may interfere with the visitor experience. The management philosophy towards these developments is to minimize their intrusion and manage towards their eventual elimination, either through technological improvements or acquisition. Many of these uses will likely remain intact throughout the life of this plan, but as opportunities arise to minimize or eliminate them, the park would work towards that end (NPS, 2002).

Clark County Conservation of Public Land and Natural Resources Act of 2002. The Clark County Conservation of Public Land and Natural Resources Act of 2002 is a federal act that establishes wilderness areas, promotes conservation, improves public land, and provides for high-quality development in Clark County, Nevada. It established Bridge Canyon Wilderness within the Lake Mead National Recreation Area as part of the National Wilderness Preservation System.

5.16.3 Applicant Proposed Measures

The Proposed Project does not include any APMs related to Recreation.

5.16.4 CEQA Significance Criteria

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR 15000 et seq.) provides guidance on assessing whether a project would have significant impacts on the environment. Consistent with Appendix G, the Proposed Project would have significant recreation impacts if it would:

- a. *Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated*
- b. *Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities, which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment*

5.16.5 Methodology

This analysis reviewed the existing recreational areas along the Proposed Project alignment primarily at the location of ground disturbance. It then reviews whether the Proposed Project would permanently convert or temporarily impact recreation such that it results in a substantial increase in use of a different recreational area. It also reviews whether the Proposed Project would conform with recreational plans and regulations.

5.16.6 Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

- a. *Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?*

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. SCE anticipates 15 to 346 construction personnel would be working on the Proposed Project at any given time during the approximately 15 months of construction. Crew members would likely commute from residences in San Bernardino and Clark County, or nearby counties, and are not anticipated to permanently relocate to the area. The minor increase in daily worker population would be temporary and if some workers used recreation facilities, this would not lead to substantial physical deterioration of existing recreational facilities. In addition, as described in Section 4.13, Population and Housing, the Proposed Project would not induce population growth in the area either directly or indirectly. The Proposed Project would not promote new growth or development that would increase the use of existing recreational facilities and result in substantial physical deterioration.

Operation

NO IMPACT. O&M activities associated with the Proposed Project would be similar to those currently performed for the existing facilities, with additional O&M activities associated with the proposed mid-line series capacitors and fiber optic repeater facilities. These activities would be undertaken by existing staff. Because O&M activities would be similar to current practices they would not increase use of recreation facilities.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

- b. *Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities, which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?*

Construction

NO IMPACT. The Proposed Project does not include or require the construction of recreational facilities. Impacts to existing facilities would be temporary and no additional recreational facilities would be required to accommodate users because of the Proposed Project. The Proposed Project would not promote new growth or development that would increase the use of existing recreational facilities. The

Proposed Project would not require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities and no impact would occur.

Operation

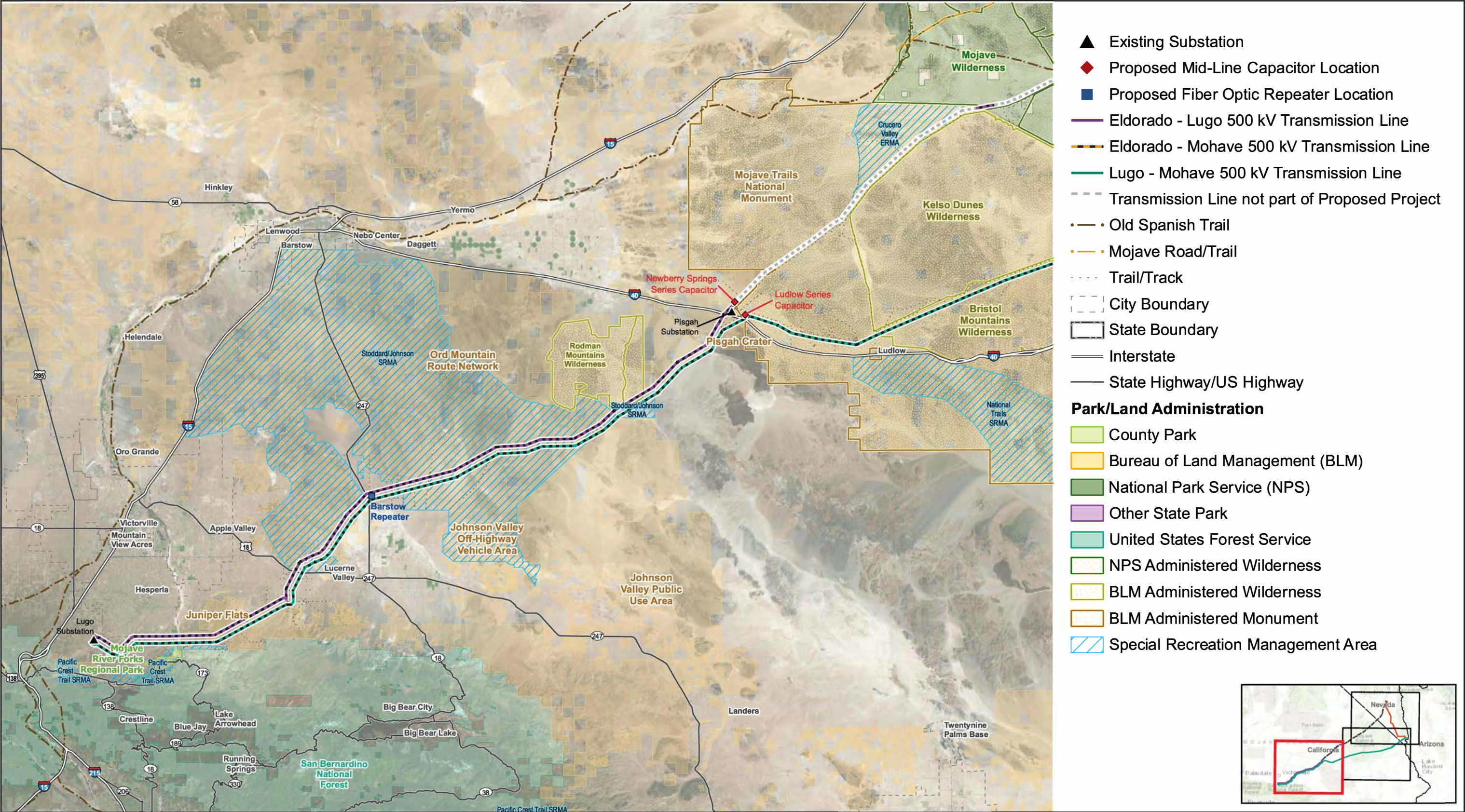
NO IMPACT. O&M activities associated with the Proposed Project would be similar to those currently performed for the existing facilities, with additional O&M activities associated with the proposed mid-line series capacitors and fiber optic repeater facilities. Because O&M activities would be similar to current practices and no impact would result from the Proposed Project.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

5.16.7 References

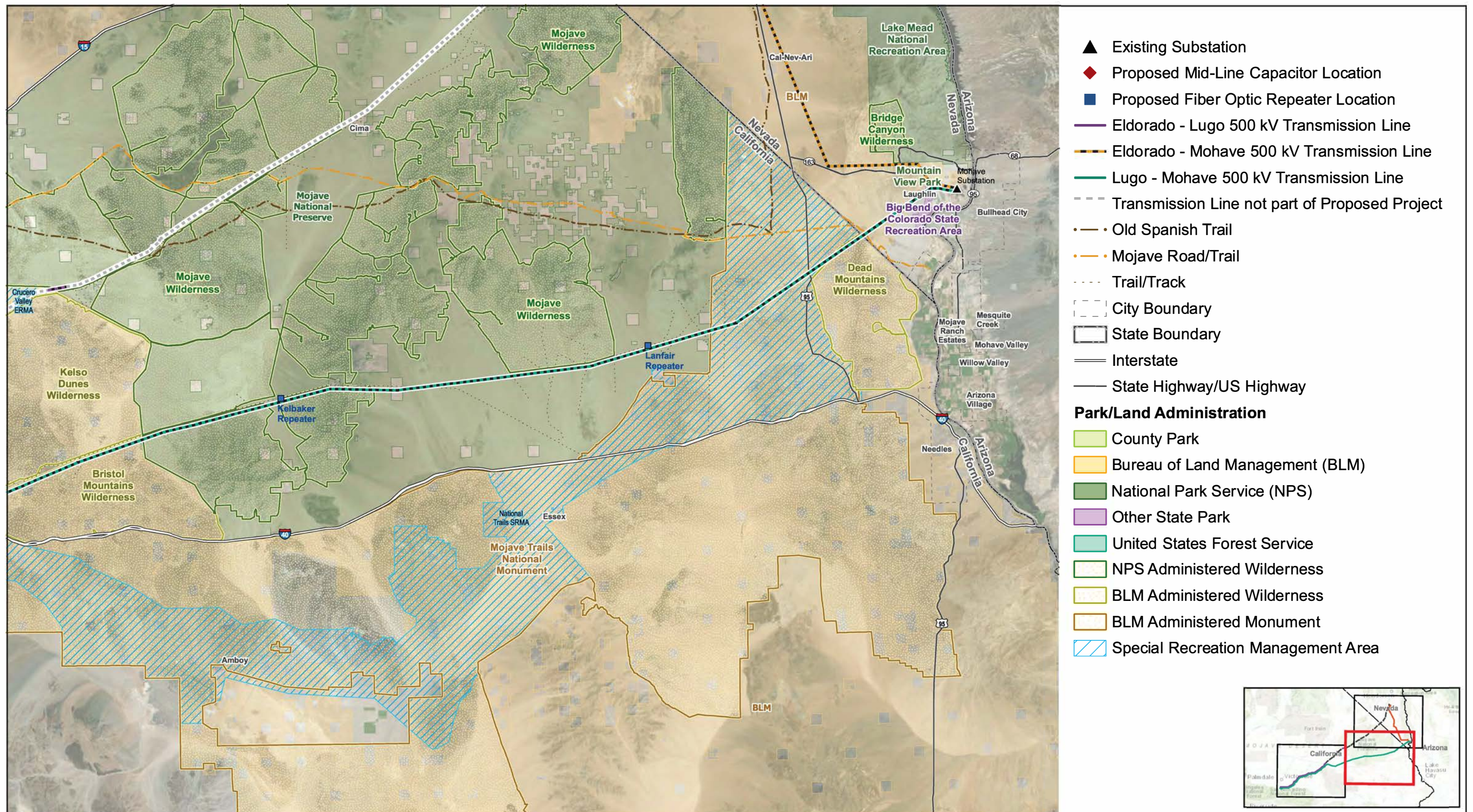
- BLM (Bureau of Land Management). 2016. Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan Land Use Plan Amendment. Appendix C, Special Recreation Management Area and Extensive Recreation Management Area – Special Unit Management Plans.
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- SCE (Southern California Edison). 2018. Eldorado-Lugo-Mohave Series Capacitor Project: Proponent's Environmental Assessment (PEA). Volumes 1 through 8. April.



Source: SCE, 2018.



Figure 5.16-1
Recreational Facilities
Within 1 Mile of the Proposed Project
Map 1 of 3



Source: SCE, 2018.

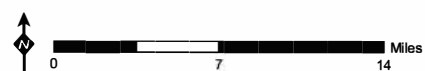


Figure 5.16-1
Recreational Facilities
Within 1 Mile of the Proposed Project
Map 2 of 3

5.17 Transportation

TRANSPORTATION

Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Conflict with a program plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Result in inadequate emergency access?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Require helicopter use that would have potential impacts on public safety and create nuisance conditions?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Significance criteria a. through d. established by CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G. Criterion e. is added to address helicopter use.

5.17.1 Environmental Setting

The Proposed Project is located in California and Nevada, within the Mojave Basin and Range (Mojave). Federal lands constitute a majority of the land area in the Mojave, including lands under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), National Park Service (NPS), Bureau of Reclamation (BOR), and Department of Defense (DoD). The Proposed Project would modify three existing transmission lines that extend northeast from Lugo Substation (located in San Bernardino County, California) to Eldorado Substation (located in the City of Boulder City, Nevada) and Mohave Substation (located in Clark County, Nevada), and from Mohave Substation northwest to Eldorado Substation. Portions of the Proposed Project would also cross the City of Hesperia, California, the unincorporated community of Lucerne Valley in California, as well as the unincorporated communities of Searchlight and Laughlin in Nevada.

Existing Roadway Network

The *Highway Capacity Manual* (HCM) (Transportation Research Board, 2000) provides methodologies to assess potential impacts to traffic flow. A Level of Service (LOS) scale is used to indicate the quality of traffic flow on roadway segments and at intersections. LOS is an indicator of operating conditions on a roadway or at an intersection and is defined in categories ranging from A to F. LOS A represents the best traffic flow conditions with very low delay, and LOS F represents poor conditions. LOS A indicates free-flowing traffic, and LOS F indicates substantial congestion with long delays at intersections.

LOS for signalized intersections is based upon the average time (seconds) that vehicles approaching an intersection are delayed. There is a specific delay and level of service associated with each approach and an overall average delay for all movements. The overall LOS for the intersection is based upon the overall average delay.

Unsignalized intersection LOS is also based upon the control delay, but delay is assessed only for those traffic movements that are stopped or must yield to through traffic. Some movements, including cross traffic on the minor street or left turns onto the major street, can be subject to long delays; however, through traffic and right turns from the major street would not experience any delays at stopped intersections. When delay for cross traffic is severe (LOS F), the intersection should be evaluated further for possible improvement with traffic signals. In some cases, this analysis determines that the delay is being

experienced by a very low number of vehicles, and traffic signals are not warranted. In other cases, when the number of stopped vehicles is substantial, and traffic signals may be justified as a mitigation measure, additional analysis is required to determine the need and justification for the installation of a traffic signal.

Table 5.17-1 shows the relationship between LOS and the performance measures for signalized and unsignalized intersections and lists the Highway Capacity Manual delay criteria for signalized intersections.

Table 5.17-1. Intersection Level of Service Definitions

Level of Service	Signalized Intersection Control Delay (seconds/vehicle)	Unsignalized Intersection Control Delay (seconds/vehicle)
A	0 – 10	0 – 10
B	10.1 – 20	10.1 – 15
C	20.1 – 35	15.1 – 25
D	35.1 – 55	25.1 – 35
E	55.1 – 80	35.1 – 50
F	80.1 or more	50.1 or more

Source: Transportation Research Board (2000)

A list of roadways that may be used for construction vehicle travel associated with the project are presented in Table 5.17-2, Roadway Network in the Vicinity of the Proposed Project. Table 5.17-2 also includes the classification, number of lanes, traffic volume data, average annual daily traffic (AADT), and Level of Service (LOS) information (where available) for these roadways. In addition, the results of the Eldorado-Lugo-Mohave Traffic Study conducted by Fehr and Peers were incorporated into Table 5.17-2.

Table 5.17-2. Roadway Network in the Vicinity of the Proposed Project

Roadway	Nearest Cross Street	Roadway Location	Classification	Approximate Number of Lanes ¹	Existing Traffic Volume (ADT)	Roadway Capacity (AADT)	Existing LOS
Lugo Substation							
Fuente Avenue	Whitehaven Street	Spanned	Local	Two	12	400	A
Escondido Avenue	Ranchero Road	Adjacent	Local	Two	LOS analyzed in Traffic Study*	LOS analyzed in Traffic Study*	A*
Eldorado-Lugo and Lugo-Mohave 500 kilovolt (kV) Transmission Lines²							
Summit Valley Road	Telephone Canyon Road	Spanned	Minor Arterial	Two	—	—	—
Los Flores Road	Summit Valley Road	Spanned	Minor Arterial	Unpaved road, no lanes	—	—	—
Arrowhead Lake Road	State Route (SR-) 173	Spanned	Local	Two	810	6,300	A
Bowen Ranch Road	South Valley View Road	Spanned	Local	Unpaved road, no lanes	196	400	A

Table 5.17-2. Roadway Network in the Vicinity of the Proposed Project

Roadway	Nearest Cross Street	Roadway Location	Classification	Approximate Number of Lanes ¹	Existing Traffic Volume (ADT)	Roadway Capacity (AADT)	Existing LOS
SR-18	Bear Valley Cutoff	Spanned	Minor Arterial	Two	9,500	14,000	B
High Road	SR-18	Spanned	Local	Unpaved road, no lanes	713	1,100	B
Exeter Street	West Cove Road	Spanned	Local	Unpaved road, no lanes	153	400	A
Banta Road	Chuckawalla Road	Spanned	Local	Unpaved road, no lanes	20	400	—
SR-247/Barstow Road	Haynes Road	Spanned	Minor Arterial	Two	—	—	—
Meridian Road	Powerline Road	Spanned	Local	Two	74	400	A
Huff Road	North Northside Road	Spanned	Local	Unpaved road, no lanes	44	400	A
Camp Rock Road	Troy Road	Spanned	Local	Unpaved road, no lanes	13	400	A
Kelbaker Road	Kelso Dunes Road	Spanned	Major Collector	Two	—	—	—
Essex Road	North Black Canyon Road	Spanned	Major Collector	Two	25	400	A
Black Canyon Road	Essex Road	Spanned	Minor Collector	Two	—	—	—
Lanfair Road	North Goffs Road	Spanned	Major Collector	Two	35	400	A
U.S. Highway (US-) 95	Goffs Road	Spanned	Other Principal Arterial	Two	2,700	8,500	A
Santa Rosa Road	East Willow Wells Avenue	Adjacent	Local	Unpaved road, no lanes	28	400	A
Pisgah Substation, Newberry Springs Series Capacitor, and Ludlow Series Capacitor							
I-40	Pisgah Crater Road	Spanned	Principal Arterial	Four	—	—	—
Pisgah Crater Road	National Trails Highway	Spanned	Local	Two	11	400	A
National Trails Highway	Pisgah Crater Road	Adjacent	Major Collector	Two	—	—	—
Hector Road*	Interstate (I-) 40 East Ramps	Approximately 3.9 miles west of Pisgah Substation	Local	Two	LOS analyzed in Traffic Study*	LOS analyzed in Traffic Study*	A
Hector Road*	I-40 West Ramps	Approximately 3.9 miles west of Pisgah Substation	Local	Two	LOS analyzed in Traffic Study*	LOS analyzed in Traffic Study*	A

Table 5.17-2. Roadway Network in the Vicinity of the Proposed Project

Roadway	Nearest Cross Street	Roadway Location	Classification	Approximate Number of Lanes ¹	Existing Traffic Volume (ADT)	Roadway Capacity (AADT)	Existing LOS
Mohave Substation							
Edison Way*	Bruce Woodbury Drive	Adjacent	Local	Two	LOS analyzed in Traffic Study*	LOS analyzed in Traffic Study*	A*
Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line							
Needles Highway	Bruce Woodbury Drive	Spanned	Interstate/State Highway	Two to Four	1,700	34,000	A
Nevada SR-163/ Laughlin Highway	Christmas Tree Pass Road	Spanned	Minor Arterial	Four	—	—	—
Christmas Tree Pass Road	US-95	Spanned	Local	Unpaved road, no lanes	—	—	—
Loran Station Road	US-95	Spanned	Local	Unpaved road, no lanes	—	—	—
US-95	Old Airport Road	Spanned	Other Principal Arterials	Four	—	—	—
SR-163/Nipton Road	Gas Pipeline Road	Spanned	Major Collector	Two	550	2,600	—
Eldorado Substation (and LADWP's McCullough Substation)							
US-95*	Eldorado Valley Road	Spanned	Interstate	Four	LOS analyzed in Traffic Study*	LOS analyzed in Traffic Study*	A

Sources: Caltrans (2014), Clark County (2014), County of San Bernardino Transportation Department (2014), Fehr and Peers (2016), Google (2016), NDOT (2015a, 2015b), OpenStreetMap (2016), SBCTA (2016; 2018a; and 2018b), U.S. DOT (2013).

Notes: "—" = information not available; "N/A" = not applicable; "ADT" = Average Daily Trip

* The LOS for roadways serving Eldorado, Lugo, Mohave, and Pisgah Substations were evaluated in the Traffic Study conducted by Fehr and Peers using methods from Chapters 18 and 19 of the Transportation Research Board's 2010 Highway Capacity Manual. These methods use various intersection characteristics (e.g., traffic volumes, lane geometry, and signal phasing) to estimate the average control delay experienced by motorists traveling through an intersection. The LOS analysis is described in Appendix L: Traffic Study.

1 - This column specifies the total number of lanes traveling in both directions.

2 - Not all roads are spanned by the Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line, which separates from the Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line southwest of Pisgah Substation.

A traffic study was prepared by Fehr and Peers to evaluate traffic conditions at major intersections identified as being particularly susceptible to construction-related traffic impacts. The location and LOS associated with each intersection are identified in Table 5.17-2, Roadway Network in the Vicinity of the Proposed Project. As described in the Congestion Management Program (CMP) for San Bernardino County (SANBAG, 2016), the peak-hour LOS performance standard in the Valley and Mountain Regions within the county is LOS D for all major arterials. The intersections evaluated within San Bernardino County are located within the Desert Region, which is required by the CMP to maintain LOS C at all times. Principal arterials within San Bernardino County are required to operate at LOS E.

The Clark County Comprehensive Plan (2015) establishes LOS D as the performance standard for non-residential streets and LOS C as the performance standard for residential streets in buildout conditions. As described in the Traffic Study, the intersections evaluated currently operate within applicable LOS

standards. The existing LOS and LOS during Proposed Project construction at these intersections are presented in Table 5.17-3, Level of Service at Traffic Study Intersections during Proposed Project construction.

Table 5.17-3. Level of Service at Traffic Study Intersections during Proposed Project Construction

Intersection	LOS Standards ¹	Existing LOS without Proposed Project Construction	Existing LOS with Proposed Project Construction
Lugo Substation Intersection			
Escondido Avenue and Ranchero Road	C	B	B
Proposed Mid-Line Series Capacitors Intersections			
Hector Road and I-40 West Ramps	C	A	A-B
Hector Road and I-40 East Ramps	C	A	A
Mohave Substation			
Edison Way and Bruce Woodbury Drive	C	A	A-C
Eldorado Substation (and LADWP McCullough Substation)			
US-95 and Eldorado Valley Road	D	A-B	A-C

1: The LOS standards presented in the table were established by San Bernardino County and Clark County.

Highways

As shown in Figure 5.17-1, Roadway Network in the Vicinity of the Proposed Project, regional access to the Proposed Project and would be provided by I-40, I-15, SR-18, SR-173, SR-247, SR-163, and US-95. I-15 runs northeast-southwest approximately 2.7 miles northwest of Lugo Substation and would provide access to the substation and associated Proposed Project components. Construction vehicles and equipment would likely access Lugo Substation from I-15 at the Ranchero Road off-ramp and turn right on Escondido Avenue. I-15 typically provides four lanes of travel north and south of the Ranchero Road exit. Proposed Project components between Lugo Substation and Pisgah Substation would likely be accessed using a network of local roads connected to SR-18 and SR-247.

Regional access to Pisgah Substation, the Newberry Springs Series Capacitor, and the Ludlow Series Capacitor would be provided from the National Trails Highway (Historic Route 66) accessed from I-40 which runs east-west and crosses the Proposed Project approximately 0.3 miles south of Pisgah Substation. Vehicles would likely exit I-40 at the Hector Road exit and travel east on National Trails Highway to Pisgah Crater Road. The portions of I-40 in the vicinity of Pisgah Substation and the two mid-line series capacitor sites typically provide two lanes of east-west travel. Regional access between Pisgah Substation and the series capacitor sites and Mohave Substation in Nevada would likely be provided by a network of local roads connected to I-40 and US-95.

Regional access to Mohave Substation, Eldorado Substation, and McCullough Substation would be provided primarily by US-95 and SR-163, which travel north-south and east-west, respectively. From I-40, Mohave Substation would likely be accessed by exiting at the River Road Cutoff and traveling north on Needles Highway/River Road. Construction vehicles using SR-163 would access Mohave Substation by traveling south on Needles Highway until reaching Bruce Woodbury Drive, which travels eastward toward Mohave Substation. Regional access to Eldorado Substation and nearby McCullough Substation would be provided by turning west on Eldorado Valley Drive from US-95. Proposed Project components between Mohave Substation and Eldorado Substation would be accessed using US-95, which generally parallels the Eldorado-Mohave

Arterial Roads

The majority of the roadways spanned by the Eldorado-Lugo, Eldorado-Mohave, and Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Lines consist of local unpaved roadways. The local roadways spanned by the Proposed Project are provided in Table 5.17-2, Roadway Network in the Vicinity of the Proposed Project.

Lugo Substation

In the vicinity of Lugo Substation, Whitehaven Street, Belmont Road, Prairie Trail, and Lookout Trail are the local public roads that travel east-west. Foley Road, Escondido Avenue, and Fuente Avenue travel north-south. Escondido Avenue and Fuente Avenue would provide access to Lugo Substation.

Newberry Springs and Ludlow Series Capacitors

In the vicinity of the Newberry Springs and Ludlow Series Capacitors, Pisgah Road, Pisgah Crater Road, and several unnamed access roads travel northwest-southeast. Pisgah Road and Power Lane travel northeast-southwest. Power Lane and Pisgah Road would likely be used to access Newberry Springs Capacitor; Pisgah Crater Road would be used to access Ludlow Series Capacitor.

Mohave Substation

Within the vicinity of Mohave Substation, Bruce Woodbury Drive and West Casino Drive are the local public roads that travel east-west. Needles Highway, South Casino Drive, Thomas Edison Drive, and Edison Way travel north-south. Access to Mohave Substation is provided by an unpaved road, which is accessed by turning south from Bruce Woodbury Drive.

Eldorado Substation

Within the vicinity of Eldorado Substation, Eldorado Valley Drive is the primary local, private street that travels east-west. McCullough Pass and several unnamed access roads travel north-south. Access to Eldorado Substation would be provided by Eldorado Valley Drive or McCullough Pass.

McCullough Substation

LADWP's McCullough Substation is approximately 800 feet northwest of SCE's Eldorado Substation and would be accessed by an unnamed access road off McCullough Pass.

Truck Routes

Caltrans-designated truck routes include I-40, I-15, and US-95 (Caltrans, 2018). Trucks accessing Lugo Substation would use I-15 in conjunction with a network of local roads. Truck access to Pisgah Substation, the proposed Newberry Springs and Ludlow Series capacitor sites would be provided by I-40. Trucks would likely use US-95, SR-163, and US-68 to access Mohave Substation. Major roadways that would be used to access Eldorado Substation and McCullough Substation include I-515 and US-95. Truck routes to and from the Barstow Fiber Optic Repeater would use SR-247/Barstow Road, SR-18, and/or I-15. Trucks accessing the Kelbaker and Lanfair Fiber Optic Repeaters would use I-40 and US-95. The previously described truck routes would also provide access to the discrepancy work areas, as well as the pulling and tensioning locations.

Mass Transit

Public transit in the vicinity of the Proposed Project is provided by Area Transport, Morongo Basin Transit Authority, Mountain Area Regional Transit Authority, Needles Area Transit, Omnitrans, Valley

Transportation Services, Victor Valley Transit Authority (VVTa), and Foothill Transit Authority (SBTCA, 2018c). With the exception of the Foothill Transit Authority, SANBAG provides financial support to these operators. The primary public transit operator in the vicinity of the Proposed Project is the VVTa, which provides bus service to the cities of Adelanto, Hesperia, and Victorville; the Town of Apple Valley; and other areas within San Bernardino County. The existing transmission lines do not span any bus routes operated by the VVTa (VVTa, 2018).

Public mass transit services in Clark County are provided by the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC). The RTC is responsible for planning and implementing transit systems designed to transport large numbers of residents and tourists. According to the Nevada DOT (2018), the Southern Nevada Transit Coalition (SNTC) is the main public transit provider in the vicinity of the Proposed Project in Clark County. The SNTC operates bus routes 777 and 888 in the vicinity of the existing Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line and Mohave Substation. Bus 777 operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and crosses the Proposed Project on Needles Highway, east of Mohave Substation. Route 777 travels north on Needles Highway and follows Bruce Woodbury Drive in an easterly direction until reaching Thomas Edison Drive. Route 888 operates seven days a week between 5:44 a.m. and 12:31 a.m. and uses the same roadways as Route 777 in the opposite direction (SNTC, 2018).

Rail

Commuter rail service in San Bernardino County is provided by Metrolink and Amtrak. Metrolink is operated by the Southern California Regional Rail Authority, which operates three lines throughout the Los Angeles metropolitan area that provide direct service to San Bernardino County. These three lines consist of the San Bernardino Line, the Riverside Line, and the Inland Empire Orange County Line (County of San Bernardino, 2007). The nearest Metrolink station is the San Bernardino Downtown Station, which is located approximately 17 miles south of the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line (Metrolink, 2018).

Amtrak operates three trains that travel through San Bernardino County: the Southwest Chief, Sunset Limited, and Texas Eagle. The Southwest Chief is a daily train travels between Los Angeles and Chicago and stops in four San Bernardino County cities: Victorville, Barstow, and Needles. The Sunset Limited and Texas Eagle trains stop in the San Bernardino County cities of Pomona, Ontario, and Palm Springs (County of San Bernardino, 2007). The nearest Amtrak stations to the Proposed Project include the Victorville and Needles stations (Amtrak, 2018). The Victorville and Needles Amtrak stations are located approximately 12 miles north and 21.5 miles south of the Proposed Project, respectively.

The BNSF Railway is spanned by the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line twice. The discrepancy work area between Mile 96 and Mile 97 on the existing Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line would span the Union Pacific Railroad (Union Pacific, 2018).

Bicycle

Based on a review of San Bernardino County Transportation Authority (SBTCA) data (2018a), no existing bikeways are located in the immediate vicinity of the Proposed Project within California. The Proposed Project spans a planned Class III bikeway along a segment of National Trails Highway south of Pisgah Substation. According to the San Bernardino County Non-Motorized Transportation Plan (SBTCA, 2018a), a Class III bikeway is a generic term for any road, street, path, or way that in some manner is specifically designated for bicycle travel regardless of whether such facilities are designated for the exclusive use of bicycles or are to be shared with other transportation modes.

The next closest planned bikeway to the Proposed Project is a Class III bikeway located along Summit Valley Road, northeast of the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line. One planned Class II bikeway is located approximately 0.2 miles northeast of the Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line on Arrowhead Lake Road, and an additional Class II bikeway is proposed south of the Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line on Walkins Road. According to the San Bernardino County Non-Motorized Transportation Plan (SBTCA, 2018a), a Class II bikeway is a portion of roadway that has been designated by striping, signaling, and pavement markings for the preferential or exclusive use of bicyclists.

According to the Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada (2018), no additional existing or planned bikeways are located in the immediate vicinity of Proposed Project components located in Clark County. No bicycle, pedestrian, or transit facilities have been designated on local roads immediately adjacent to Pisgah, Eldorado, Lugo, Mohave, and McCullough Substations.

Air Transportation

The nearest public airport to the project alignment is Hesperia Airport, which is located approximately 0.9 miles northwest of the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line. Hesperia Airport is a privately owned public use airport that has been operating since 1980 (AirNav, 2018). The Hesperia Airport runway is approximately 3,950 feet long, and the Proposed Project is not located within any safety zones specified in the Comprehensive Land Use Plan for Hesperia Airport (San Bernardino County Airport Land Use Commission, 1991).

Four additional airports were identified within 2 miles of the Proposed Project. These facilities include the Ludlow Airport, Laughlin/Bullhead International Airport, Kidwell Airport, and Searchlight Airport. There are no available airport land use compatibility plans for these airports and no safety zones are specified.

5.17.2 Regulatory Background

State and Local

California

State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15064.3, Determining the Significance of Transportation Impacts. In response to Senate Bill 743 (Steinberg, 2013), this provision states that “vehicle miles traveled” (VMT) is the most appropriate measure of transportation impacts in the CEQA process. For transportation impacts under CEQA, VMT refers to the amount and distance of automobile travel attributable to a project. Other relevant considerations may include the effects of the project on transit and non-motorized travel. Except for roadway capacity projects, a project’s effect on automobile delay would not constitute a significant environmental impact under CEQA. For instances where existing models or methods are not available to estimate the VMT for the particular project being considered, a lead agency may analyze the project’s VMT qualitatively. Such a qualitative analysis would evaluate factors such as the availability of transit, proximity to other destinations, etc. For many projects, a qualitative analysis of construction traffic may be appropriate [14 CCR 15064.3(b)(3)].

California Streets and Highways Code. The use of California State highways for purposes other than normal transportation may require written notification or an encroachment permit from Caltrans. Caltrans has jurisdiction over the State’s highway system and is responsible for protecting the public and infrastructure. Section 660 of the California Streets and Highways Code allows Caltrans to issue encroachment permits authorizing activities related to the placement of encroachments within, under, or over

State highway rights-of-way (ROWs). Caltrans reviews all requests from utility companies that plan to conduct activities within State highway ROWs. Caltrans's encroachment permits may include conditions or restrictions on the timeframe for construction activities performed within or above roadways that are under Caltrans's jurisdiction.

The California Streets and Highways Code also includes regulations for the care and protection of State and county highways and requires permits for any load that exceeds Caltrans's weight, length, or width standards for public roadways. Sections 700 through 711 provide provisions that are specific to utility providers. Additionally, the California Streets and Highways Code outlines directions for cooperation with local agencies, guidelines for permits, and general provisions relating to State highways and Caltrans's jurisdiction.

California Joint Utility Traffic Control Manual. The California Joint Utility Traffic Control Manual (CJUTCM) provides guidelines for ensuring that the needs of all road users (e.g., motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians) are met through the establishment of a temporary traffic control zone during highway construction, utility work, and maintenance operations. For any Proposed Project construction activities within a local public ROW, the use of a traffic control service and any lane closures would be conducted in accordance with applicable laws and permit conditions. These traffic control measures would be consistent with those published in the CJUTCM.

California Vehicle Code (CVC). The CVC includes regulations pertaining to licensing, size, weight, and load of vehicles operated on highways, safe operation of vehicles, and the transportation of hazardous materials.

Nevada

Nevada Revised Statutes Section 704.865. Nevada Revised Statutes Section 704.865 provides that "A person, other than a local government, shall not commence to construct a utility facility in the State without first having obtained a permit therefor from the Commission. The replacement of an existing facility with a like facility, as determined by the Commission, does not constitute construction of a utility facility." The Public Utilities Commission of Nevada is the Lead Agency for compliance with the Nevada Utility Environmental Protection Act.

Nevada Administrative Code. Nevada Administrative Code Chapter 408, Section 427 requires that non-transportation facilities along highway ROWs be authorized by the NDOT. Permission is granted via an occupancy permit. If the highway crosses private property, the property owner must also give consent.

Chapter 408, Section 4398 specifies design guidelines for aerial electrical or communications lines that traverse State ROWs. Aerial electrical lines must not be lower than 22 feet above the ground, and poles must not be located closer than 2 feet to the curb of the road. Guy wires for such facilities may not be attached to trees and must conform to requirements defined in the National Electrical Safety Code, unless the district engineer overrides these requirements. In addition, aerial crossings of the wire over the road must be as close to 90 degrees as possible.

Local

The CPUC has sole and exclusive jurisdiction over the siting and design of the Proposed Project components located in the State of California. Pursuant to CPUC G.O. 131-D, Section XIV.B, "Local jurisdictions acting pursuant to local authority are preempted from regulating electric power line projects, distribution lines, substations, or electric facilities constructed by public utilities subject to the CPUC's jurisdiction. However, in locating such projects, the public utilities shall consult with local agencies regarding

land use matters.” Consequently, public utilities are directed to consider local regulations and consult with local agencies, but the county and cities’ regulations are not applicable as the county and cities do not have jurisdiction over the Proposed Project. For informational purposes, local regulations in California jurisdictions are provided in Appendix C. The Proposed Project is subject to local regulations in the State of Nevada.

Clark County Comprehensive Plan. The Transportation Element of the Clark County Comprehensive Plan contains goals and policies regarding airport and overall transportation. The following policy from the Transportation Element are relevant to the Proposed Project (Clark County Department of Comprehensive Planning, 2015):

- ***Designing the Transportation System Policy 2.*** *Level of Service (LOS) “D” should be the design objective for non-residential local, collector and arterial streets. LOS “C” should be the design objective for residential local, collector and arterial streets. The design year to be used by all developers should be the buildout year of the development’s final phase.*

South Clark County Land Use Plan. The South Clark County Land Use Plan Transportation Element was created to address the surface transportation issues and needs within each of the land use planning areas (Goodsprings & Sandy Valley Citizens Advisory Councils & Searchlight Town Advisory Board, 2012). The Transportation Element does not contain any specific goals or policies that are relevant to the Proposed Project.

Laughlin Land Use Plan. The Laughlin Land Use Plan guides decisions by the Laughlin Town Advisory Board, Planning Commission, and Board of County Commissioners concerning growth and development (Clark County Planning Commission, 2017). The policies of the Land Use Element of the Clark County Comprehensive Plan are incorporated by reference in the Laughlin Land Use Plan and are the adopted policies of the Laughlin Land Use Plan. See above under “Clark County Comprehensive Plan” for policies that are relevant to the Proposed Project.

City of Boulder City Master Plan. The Transportation Element of the Boulder City Master Plan establishes policies with the goal of maintaining mobility, efficiency, and safety in the City (City of Boulder, 2015). The Transportation Element does not contain any specific goals or policies that are relevant to the Proposed Project.

Federal

In addition to the federal regulations described below, federal authorizations would be required on land under the jurisdiction of the BLM, NPS, BOR, and DoD. These authorizations may include transportation-related stipulations.

Code of Federal Regulations, Title 14, Part 77. Title 14, Part 77, Section 13(2)(i) of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) requires an applicant to notify the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) of the construction of structures within 20,000 feet of the nearest point of the nearest runway of an airport with at least one runway longer than 3,200 feet. Title 14, Section 77.17 of the CFR requires an applicant to submit a Notice of Proposed Construction or Alteration (FAA Form No. 7460-1) to the FAA for construction of structures greater than 200 feet or for construction within 20,000 feet of the nearest runway of an airport with at least one runway longer than 3,200 feet. Title 14, Sections 77.21, 77.23, and 77.25 of the CFR outline the criteria used by the FAA to determine whether an obstruction would create an air navigation conflict.

Code of Federal Regulations, Title 49, Subtitle B. This regulation includes procedures and regulations pertaining to interstate and intrastate transport (including hazardous materials program procedures) and provides safety measures for motor carriers and motor vehicles that operate on public highways.

Hazardous Materials Transportation Act of 1974. The Hazardous Materials Transportation Act of 1974 directs the U.S. DOT to establish criteria and regulations regarding safe storage and transportation of hazardous materials.

5.17.3 Applicant Proposed Measures

The Proposed Project does not include any APMs related to address transportation impacts. However, SCE has identified that for construction activities within public street ROWs, the use of a traffic control service and all lane closures would be consistent with the measures published in the California Joint Utility Traffic Control Manual.

5.17.4 CEQA Significance Criteria

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR 15000 et seq.) provides guidance on assessing whether a project would have significant impacts on the environment. For purposes of evaluating the environmental impact of the Proposed Project, the CPUC has added a criterion for helicopter use. Consistent with Appendix G, the Proposed Project would have significant transportation impacts if it would:

- a. *Conflict with a program plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities*
- b. *Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?*
- c. *Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)*
- d. *Result in inadequate emergency access*
- e. *Require helicopter use that would have potential impacts on public safety and create nuisance conditions*

5.17.5 Methodology

This assessment of transportation-related impacts is based on evaluations and technical analyses designed to compare the existing conditions (pre-project), construction of the project, and cumulative impacts. Operation of the project would not generate a substantial or significant number of trips above those already generated by existing land uses in the project area. However, the construction phase of the project would include trips generated by construction workers and supplies delivered by trucks to the project area. Where roadways are crossed by the project during removal of existing OHGW and installation of new OPGW, short temporary road closures may be required to ensure motorist safety. The timing and location of closures would be coordinated with the agency having authority over a road, local police, or the state highway patrol. Local, as appropriate. This analysis considers the effects of transportation of the project in the context of Caltrans, Nevada Department of Transportation, San Bernardino County, and Clark County requirements. Caltrans is the agency responsible for permitting and regulation of the use of state-administered roadways within California, the Nevada Department of Transportation is the agency responsible for permitting and regulating the use of state-administered roadways within

Nevada, and the counties are responsible for regulating the use of roadways within their jurisdictional boundaries.

This analysis addresses the potential impacts to the surrounding transportation systems and roadways that may result from project construction, operation, and maintenance. Consistent with State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15064.3, Determining the Significance of Transportation Impacts, the project's effect on automobile delay, measured by a change in Level of Service, would not constitute a significant environmental impact under CEQA. This analysis provides information on traffic delays within the local transportation systems based on the local jurisdiction significance criteria for study intersections and roadways, as defined in the Traffic Study prepared for this project (SCE, 2018; PEA Appendix L, prepared by Fehr and Peers, February 15, 2017). A qualitative discussion of the project's impact on Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) is for construction because operation of this project would have no impact on VMT.

5.17.6 Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

a. Would the project conflict with a program plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION. The Proposed Project would require trenching in roadways near Mohave Substation and stringing of OPGW across roadways. In Nevada, the Proposed Project is located in the vicinity of SNTC bus routes 777 and 888. Bus routes 777 and 888 share the same roadways and cross the Proposed Project on Needles Highway and Bruce Woodbury Drive, in the vicinity of Mohave Substation. During construction of the Proposed Project, temporary lane closures could result in delays of service for these bus routes. In addition, the Proposed Project would span several unpaved roads, unnamed trails, and service roads that may be used by cyclists and pedestrians. Therefore, temporary construction activities may intermittently reduce, disrupt, or temporarily restrict access to portions of pedestrian sidewalks, unnamed trails, bike lanes, service roads, bus stops/shelters, and pedestrian facilities during construction of the Proposed Project.

Mitigation Measure T-1 requires the preparation of a Construction Traffic Control Plan to be reviewed and approved by Caltrans and CPUC. This Plan would provide provisions for ensuring detours or safe movement of vehicles, pedestrians, and bicycles through all locations affected by work in, near, or across roadways where vehicle, bicycle, or pedestrian movement could be adversely affected or safe passage put at risk. With the incorporation of this mitigation, impacts from project construction activities to transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities would be less than significant.

In addition, the Proposed Project would span the BNSF Railway tracks in two locations along the existing Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line. The discrepancy work area between Mile 96 and Mile 97 on the existing Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line would span the Union Pacific Railroad. However, SCE would obtain the required pipeline/wire line crossing permits from the BNSF Railway and Union Pacific Railroad prior to the initiation of construction activities in the vicinity of railroad facilities. Moreover, construction would generally occur within existing utility corridors and would not involve any activities that conflict with transportation ordinances, policies, plans, or programs. Overall, with mitigation, the project would not conflict with a program plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

Operation and Maintenance

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT. As previously described, O&M activities associated with the Proposed Project would be similar to those currently performed for existing facilities, with additional O&M activities associated with the proposed mid-line series capacitors and fiber optic repeater facilities. If any lane or road closures that may affect sidewalks or bikeways are necessary to maintain new and existing facilities, SCE would use appropriate traffic controls and signage to ensure safety of public transit users, bicycles, and pedestrian facilities. Therefore, O&M associated with the Proposed Project would not conflict with any local or regional policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g., public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities), and this impact would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

T-1 Prepare and implement a Construction Traffic Control Plan. Prior to the start of construction, SCE shall submit a Construction Traffic Control Plan for review and approval by state and local agencies responsible for public roads that would be directly affected by the construction activities and/or would require permits and approvals. The Construction Traffic Control Plan shall include, but not be limited to:

- The locations and use of flaggers, warning signs, barricades, delineators, cones, arrow boards, etc., according to standard guidelines outlined in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, the Standard Specifications for Public Works Construction, and/or the California Joint Utility Traffic Control Manual.
- The locations of all road or traffic lane segments that would need to be temporarily closed or disrupted due to construction activities.
- The locations where guard poles, netting, or similar means to protect transportation facilities for any construction work requiring the crossing of a local street, highway, or rail line are proposed.
- The use of continuous traffic breaks operated by the Highway Patrol on state highways (if necessary).
- Plans to coordinate in advance with emergency service providers to avoid restricting the movements of emergency vehicles. Police departments and fire departments shall be notified in advance by SCE of the proposed locations, nature, timing, and duration of any roadway disruptions, and shall be advised of any access restrictions that could impact their effectiveness. At locations where roads will be blocked, provisions shall be ready at all times to accommodate emergency vehicles, such as immediately stopping work for emergency vehicle passage, providing short detours, and developing alternate routes in conjunction with the public agencies.

b. Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?

Construction

LESS-THAN-SIGNIFICANT IMPACT. CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3(b) concerns vehicle miles travelled as the measure of transportation impacts. Currently, use of the provisions of section 15064.3(b) is at the discretion of the CEQA lead agency, but become mandatory statewide beginning July 1, 2020. Construction of the Proposed Project would occur over approximately 15 months and Proposed Project-related traffic would be limited to worker commutes and the transport of supplies and equipment to and from construction areas and material supply sources. Once the project is completed, the vehicle trips associ-

ated with construction would end. The total number of vehicle trips is estimated to be between 18 and 518 daily, or an average of 238 trips daily, depending on the phase of construction and the activities within that phase (SCE, 2018). Construction personnel would commute to the staging yards and work sites at the beginning of the day and leave at the end of the day, and few people would travel to and from work areas throughout the middle of the day.

Personal vehicles and construction truck trips would need to access many geographically disparate destinations to reach the Proposed Project components. Between 15 to 346 (or an average of 159) construction personnel would be working at various Proposed Project components on any given day. This would result in an average of approximately 159 personal vehicle trips per day to and from the Proposed Project (SCE, 2018). Some portion of these would assemble at designated yards for transportation to work sites either by construction trucks or helicopters. Although a maximum of 518 vehicle trips could occur during peak days of construction, crews would be spread out and assigned to several different Proposed Project components on any given day. The maximum number of construction personnel deployed at any single project component would be 154 workers needed for modification of the existing 500 kV transmission lines. In addition, a maximum of approximately 81 truck trips could be generated per day for the purposes of equipment and material hauling, as well as providing water to sites, etc., for modification of the existing 500 kV transmission lines (SCE, 2018).

Due to the linear nature of the existing transmission lines, the addition of worker vehicle and truck trips along the transmission lines is not anticipated to disrupt the performance of the traffic circulation system. Work crews would generally leave their personal vehicles at designated locations (e.g., park-and-ride facilities, material staging yards, and substations) and would proceed to work areas in crew trucks. Adequate parking areas are available throughout the Proposed Project vicinity at the existing substations, at staging yards, as well as at areas along the ROWs. In addition, approximately 40 additional parking spaces would be provided at the laydown areas adjacent to the proposed mid-line series capacitors located northeast of Pisgah Substation, which is accessible from I-40. By gathering at designated locations and traveling to work sites in crew trucks, the workers would reduce overall vehicle miles traveled by minimizing the lengths of trips traveled in single-occupant personal vehicles.

Vehicle miles traveled by personal vehicle trips and truck trips during construction would vary widely in their origins and destinations and would be periodic and temporary. Some crews would be transported to work sites by helicopter from central assembly points at project yards. Additional vehicle trips made by construction crews would be dispersed over a largely undeveloped region. The short-term nature and relatively minor of number vehicle miles traveled as a result of construction of the Proposed Project would not result in a significant transportation impact under State CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3 (b), and this impact would be less than significant.

Operation and Maintenance

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT. As previously described, O&M activities associated with the Proposed Project would be similar to those currently performed for the existing facilities, with additional O&M activities associated with the proposed mid-line series capacitors and fiber optic repeater facilities. O&M associated with the mid-line series capacitor sites and fiber optic repeater sites would result in a minor increase in vehicle trips when compared to existing O&M activities. However, O&M of these facilities would be conducted intermittently and would consist primarily of monthly and annual inspections and equipment testing. Based on the limited frequency and duration of these activities, O&M of the mid-line series capacitor sites and fiber optic repeater sites would generate a negligible number of new vehicle trips with no notable growth in VMT. Because O&M of the new facilities would require no new full-time staffing, VMT would not increase substantially; the facilities would be operated and maintained by staff

based at Lugo and/or Eldorado Substations. The transportation impact under State CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3 (b) would be less than significant.

c. Would the project substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?

Construction

LESS-THAN-SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION. Construction of the Proposed Project would not necessitate any permanent modifications to existing public roadways and would not increase hazards due to a geometric design feature. As previously discussed, temporary road closures may be necessary during construction of the Proposed Project. As shown in Figure 5.17-1, Roadway Network in the Vicinity of the Proposed Project, and in Table 5.17-2, Roadway Network in the Vicinity of the Proposed Project, the Proposed Project is situated primarily within an undeveloped desert landscape with minimal volumes of traffic reported on roadways in the project vicinity. During construction, all truck drivers would adhere to California Vehicle Code regulations pertaining to licensing, size, weight, and load of vehicles operated on highways and local roads; safe operation of vehicles; and the transport of any hazardous materials. Traffic on public freeways and roads would be of the same vehicle types (passenger vehicles and heavy trucks) that occur and are allowed under existing conditions.

Temporary road closures and encroachment into public road ROWs could increase hazards if appropriate safety measures are not in place (e.g., proper signage, orange cones, and flaggers). However, with Mitigation Measure T-1, Prepare and implement a Construction Traffic Control Plan, SCE would coordinate with local agencies and/or Caltrans, and would employ traffic control measures that would reduce any impacts from project-related vehicle use. Therefore, potential hazards resulting from road closures would be minimized. The Proposed Project would not change the geometric design features of any roadway.

Construction activities would be compatible with the intended use of the existing transportation facilities, but the movement of heavy trucks and equipment on roadways providing access to project work areas could damage road surfaces, shoulders, curbs, sidewalks, signs, and light standards. To minimize the potential impact of hazards related to inadvertent damage, Mitigation Measure T-2 (Repair roadways and transportation facilities damaged by construction activities) would ensure any damage or deterioration attributed to the project would be repaired. The impact of hazards introduced by transportation facility damage demonstrable to the project would be less than significant with mitigation.

Operation and Maintenance

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT. O&M activities associated with the Proposed Project would be similar to those currently performed for the existing facilities, with additional O&M activities associated with the proposed mid-line series capacitors and fiber optic repeater facilities. If any lane or road closures are necessary to maintain new and existing facilities, SCE would continue to employ traffic control measures to reduce the risk of hazards during O&M. Therefore, O&M of the Proposed Project would not significantly increase hazards caused by a design feature or incompatible use, and there would be a less than significant impact.

Mitigation Measures

- T-2** **Repair roadways and transportation facilities damaged by construction activities.** If roadways, sidewalks, medians, curbs, shoulders, or other such transportation features are damaged by project construction activities, as determined by Caltrans or other public agency

responsible for the transportation feature, such damage shall be repaired and restored to the pre-project condition by SCE. Prior to construction, SCE shall establish the pre-construction conditions of the roads within 500 feet in each direction of project access points (where heavy vehicles will leave public roads to reach unpaved access roads, yards, or other project sites) and confer with state and local agencies regarding roads in the agency's jurisdiction to be crossed by the project components. Establishment of existing conditions may include dated photographic or video documentation.

At the end of major construction, SCE shall coordinate with each affected jurisdiction to confirm what repairs are required. Any damage demonstrable to the project is to be repaired to the pre-construction condition within 60 days from the end of all construction, or on a schedule mutually agreed to by SCE and the affected jurisdiction. If multiple projects or users access the same transportation features, SCE will pay its fair share of the required repairs. SCE shall provide CPUC and affected jurisdictions (as applicable) proof when any necessary repairs have been completed.

d. Would the project result in inadequate emergency access?

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT. As previously discussed, temporary lane closures may be necessary during construction activities to ensure the safety of the public and workers within public areas and roadways. In addition, some roads may be temporarily limited to one-way traffic, which would require the implementation of one-way traffic controls. However, SCE would obtain the required encroachment permits from the State and local agencies, which would include coordination with local emergency service providers, and would implement traffic control measures. As there are no fire or police stations or medical facilities with the immediate Proposed Project vicinity, the Proposed Project would not have direct impacts to access to emergency facilities. Because emergency access along roadways in the Proposed Project vicinity would be maintained, any potential impacts during construction would be less than significant.

Operation and Maintenance

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT. As previously described, O&M activities associated with the Proposed Project would be similar to those currently performed for the existing facilities, with additional O&M activities associated with the proposed mid-line series capacitors and fiber optic repeater facilities. In locations where O&M activities span a road or require lane closures, SCE would implement appropriate traffic controls and coordinate with local emergency service providers to avoid impacts to emergency access routes. Therefore, O&M of the Proposed Project would not significantly affect emergency access in the area.

e. Would the project require helicopter use that would have potential impacts on public safety and create nuisance conditions?

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION. SCE has identified that helicopters would be used primarily to support construction activities associated with OPGW installation. They also may be used in areas where access is limited (e.g., no suitable access road, limited construction area for on-site structure assembly, and/or there are environmental constraints to accessing the Proposed Project area with standard construction vehicles and equipment) or where system outage constraints are a factor.

Helicopter activities may include transportation of construction workers and delivery of equipment and materials to work sites, installation of hardware and marker balls (if applicable), and OPGW stringing operations. Helicopter operations, including refueling, and related support areas typically occur at staging yards, storage and maintenance sites, and ground locations (landing zones) in close proximity to OPGW pulling, tensioning, and splice sites, and/or within previously disturbed areas near construction sites.

Helicopters have the potential to pose a risk to the public if exterior loads are lost in flight. They also can be a nuisance if disruptive noise levels are caused by operating in the vicinity of buildings occupied by sensitive receptors, including residences, schools, day care centers, nursing homes, and hospitals (see Section 5.13, Noise). Helicopters can also create excessive dust when operating near the ground (see Section 5.3, Air Quality). A portion of the project passes near designated wilderness, where helicopter use could detract from the solitude of the wilderness experience.

The Proposed Project would follow an operating plan for helicopter use that should specify the protocols and methods to protect public safety and minimize nuisances, as described in Project Description, Section 4.7.1.4, Helicopter Access. This analysis recommends Mitigation Measure T-3, Prepare and implement a final helicopter use plan, to clearly establish the steps taken to avoid substantially increasing hazards and to ensure that helicopter operations minimize nuisance conditions. This impact would be less than significant with mitigation.

Operation and Maintenance

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. During operations, helicopters would be used for periodic line inspections and for insulator cleaning. The installation of OPGW to replace OHGW would not increase the use of helicopters during operations above that which currently occurs. The impact would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

T-3 Prepare and implement a final helicopter use plan. SCE and its contractor shall prepare and obtain approval of a Final Helicopter Use Plan 30 days prior to using helicopters to transport personnel, materials, or equipment for the deconstruction of existing project facilities or construction of new or replacement project facilities. The plan shall identify the specific locations requiring deconstruction or construction work using helicopters. The Final Helicopter Use Plan shall draw upon protocols and methods used on previous transmission line projects and shall be submitted to CPUC and BLM for approval.

The Federal Aviation Agency (FAA) has jurisdiction over U.S. airspace, aircraft, aircraft operations, airports, and pilots. To the extent that they do not conflict with any FAA requirements, the following shall apply to helicopter use and be incorporated in the Final Helicopter Use Plan.

- All aircraft and pilots shall be in full compliance with applicable FAA requirements and standards.
- On the day before a flight, helicopter flight information shall be provided by email to CPUC/BLM monitors regarding the specific sites to be used for helicopter retrieval of materials, equipment, or personnel and the destination of the materials, equipment, or personnel being transported. Information provided in the email shall include pilot name, contact number, aircraft type, aircraft registration number, aircraft color, work/flight area, anticipated beginning and completion times, and scope of work.

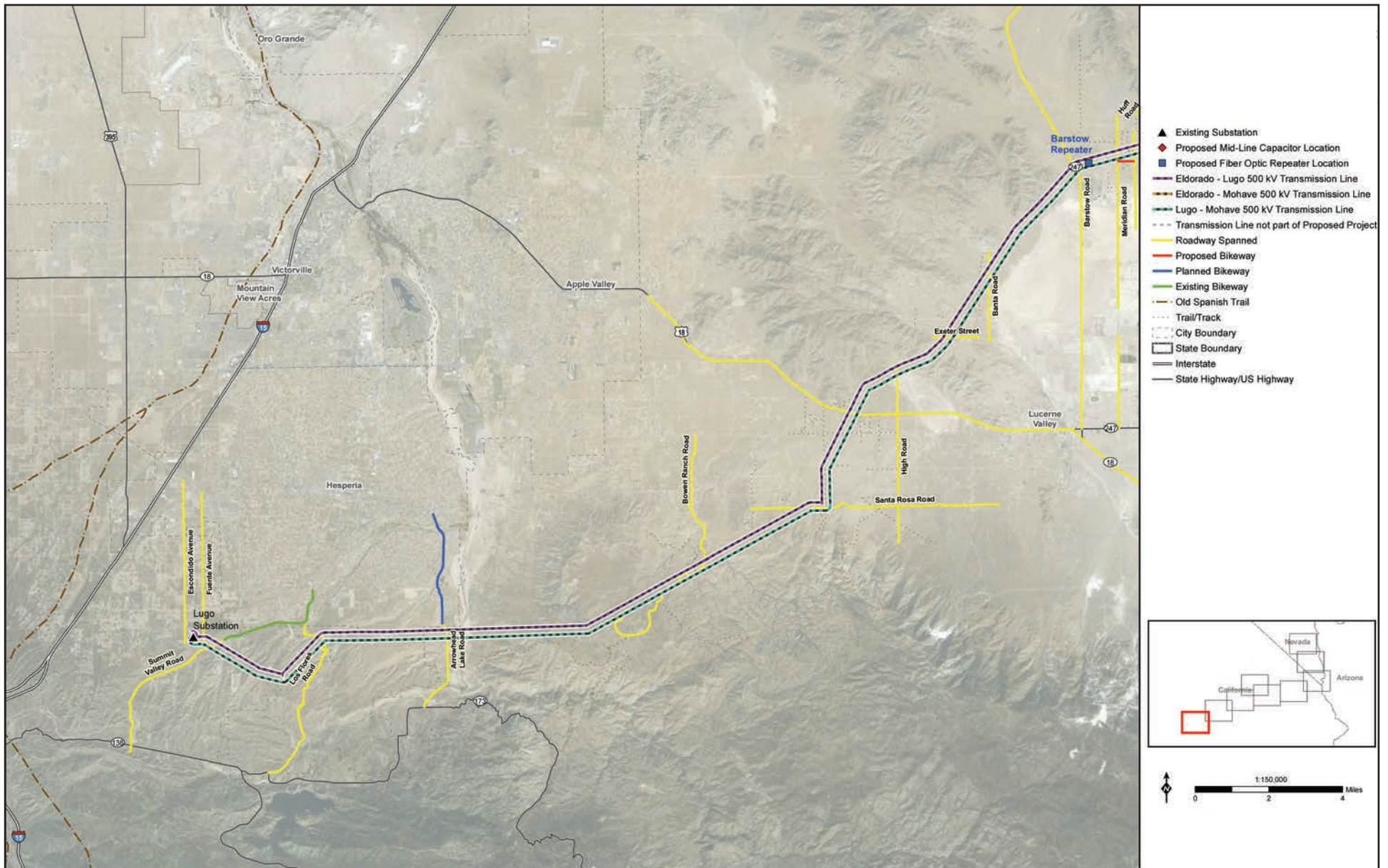
- The specific locations requiring deconstruction or construction work using helicopters shall be identified.
- Temporary staging of materials outside of approved yards or on access or spur roads shall not occur without prior approval of CPUC or BLM, as appropriate.
- The yards to and from which helicopters would fly (fly yards) shall be identified and shall be of sufficient size to ensure safe operations, given the other activities occurring at the yards and the vicinity.
- Fly yards shall be no closer than a horizontal distance of 475 feet from occupied residences to avoid unacceptable nuisances.
- Site-specific steps taken to avoid nuisances and ensure safe refueling shall be identified for each fly yard.
- Flight paths that minimize flights in wilderness areas and near schools, hospitals, nursing homes, and other sensitive group receptors shall be identified and followed.
- Except in an emergency, helicopters shall land or hover near the ground only in areas previously approved for landing, and all dust control and biological and cultural resource protection requirements shall apply.
- External loads will be secured by appropriate rigging, including boxing, netting, choking, and cabling, or other suitable means. Only qualified riggers shall prepare and attach external loads to helicopters, and rigging shall be appropriate to the nature of the load, including the use of devices as necessary to prevent materials being lost in flight. Where appropriate to reduce load in-flight spinning and movement, drag chutes will be attached to loads. The need for drag chutes will be determined by the pilot and rigging personnel, where appropriate. At locations where rigging is to occur, a sufficient supply of appropriate rigging and containment materials in good repair shall be on hand at all times.
- All aircraft are to be configured with weight sensors such that, when preparing to haul external loads, the pilot is able to determine the weight of the load being lifted.
- Yards or landing zones shall have a designated qualified individual managing the movement of aircraft in and out of the yard or landing zone when flight activity is high.
- Appropriate protocols for communication among pilots and between pilots and the ground shall be developed and implemented.
- A GPS-based data system shall be installed in each aircraft
 - The system shall identify for the pilot all project-approved project flight paths and those areas where overflights are restricted (such as seasonally restricted bird nesting areas and sensitive residential or institutional areas) and shall be updated as often as any flight restrictions are implemented or lifted.
 - The system shall automatically record and preserve flight data sufficient to identify the aircraft's flight path, including altitude above ground. The system shall be capable of providing the information required with regard to flight path and aircraft identifier, and provide a location "ping" no less frequently the once every 3 seconds. These data shall be collected daily and maintained by SCE or its contractor for a period of no less than six months and made available to CPUC or BLM upon request.

The Helicopter Use Plan shall be submitted to CPUC and BLM for review and approval at least 30 days prior to the use of helicopters on the project. Once the Helicopter Use Plan is made final, a copy shall be provided as a courtesy to each jurisdiction through which the Project passes.

5.17.7 References

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Source: SCE, 2018.

Figure 5.17-1.
Roadway Network in the Vicinity of the Proposed Project
Map 1 of 9



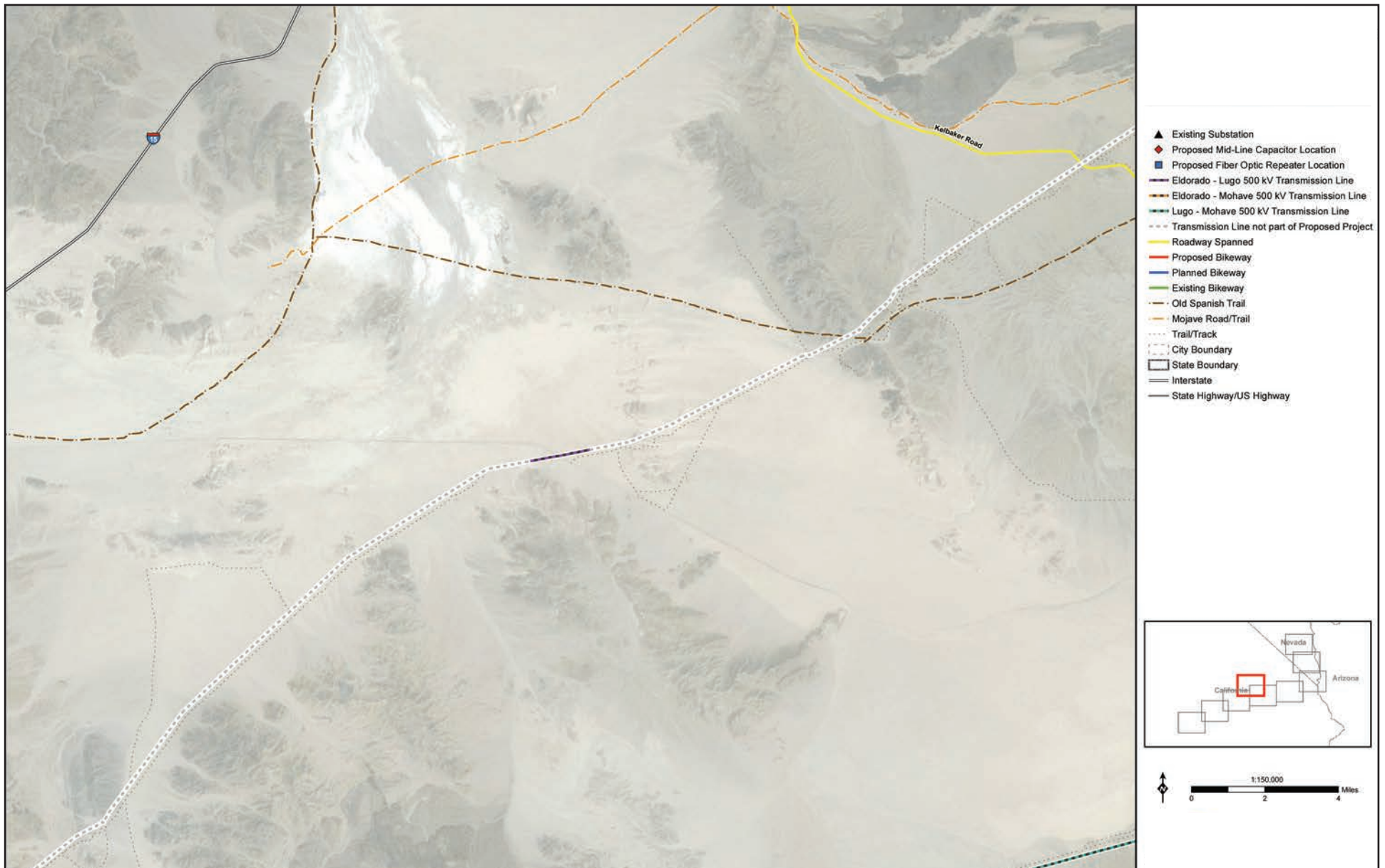
Source: SCE, 2018.

Figure 5.17-1.
Roadway Network in the Vicinity of the Proposed Project
Map 2 of 9



Source: SCE, 2018.

Figure 5.17-1.
Roadway Network in the Vicinity of the Proposed Project
Map 3 of 9



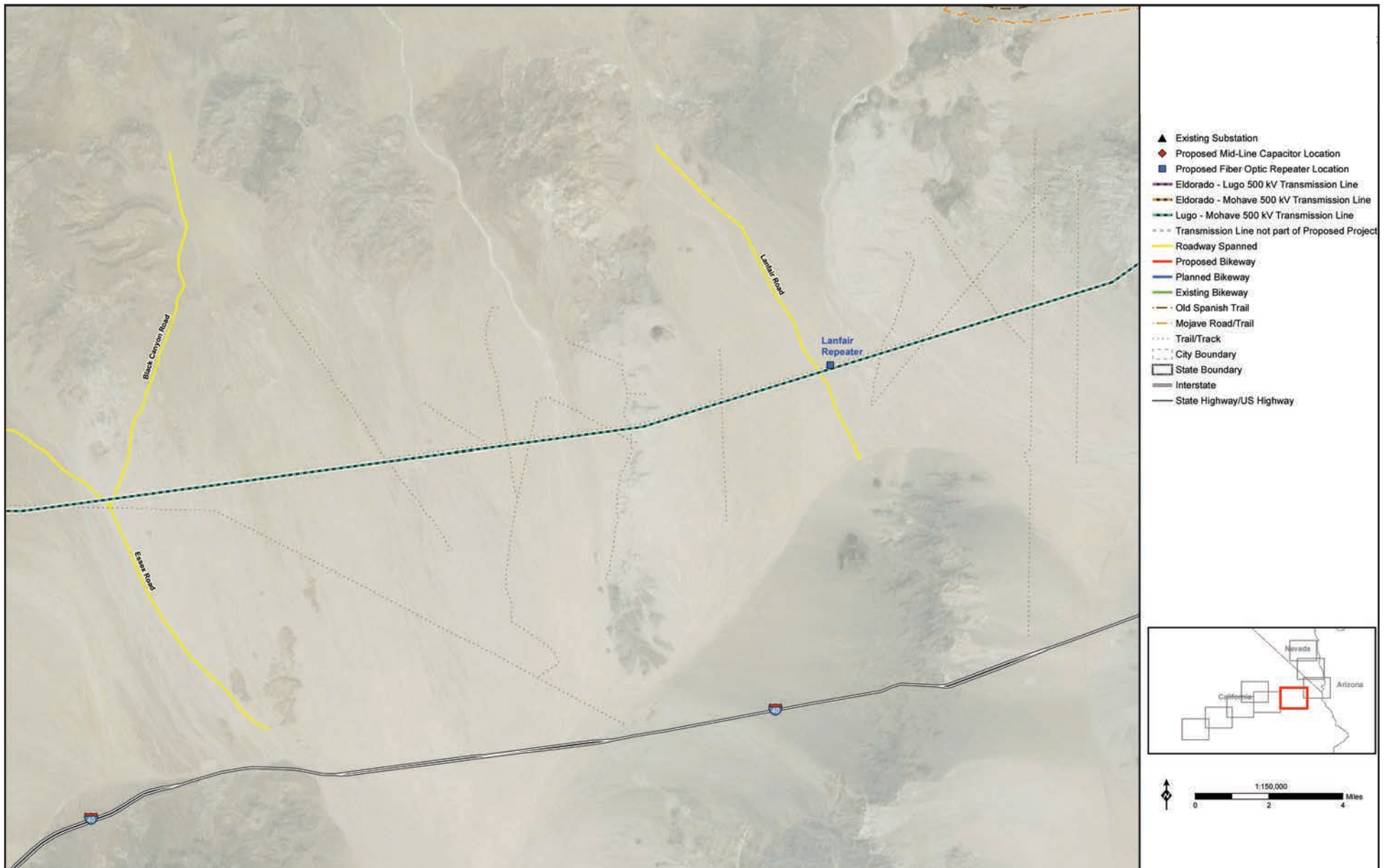
Source: SCE, 2018.

Figure 5.17-1.
Roadway Network in the Vicinity of the Proposed Project
Map 4 of 9



Source: SCE, 2018.

Figure 5.17-1.
Roadway Network in the Vicinity of the Proposed Project
Map 5 of 9



Source: SCE, 2018.

Figure 5.17-1.
Roadway Network in the Vicinity of the Proposed Project
Map 6 of 9



Source: SCE, 2018.

Figure 5.17-1.
Roadway Network in the Vicinity of the Proposed Project
Map 8 of 9



Source: SCE, 2018.

Figure 5.17-1.
Roadway Network in the Vicinity of the Proposed Project
Map 9 of 9

5.18 Tribal Cultural Resources

TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:				
(i) listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(ii) a resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Significance criteria established by CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G.

5.18.1 Environmental Setting

Tribal cultural resources (TCRs) are a class of resources under state law; they are described in more detail below under Regulatory Background. TCRs include sites, features, places, cultural landscapes, and sacred places or objects that have cultural value or significance to a tribe. To qualify as a TCR, the resource must either: (1) be listed on, or be eligible for listing on, the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) or other local historic register; or (2) constitute a resource that the lead agency, at its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, determines should be treated as a TCR (PRC § 21074(a)(2)). Native American tribes that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with a geographic area can provide expert knowledge of TCRs to lead agencies.

Background Research

Several present-day Native American groups occupy and regularly travel through the Mojave Desert of California and Nevada, as did their ancestors. Native American groups having historical Tribal territories falling within the study area for the proposed project include the Southern Paiute and Chemehuevi in the more eastern reaches of California and southern Nevada; the Mojave, whose subsistence activities extended well into the Mojave Desert, although the heart of their territory was the Colorado River; and the Desert Serrano (also known as Vanyumé) who ranged and occupied the central and western parts of the project area including Baker, Barstow, and Victorville (ASM, 2018).

Southern Paiute/Chemehuevi. Historically, the Numic speaking Southern Paiute (Nuwuvi) and Cheme-huevi (Nüw) occupied a crescentic region extending from southeastern Utah and northeastern Arizona, southwestward to the deserts of California and Nevada. Of the 16 subgroups identified by anthropologists, the Las Vegas subgroup inhabited a relatively large area extending into the Mojave Desert, including the Spring Mountain Range and roughly bounded on the west by the Black Mountains, and on the northerly extent by the Avawatz Mountains. The Chemehuevi, now recognized as a separate tribe, are generally classified by anthropologists as the southwestern most branch of the Southern Paiute. Prehistorically,

their territory was arranged in a patchwork of semi-sedentary use areas where available water sources formed nuclei around which resource collection was tied in each appropriate season. Broader boundaries were conceptualized to extend to flowing bodies of water, encompassing the internal use areas. These internal areas were woven together by a complex system of foot-paths. With their knowledge of the landscape, Southern Paiute managed and modified the environment to assure their survival within their traditional homelands. The modern descendants of the Chemehuevi belong to 3 federally recognized tribes, including the Colorado River Indian Tribes, the Chemehuevi Tribe of the Chemehuevi Reservation, and the Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians.

Kawaiisu. The Kawaiisu occupied the southern end of the Sierra Nevada watershed by the Piute and Tehachapi mountains. The habitat was in the mountainous ridge between the Mojave Desert and the San Joaquin Valley. Relocation by the United States government in the late 1800s resulted in the loss of much of the Kawaiisu traditional dress, music, language, and knowledge of traditional practices. Currently, the Kawaiisu number around 250 and are a non-federally recognized Indian tribe. An additional Kawaiisu organization is the Kawaiisu Tribe of the Tejon Indian Reservation. This is not a federally recognized tribe. Members are represented by a five-member tribal council.

Mojave. The Mojave trace the origin of their people to Spirit Mountain (Mastamho) and are thought to have been occupying their territory since as early as A.D. 900. The traditional territory of the Mojave centered in the Mojave Valley and along the Colorado River; however, their area extended into the Mojave Desert. Reports of Mojave activities extend north to the Great Basin, west to the Pacific Ocean, south to Yuma, Arizona, and southeast to Gila Bend. Three groups comprised the tribe: the northern Matha lyathum, the central Hutto-pah, and the southern Kavi lyathum. There is some evidence that substantial Mojave occupation of the central Mojave Desert may have occurred while maintaining the main habitation areas along the Colorado River. Oral tradition from the Chemehuevi and Mojave suggests Mojave were living in the Mojave Sinks at some point; Chemehuevi tradition suggests that that Mojave were exterminated from the central Mojave Desert through warfare. Archaeological remains from the Cronise Basin indicate influence from the Colorado River area, which may be evidence of Mojave occupation. Today, descendants of the Mojave belong to the following federally recognized tribes: Colorado River Indian Tribes (CRIT), Fort Mojave Indian Tribe, and the Fort Yuma Quechan Indian Nation (Quechan Tribe).

Serrano. Serrano territory generally encompassed the San Bernardino Mountains east of Cajon Pass, east to Twentynine Palms and south to Yucaipa Valley. When an outpost of the San Bernardino Mission was established at Redlands in 1819, the Spanish forced most of the Western Serrano into the missions, away from their homeland. Serrano descendants belong to the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians, the San Fernando Band of Mission Indians, and Morongo Band of Mission Indians. The San Manuel Band of Mission Indians and the Morongo Band of Mission Indians are federally recognized tribes.

Trail Networks. The Southern California Desert features a significant network of trails that supported a complex of prehistoric trade relations (Davis 1961: 2-3), and religious relations (Johnson 2003: 159). There are actually three braided trail corridors that are generally traversed today by Interstate Highway I-15/40 in the northern desert, Interstate Highway I-8 in the south and Interstate Highway I-10 in the central section of the desert. Trade between the Southern California Desert groups and the Lower Colorado River groups and Great Basin groups was extensive. Trading was an important aspect to groups' culture as it provided an opportunity for the communication of cultural ideas and allowed groups to obtain non-local items. Various ethnographic and archaeological sources document evidence of trade between the Pacific Coast and groups in the Southwest (e.g., Sample 1950:4-5; Davis 1961: 2; Schaefer and Laylander 2007: 254-255; Fowler 2009:87-88; Fitzgerald et al. 2005:2). These five cultures, the Mojave, Chemehuevi,

Quechan, Cahuilla, and Serrano, all played an important role in this trade process. Several of the routes that extend from the coast to the Southwest pass through the Colorado Desert (Davis 1961: 70 Map 1), and tribes were able to take advantage of their primary position as trade facilitators (Westec 1980:284). As important middlemen to the trade process, groups were able to acquire a suite of resources and finished objects that were incorporated into their cultural milieu. Exchanging items of equal value was the most prevalent type of trade to occur between neighboring groups (Davis 1961: 8-9).

Trails were not only used for secular purposes such as trade, warfare, and communication, but also played a critical role in the ceremonial lives of several of the Native American groups. For many tribes, dreaming and dream interpretation were the foundation of life. Dreams were believed to be the source of knowledge, skills, courage, success in love and war, and shamanistic power. In particular, the role of dreaming and the trails upon which dreamers travel are especially important resources to Native Americans. Dreaming, the knowledge and methods for proper dreaming, and the revelations resulting from dreaming are thought to be the basis of Lower Colorado Native American lifeways (Forde 1931:201-204; Gifford 1926:58-69; Kroeber 1976:754-755, 783-784; Wallace 1947:252-258).

Sacred Lands File Search

A letter was sent to the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) on June 7, 2018, requesting an updated search of the Sacred Lands File and a current AB 52 Tribal Consultation List identifying any tribal groups or persons who have expressed an interest in receiving notification about projects being undertaken or applications being reviewed by the CPUC. On June 14, 2018, the NAHC responded that the Sacred Lands File search was positive and provided a list of 7 tribal organizations identified as potentially having an interest in the proposed project. These tribes included: Chemehuevi Reservation, the Colorado River Indian Tribe, the Morongo Band of Mission Indians, the San Fernando Band of Mission Indians, the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians, the Serrano Nation of Mission Indians, and the Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians.

Assembly Bill (AB) 52 Native American Tribal Consultation

AB 52 requires that within 14 days of the lead agency determining that a project application is complete, a formal notice and invitation to consult about the proposed project be sent to all tribal representatives who have requested in writing to be notified of projects that may have a significant effect on TCRs located within the proposed project area (PCR § 21080.3.1(d)).

AB 52 states that once California Native American tribes have received the project notification letter, the tribe then has 30 days to submit a written request to consult (PCR § 21080.3.1(d)). Upon receiving a Tribe's written request to consult, the lead agency then has 30 days to begin tribal consultation. Consultation must include discussion of specific topics or concerns identified by tribes. Any information shared between the tribes and the lead agency representatives is protected under confidentiality laws and not subject to public disclosure (GC § 6254(r); GC § 6254.10) and can be disclosed only with the written approval of the tribes who shared the information (PCR § 21082.3(c)(1-2)).

Consultation as defined in AB 52 consists of the good faith effort to seek, discuss, and carefully consider the views of others. Consultation between the lead agency and a consulting Tribe concludes when either of the following occurs: (1) the parties agree to measures to mitigate or avoid a significant effect, if a significant effect exists on a TCR; or (2) a consulting party, acting in good faith and after reasonable effort, concludes that mutual agreement cannot be reached (PCR § 21080.3.2(b)).

Project Notification

On October 22, 2018, the CPUC mailed certified letters to representatives of tribes that had previously submitted a written request to the CPUC to receive notification of proposed projects. The letters included a brief description of the proposed project, information on how to contact the lead agency Project Manager, and a USGS topographic quadrangle showing the proposed project components and lay-down areas. The letters noted that requests for consultation needed to be received within 30 days of the date of receipt of the notification letter. The formally notified tribes include the following:

- Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians
- Colorado River Indian Tribes
- Gabrieleno Band of Mission Indians – Kizh Nation
- Mission Creek Band of Mission Indians, Mission Creek Reservation
- Pala Band of Mission Indians
- Pechanga Band of Luiseno Mission Indians
- San Manuel Band of Mission Indians
- Santa Ysabel Band of the Lipay Nation (Kumeyaay)
- Tongva Ancestral Territorial Tribal Nation
- Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians
- Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians

A separate non-AB 52 courtesy notification letter was sent to those tribes identified by the NAHC Sacred Lands File search and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Section 106 outreach for the Proposed Project. Tribes based in California include: Chemehuevi Tribe, Fort Mojave Indian Tribe, Morongo Band of Mission Indians,¹ San Fernando Band of Mission Indians, Serrano Nation of Mission Indians and Timbi-sha Shoshone Tribe. Tribes based in Nevada include: Kawaiisu Tribe, Las Vegas Tribe of Paiute Indians, Moapa Band of Paiute Indians and Pahrump Paiute Tribe.

Initially, three tribes requested to consult on the Proposed Project: the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians, the Morongo Band of Mission Indians, and the Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians. Subsequently, the Fort Mojave Tribe requested consultation. Subsequently, in its comment letter on the MND as part of public review the Colorado River Indian Tribes (CRIT) requested consultation.

Meetings

In December 2018, the initial three consulting tribes were provided cultural resource reports from BLM from which sensitive site location information had been redacted. These were the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians (San Manuel), the Morongo Band of Mission Indians (Morongo), and the Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians (Twenty-Nine Palms). In initial consultation conversations with the San Manuel, the tribe expressed concern over the quality of the cultural resources and ethnographic technical reports, the methods used to evaluate the resources, the final eligibility determinations, and the lack of site location information. The differences between Section 106 and CEQA/AB 52 resource types and resource evaluation approaches were discussed in detail. The BLM, which had managed preparation of the reports, was advised of the San Manuel's issues.

In response to a request from the San Manuel for clarification regarding the specific nature of potential project impacts to all prehistoric resources in the Proposed Project area, the CPUC circulated a detailed

¹ The Morongo Band of Mission Indians subsequently was included in the AB 52 list when they formally requested of CPUC to be consulted on projects within their geographical area of interest.

table describing the prehistoric resources and potential project impacts. The CPUC also provided a preliminary draft of Tribal Cultural Mitigation measures, which they reviewed and commented on. Subsequently, the BLM met with San Manuel representatives and showed them maps that indicated resource locations. The San Manuel were then able to identify sites within their traditional tribal area that were of potential interest to them. As well, this table was circulated by email to the other two tribes consulting at that time — the Morongo and Twenty-Nine Palms. The San Manuel indicated that they were satisfied that the majority of the prehistoric resources could be successfully avoided, but they requested a site visit to particular resource sites in order to further consider avoidance strategies or other mitigation measures if necessary.

The Morongo and Twenty-Nine Palms were advised of the field site visit and were provided a copy of the revised mitigation measures, which had incorporated many of the suggestions from the San Manuel. The Morongo and the Twenty-Nine Palms each indicated their desire to participate in the site visit and the Twenty-Nine Palms identified three additional sites of interest to them in addition to the original list provided by the San Manuel.

Site Visits

A two-day site visit took place on May 16-17, 2019. Representatives from the San Manuel, Morongo, Twenty-Nine Palms, CPUC, BLM, National Parks Service (NPS), and SCE attended. Representatives of the Morongo and the Twenty-Nine Palms participated on the first day, the Morongo and the San Manuel participated on the second day. During this site visit, several large landscape-sized tribal cultural resources with boundaries that overlap with the Proposed Project Area were mentioned by tribal representatives. Construction methods and locations and monitoring of construction activities in the vicinity of prehistoric resources by cultural resources specialists and tribal representatives were discussed.

The Fort Mojave Tribe (Ft. Mojave) requested consultation after consultation had begun with the other tribes. Ft. Mojave was provided the same resource information that had been provided to the other tribes, and BLM met with tribal representatives to review maps showing site locations. A second site visit took place on June 25 and 26, 2019. Representatives from Fort Mojave, CPUC, BLM, NPS and SCE attended. The sites previously visited with the others were revisited, plus one additional site identified by Ft. Mojave. Subsequently, Ft. Mojave was provided the draft proposed mitigation measures for review and comment.

Based on cultural report information, the site visits, and tribal input, the CPUC has determined that it considers all prehistoric resources within the CEQA Area of Direct Impacts and CEQA Area of Indirect Impacts to be both TCRs and historical resources eligible for the CRHR under Criteria 1 for their contribution to important events in the past.

Subsequent to publication of the Draft MND, the CRIT requested government-to-government consultation with the CPUC. CPUC policy permits consultation even after the response period specified in AB 52 has lapsed, if there is sufficient time for meaningful consultation. The CPUC met with CRIT representatives on November 5, 2019 in response to their request made in the MND comment letter. Based on this consultation meeting, the CPUC considers CRIT a consulting tribe on the ELM project. Therefore, there are five consulting tribes on the ELM Project: San Manuel Band of Mission Indians, Morongo Band of Mission Indians, Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission, Fort Mojave Tribe, and Colorado River Indian Tribes.

Resources Identified

Tribal outreach resulted in the identification of a large cultural landscape, which AB 52 defines as one type of Tribal Cultural Resource. Cultural landscapes consist of geographic areas, including both natural and cultural resources, associated with a historic event, activity or person. Cultural landscapes can be spaces

rather than things that can be owned. These spaces or places are given meaning through their association with local and regional histories, cultural identities, beliefs, and behaviors. Landscapes can include horizons, unmarked spiritual corridors, and places of connection between the earth's surface and the upper and lower realms. While these kinds of landscapes are often associated with Native Americans, they can be associated with any cultural group or belief system. Cultural landscapes can be determined eligible and nominated for inclusion on the CRHR as either sites or districts. As such, these landscapes can be contiguous or noncontiguous.

Some of the previously identified cultural landscapes identified in the southern California desert include: the Keruk/Xam Kwatcan/Dream Trail, the Salt Song Trail and the Pacific to Rio Grande Trails Landscape.

The Keruk/Xam Kwatcan/Dream Trail runs the length of the Colorado River between Spirit Mountain (Newberry Mountains) in the north and Pilot Knob (Cargo Muchacho Mountains) in the south. Three "Big Houses", Spirit Mountain in the North, Pilot Knob in the south, and Palo Verde Peak in the middle, are considered to be abodes of ancestor spirits (relatives who have passed away) (Johnson 2003:163). Family members travel near to the big houses and utilize the various earth figures along the trail in an effort to address the ancestor spirits and ask that they move on to the next world. The area reserved for beseeching ancestral spirits to depart this world are often marked with earth figures, cairns, and trails. Campsites are usually located at a comfortable distance away from the earth figures.

The Salt Song Trail is a culturally important trail for the Southern Paiute. The Salt Song Trail goes east through the Coachella Valley and south of the Chocolate Mountains to the Colorado River, where it then heads north into northwestern Arizona, southwest Utah, and southeast Nevada. The Salt Song is sung at the Annual Mourning Ceremony or Cry Ceremony. The Song ushers the ceremony participants and the spirit of the deceased from place to place in a circuit, naming places, landforms and other natural phenomena. The Salt Song describes where to go and how to get there and what can be found at specific places. Southern Paiute people travel on these trails physically across the land, mentally in a dream state, and spiritually after death. The Salt Songs contain numerous place names for mountains, water sources, valleys, and other geographic points of interest, many of which are also physical points on known trails (Fowler 2009:88). The Salt Song Trail, its associated shrines, and the sacred landscape along its route together comprise a cultural landscape (Musser-Lopez and Miller 2010).

The Pacific to Rio Grande Trails Landscape (PRGTL) is a cultural landscape that encompasses three primary trail corridors from the southern Pacific coast of California across the deserts and the Colorado Plateau of the Southwest to the northern Rio Grande Valley in what is now New Mexico. These trail corridors are generally traversed today by Interstate Highway I-15/40 in the northern desert, Interstate Highway I-8 in the south and Interstate Highway I-10 in the central section of the desert. This landscape was identified by the California Energy Commission as part of the Palen Solar Energy Project. The landscape includes archaeological sites and features, a complex trail system, springs, tanks and wells, and culturally important plant and animal species (Braun and Gates 2013).

Based on consultation with the Ft. Mojave, specifically with a former Tribal Council Member and current Director of the Ahamakav Cultural Society, the CPUC has identified a large cultural landscape/Tribal Cultural Resource that encompasses and expands beyond the CEQA Areas of Direct and Indirect Impacts for the entire project. This resource is referred to here as the Mojave Trails Landscape. This landscape is the northern-most segment of the PRGTL described above.

The boundaries of the landscape extend from the Colorado River in the east, Cajon Pass in the west, Granite Mountains to the north, and I-40 to the south. Mojave songs, specifically Bird Songs and the Deer Song Cycle name specific landmarks within this landscape. The most well-known component of this

landscape is the Mojave Trail or Road which runs between water sources across the Mojave Desert between the Colorado River and Mojave River then to the Cajon Pass.

The resource is both a collection of multiple mapped trail segments and associated artifacts and features as well as a more ephemeral spiritual corridor used by dreamers. Secular activities associated with this resource include travel and trade. Ceremonial activities associated with this resource include dreaming by living dreamers as well as travel by the deceased. The deceased travel with the aid of traditional practitioners who, through song, story and prayer, usher the deceased along the path in an effort to assist them on their post burial journey to the afterlife. As such the thematic associations of this resource include travel, trade, and ritual.

The period of significance of the resource extends from the earliest human occupation of the region beginning 11,500 years ago and extending to the present day, as Fort Mojave Indian Tribal members continue to use this landscape in both secular and ceremonial ways.

Characteristic site types for the Mojave Trails Landscape have been described by archaeologists working in the Mojave Desert for decades. These include: destinations, trails, and trail-associated sites or features. *Destinations* primarily include water sources, but also include residential, religious, and resource-collection sites. Water-oriented destinations include natural features such as rivers, springs, lakes, rainwater tanks, as well as man-made wells. Residential sites include villages and camps with evidence of a full range of activities. Religious sites include geoglyphs and petroglyphs. *Trails* can either be created over time by multiple users following the same route or can be formally constructed. They average 30 cm in width and can be traced for many kilometers, interrupted only by gullies and washes. Trails are usually the shortest and most convenient routes from one point on the landscape to another. *Trail-associated sites or features* could include: concentrations of ceramics/pot drops, cleared circles, rock rings, rock clusters, rock cairns, rock alignments, petroglyphs, and geoglyphs. When the trail itself is not preserved, its route can often be approximately traced by distinctive patterns of trail-associated sites and features.

The CPUC considers the Mojave Trails Landscape to be a Tribal Cultural Resource eligible for the CRHR under Criteria 1 and 4. Under Criteria 1, a resource is eligible if it is associated with “events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.” In the context of a Native American site where its importance is not recorded in written form, “history” includes both traditional oral and written history. Important events can include specific events, or repetitive trends. Places referred to in Native American oral histories and creation stories, therefore, are potentially eligible.

Native American groups in the Mojave Desert consistently accord mythological importance to springs, petroglyph sites, and particularly trails systems. Trails across the desert mark the locations of travels of ancestral groups as they traveled to the Colorado River. Trails also facilitate dream travel to these places and the times when events mentioned in story and song occurred (Cleland 2005: 132). The particular trail that forms one of the connecting links for this cultural landscape, the Mojave Trail, is well known from multiple historical and ethnographic sources. It was an essential trade, transportation, and ritual route for Native American peoples and early European visitors in the Mojave Desert during prehistoric and historic times. This route was an essential connection between the Pacific Coast and the Southwestern deserts of Arizona and New Mexico.

The CPUC considers the resources that make up the Mojave Trails Landscape to be significant under CRHR Criteria 1, for their ties to important events in American history. However, most property types associated with the Mojave Trails Landscape exist today as archaeological resources, such as scatters of lithic artifacts, pot drops, cleared circles, and webs of intersecting trails. These sites are also considered register-eligible under Criterion 4 for their ability to yield information important in history and prehistory.

Therefore, the CPUC considers that all of the prehistoric resources within the CEQA Areas of Direct and Indirect Impacts to be eligible for the CRHR under Criteria 1 as contributors to the Mojave Trails Landscape. All of these resources are also considered eligible as contributors to the Mojave Trails Landscape under Criteria 4 for their ability to yield information important in history and prehistory.

Mitigation Measures

Draft Mitigation Measures CR-1 to CR-8 were developed to address potential impacts to cultural resources (see Section 5.5) and TCRs. The San Manuel were the first Band to engage in extensive consultation, during which time they reviewed and comment on the draft mitigation measures. The draft measures were revised based on several of their comments. The revised mitigation text was provided to the initial three tribes on May 16, 2019. The San Manuel responded in an email on May 24, 2019, stating that they accepted the revised mitigation measures and that the tribe would not be requesting San Manuel monitors. The Morongo Band suggested revisions to the draft mitigation measures on June 24, 2019, including a request for tribal monitors to be involved during construction. The Twenty-Nine Palms Band did not provide any comments on the mitigation measures. The Fort Mojave Tribe furnished comments on the mitigation measures on July 16, 2019. The comments from each tribe were considered and to the greatest extent deemed feasible by the CPUC included during finalization of the measures.

5.18.2 Regulatory Background

State and Local

California

There are numerous state regulations and policies that direct management of cultural resources on state lands and by state agencies. The following is a discussion of the most pertinent laws affecting the proposed project and impact analysis from a state perspective. These laws identify four types of resources: historical resources, unique archaeological resources, human remains, and tribal cultural resources. Please see Section 5.5, Cultural Resources, for more details about potentially relevant state regulations, which also apply to Tribal Cultural Resources.

Assembly Bill 52. AB 52 requires consultation with a tribe that is traditionally and culturally affiliated to the geographic area where a project is located if the tribe has requested consultation regarding projects in the tribe's area of traditional and cultural affiliation. Public Resource Code (PRC) Sections 21073, 21074, 21080.3, 21082.3, 21083.09, 21084.2, and 5097.94 (Assembly Bill AB 52 2014). Public Resources Code Section 21074 defines a TCR as "a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe." TCRs also include "non-unique archaeological resources" that may not be scientifically significant, but still hold sacred or cultural value to a consulting tribe.

CEQA requires that impacts to TCRs be identified and, if impacts will be significant, that mitigation measures be implemented to reduce those impacts to the extent feasible (PRC § 21081). In the protection and management of the cultural environment, both the statute and the CEQA Guidelines provide definitions and standards to be used for the assessment of potential impacts to TCRs.

Impacts to a TCR are considered potentially significant if the affected resource is: (1) listed or eligible for listing in the CRHR, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in PCR § 5020.1(k); or (2) a resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be

significant pursuant to criteria set forth in of PCR Section 5024.1(c). In applying these criteria, the lead agency must consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

Thus, a project may have a substantial adverse change in the significance of a TCR if:

- The adverse change is identified as being substantial through consultation with any California Native American tribe that requests consultation and is traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of a proposed project (PCR § 21084.2).
- The resource is listed, or eligible for listing, in the CRHR or in a local register of historical resources, and if the resource or its immediate surroundings are subject to physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration such that the significance of an historical resource would be materially impaired. (State CEQA Guidelines section 15064.5 (b)).

The fact that a TCR is not listed in or determined to be ineligible for listing in the CRHR, is not included in a local register of historical resources or is not identified in a historical resources survey does not preclude a lead agency from determining that the resource may be a historical resource.

Nevada

2017 Nevada Revised Statutes Chapter 383 - Historic Preservation and Archeology. This chapter establishes the Office of Historic Preservation: establishes the State Register of Historic Places; establishes the Commission for Cultural Centers and Historic Preservation; identifies roles, penalties and procedures in the event of the discovery of an Indian burial site; and identifies penalties for individuals that knowingly and willfully removes, mutilates, defaces, excavates, injures or destroys a historic or prehistoric site or resource on state land.

Local

The CPUC has sole and exclusive jurisdiction over the siting and design of the Proposed Project components located in the State of California. Pursuant to CPUC G.O. 131-D, Section XIV.B, "Local jurisdictions acting pursuant to local authority are preempted from regulating electric power line projects, distribution lines, substations, or electric facilities constructed by public utilities subject to the CPUC's jurisdiction. However, in locating such projects, the public utilities shall consult with local agencies regarding land use matters." Consequently, public utilities are directed to consider local regulations and consult with local agencies, but the county and cities' regulations are not applicable as the county and cities do not have jurisdiction over the Proposed Project. For informational purposes, local regulations in California jurisdictions are provided in Appendix C. The Proposed Project is subject to local regulations in the State of Nevada. However, no regulations pertaining to TCRs were identified.

Federal

Portions of the proposed project are located on BLM land and NPS land and require a Right-of-Way (ROW) Grant on BLM land and Special Use Permits for ROW and construction on NPS land. Issuing a grant or permit is a federal undertaking that requires compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). Section 106 requires that federal agencies consider the effect of their actions on properties that may be eligible for or listed in the National Register of Historic Places. See Section 5.5, Cultural Resources, for more details about relevant federal regulations.

5.18.3 Applicant Proposed Measures

See Section 5.5, Cultural Resources, subsection 5.5.3, for the full text of Cultural Resource APMs. These are applicable to Tribal Cultural Resources as well.

APM CUL-01: Environmentally Sensitive Areas (Requires protection and avoidance of resources). [Superseded by Mitigation Measures CR-1 through CR-6.]

APM CUL-02: Cultural Resources Survey (Requires surveys prior to construction).

APM CUL-03: CRMP (Requires Cultural Resource Management Plan [CRMP]). Superseded by Mitigation Measures CR-1 through CR-6.]

In addition to these APMs, SCE has identified two APMs specific to Tribal Cultural Resources:

APM TCR-01: Tribal Monitoring. An archaeological monitor, and tribal monitor that is culturally affiliated with the project area, may be present for all ground-disturbing activities within or directly adjacent to previously identified TCR(s) and prehistoric resources as outlined in the CRMP. The archaeological and tribal monitors will consult the CRMP to determine when to increase or decrease the monitoring effort should the monitoring results indicate a change is warranted. Monitoring reports shall be prepared and submitted to the BLM and CPUC on a monthly basis.

APM TCR-02: Tribal Engagement Plan. A tribal engagement plan shall be prepared, which will detail how Native American tribes will be engaged and informed throughout the proposed project. The tribal engagement plan will be included in the CRMP.

5.18.4 CEQA Significance Criteria

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR 15000 et seq.) provides guidance on assessing whether a project would have significant impacts on the environment. Consistent with Appendix G, the Proposed Project would have significant Tribal Cultural Resource impacts if it would cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:

- a. listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or*
- b. a resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. (In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.)*

5.18.5 Methodology

Information presented in this section was gathered through AB 52 consultation between the CPUC and California Native American Tribes that have cultural affiliations with the proposed project area and have requested to consult on the proposed project – the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians; the Morongo Band of Mission Indians; the Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians; and the Fort Mojave Tribe. Supplementary information for this section was gathered from the cultural resource literature and records search, cultural resources field survey, ethnographic summary, and pre-AB 52 tribal outreach described in detail in Section 5.5, Cultural Resources.

5.18.6 Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:

(i) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k)?

Note: The CEQA Guidelines define historical resources to include:

- A resource listed in, or determined to be eligible by, the State Historical Resources Commission for listing in the CRHR;
- A resource listed in a local register of historical resources or identified as significant in a historical resource survey meeting the requirements of section 5024.1(g) of the Public Resources Code; or
- Any object, building, structure, site, area, place, record, or manuscript which a lead agency determines to be historically significant or significant in the architectural, engineering, scientific, economic, agricultural, educational, social, political, military, or cultural annals of California, provided the agency's determination is supported by substantial evidence in light of the whole record. (14 CCR 15064.5(a).)

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION. AB 52 consultation with tribes resulted in the identification of the Mojave Trails Landscape as a Tribal Cultural Resource with boundaries that overlap with the Proposed Project area. Based on information received from tribes during AB 52 consultation, the CPUC considers all of the prehistoric resources within the CEQA Areas of Direct and Indirect Impacts to be eligible for the CRHR under Criteria 1 as contributors to the Mojave Trails Landscape. All of these resources are also considered eligible as contributors to the Mojave Trails Landscape under Criteria 4 for their ability to yield information important in history and prehistory.

Direct Impacts: In the California portion of the Proposed Project area, 1 ethnohistoric resource, 18 multi-component resources and 28 prehistoric resources are within the CEQA Area of Direct Impacts and are considered eligible to the CRHR as contributors to the Mojave Trails Landscape. In the Nevada portion of the Proposed Project area, 3 known prehistoric resources are within the CEQA Area of Direct Impacts and are considered contributors to the Mojave Trails Landscape; if the resources in Nevada were in California, they would be considered eligible for the CRHR. These resources are potentially subject to direct impacts from the Proposed Project. Direct impacts to these known resources would be addressed by Mitigation Measure CR-5 (Avoidance of Cultural and Tribal Cultural Resources), which would protect the resources from destruction through avoidance and monitoring during construction.

Direct effects could occur to TCRs previously identified. These would be eligible for the CRHR. Impacts to known resources and inadvertently discovered resources would be addressed by the implementation of Mitigation Measures CR-1 through CR-8, which would reduce these impacts to less than significant levels.

Indirect Impacts: In the California portion of the Proposed Project area, 319 known prehistoric resources are within the CEQA Area of Indirect Impacts and are considered eligible to the CRHR as contributors to the Mojave Trails Landscape. In the Nevada portion of the Proposed Project area, 50 known prehistoric resources are within the CEQA Area of Indirect Impacts and are considered contributors to the Mojave

Trails Landscape. If the resources in Nevada were in California, they would be considered eligible for the CRHR. These resources are potentially subject to indirect impacts from the Proposed project.

Proposed Project activities would be clearly visible from these sensitive resources. Construction activities would be temporary or short-term in nature and would cease with the end of construction. Permanent visual changes (e.g., series capacitor facilities and repeater facilities) would be of a similar nature and scale as existing visible facilities on the ROW and in the vicinity. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource or TCR. As such, these resources are not subject to indirect effects from the Proposed Project and no mitigation is necessary.

Operations and Maintenance

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. O&M activities would occur in previously disturbed locations. No ground disturbance that would cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a TCR is anticipated to occur during routine O&M activities. Therefore, the impact is less than significant during O&M.

Mitigation Measures

Implementation of Mitigation Measures CR-1 through CR-8 would evaluate and protect known and unanticipated discoveries of tribal cultural resources, thereby reducing construction impacts to less than significant.

CR-1 Retain a Cultural Resources Specialist. Prior to the start of construction, a project Cultural Resources Specialist (CRS) whose training and background conforms to the U.S. Secretary of Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards, as published in Title 36, Code of Federal Regulations, part 61 (36 C.F.R., part 61) shall be retained by SCE to supervise monitoring of construction excavations and to prepare a Cultural Resources Management Plan (CRMP) for the approved project. Their qualifications shall be appropriate to the needs of the project, specifically an archaeologist with demonstrated prior experience in the southern California desert and previous experience working with Southern California Tribal Nations. A copy of their qualifications shall be provided to the CPUC for review and approval. The project Cultural Resources Specialist shall use the services of Cultural Resources Monitors, tribal monitors and Field Crew as needed, to assist in mitigation, monitoring, and curation activities, as outlined in the CRMP. A copy of all proposed cultural staff qualifications shall be provided to the CPUC for review and approval prior to beginning work.

CR-2 Cultural resources environmental awareness training. Project personnel, including cultural resources monitors and tribal monitors, shall receive training that includes sensitivity training provided through participating tribes in video format regarding the appropriate work practices necessary to effectively implement the APMs and mitigation measures related to cultural resources and tribal cultural resources, including human remains. Training shall be required for all personnel before they begin work on a project site and repeated as needed for all new personnel before they begin work on the Project. This training program shall be submitted to the CPUC for approval at least 30 days before the start of construction and include procedures to be followed upon the discovery or suspected discovery of archaeological materials, tribal cultural resources, and human remains, consistent with the procedures set forth in the CRMP. This training may be integrated with a broader Worker Environmental Awareness Training program. Documentation of the training will be provided to the BLM and CPUC. The CPUC will provide documentation to the consulting tribes.

CR-3 Prepare and implement a Cultural Resources Management Plan. Prior to the beginning of construction, SCE shall submit at least 90 days before construction a Cultural Resources Management Plan (CRMP) for the project to the BLM and CPUC for review. The CPUC will submit the CRMP to representatives of consulting tribes for a 30-day review and comment period prior to approving the CRMP. The CPUC will in good faith consider any comments received from consulting tribes and incorporate such comments into the CRMP as deemed feasible. A single plan document that meets the requirements of both BLM and CPUC is acceptable. The CRMP shall be implemented under the direction of the SCE and the project Cultural Resources Specialist. The CRMP shall be prepared at the sole expense of the project proponent and shall meet all regulatory requirements. At a minimum the CRMP must address the following:

- The duties of the project Cultural Resources Specialist and associated staff shall be fully explained, including oversight/management, monitoring, and reporting duties with respect to known cultural resources and tribal cultural resources as well as site evaluation, data collection, and reporting for any newly identified resources discovered during project activities. The professional standards and ethical guidelines for all cultural resource personnel will be clearly outlined in the CRMP.
- No collection of artifacts is authorized or planned for this project. If an unanticipated discovery requires evaluation via excavation and artifact collection, the retention/disposal, and permanent and temporary curation policies shall be specified. The decision-making process for identifying which artifacts are curated or reburied, where they are reburied and the individuals, including tribal participants, making these decisions shall be described. These policies shall apply to cultural resources materials and documentation resulting from evaluation and treatment of cultural resources and tribal cultural resources discovered during project activities.
- The CRMP shall define and map all known prehistoric and historic resources eligible to the NRHP and CRHR within 100 feet of proposed work areas. How these resources will be avoided and protected during construction will be described. Avoidance measures to be used will be described, including where and when they will be implemented. How avoidance measures and enforcement of Environment Sensitive Areas (ESAs) will be coordinated with construction personnel will be included.
- The implementation sequence and the estimated time frames needed to accomplish all project-related tasks (i.e., evaluation of new resources resulting in work stoppage, time to complete reports, etc.) during the project activities and any post-project analysis phases of the project, if necessary, shall be specified. The intensity of monitoring proposed for each resource that may be impacted by project activities shall be outlined in the CRMP.
- Person(s) expected to perform each monitoring and, if necessary, treatment task, their responsibilities, and the reporting relationships between project construction management and the monitoring and treatment team shall be outlined in the CRMP.
- Tribal Monitors shall be retained to monitor ground disturbing activities within 100 feet of prehistoric and protohistoric resources. Tribal Monitors shall be retained for data recovery within prehistoric and protohistoric resources identified for data recovery. The ELM Project area spans multiple Tribal areas. The Tribe affiliated with a specific area will be considered first to provide Tribal Monitors. If multiple Tribes or Tribal Organizations are affiliated with a specific area, Tribal Monitors will be selected on a rotating basis. The CRMP will describe the roles and responsibilities of the monitors. Tribal monitors will be compensated. All

impact-avoidance measures (such as the presence of monitors) to prohibit or otherwise restrict access to sensitive resource areas that are to be avoided during ground disturbance, construction, and/or operation shall be described. Areas where these measures are to be implemented shall be identified. The description shall address how these measures would be implemented prior to the start of ground disturbance and how long they would be needed to protect the resources from project-related impacts.

- The commitment to record resources on Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) 523 forms, to map, and to photograph all newly identified cultural resources over 50 years of age shall be stated. Participating tribes may offer their perspective regarding the newly identified cultural resource. Comments by tribes may be documented on the DPR 523c, parts A13 (Interpretation) and A14 (Remarks).
- The commitment to curate all artifacts retained as a result of any archaeological investigations in accordance with the appropriate requirements and the California State Historical Resources Commission's Guidelines for the Curation of Archaeological Collections, into a retrievable storage collection in a public repository, museum, or reburial at the request of tribal representatives shall be stated. The different curation policies for archaeological material collected on BLM land as opposed to private or state land, shall be clearly articulated.
- The commitment of SCE to pay all curation or reburial fees for artifacts recovered and for related documentation produced during cultural resources investigations conducted for the project shall be stated. Should consulting tribes request that artifacts not be reburied, the CRMP shall identify a curation facility that could accept cultural resources materials resulting from project cultural resources investigations on private or state land. Tribal monitors shall be present for any reburials.
- A final report shall be prepared presenting the results of the monitoring efforts. The contents, format, and review and approval process of the final report shall meet appropriate federal, state, and local guidelines.

CR-4 Inadvertent discovery of cultural or tribal cultural resources. If previously undiscovered resources are identified during project activities all activities within 100 feet (30 meters) of the resource shall halt. The onsite construction supervisor and SCE shall be notified. SCE will notify the CPUC and BLM of the discovery. The monitoring team shall flag-off the area. SCE and its cultural resource specialist will coordinate with the CPUC, BLM, NPS and tribal representatives as appropriate, on avoidance measures.

If the resource cannot be avoided, methods of resource evaluation, and methods of mitigation will be discussed with all appropriate parties. Work may be temporarily diverted to activities that are outside of 100 feet (30 meters) of the discovered or suspected resource. The resource shall be evaluated to determine whether it is eligible for the NRHP, CRHR, a unique archaeological resource, a tribal cultural resource, or part of a larger culturally sensitive landscape area or traditional cultural property. If the resource is determined not to be significant, work may recommence in the area. If the resource is determined significant work shall remain halted within 100 feet (30 meters) of the area of the find, SCE shall consult with the BLM, CPUC, and representatives of the consulting tribes as appropriate regarding methods to ensure that no adverse effect and no substantial adverse change would occur to the significance of the resource. Preservation in place (i.e., avoidance) is the preferred method of mitigation for impacts to cultural resources. Other methods of mitigation, described below, shall only be used if it is determined the method would provide equivalent or superior mitigation

of the impacts to the resource. The alternative methods of mitigation may include data recovery and documentation of the information contained in the resource to answer questions about local prehistory or history. The methods and results of the evaluation or data recovery work at an archaeological find shall be documented in a professional-level technical report to be filed with the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS). Work in the area may commence upon completion of treatment, as approved by the BLM and CPUC.

If data recovery of resources is necessary, additional archaeologists shall perform the excavation while the monitoring team(s) continues to monitor construction. Additionally, the tribes shall be offered the opportunity to monitor data recovery efforts at prehistoric sites in addition to construction efforts, under the same contract terms. This opportunity shall additionally be extended to tribes that consulted on this project, but for which a tribal monitor was not provided for construction efforts.

- CR-5 Avoidance of cultural and tribal cultural resources.** When project work is planned within 100 feet of a known prehistoric-era cultural resource or a tribal cultural resource, or any resources that are eligible for the CRHR and/or NRHP, avoidance areas shall be established and monitors shall be present as outlined in the CRMP. ESAs shall be established with a 50-foot buffer around each resource prior to project activities, except where the 50-foot buffer would encroach on a work area, in which event the ESA buffer shall be the near edge of the identified work area. Monitoring teams shall include one qualified cultural resources monitor and one Native American monitor at prehistoric sites. ESAs shall be established by a qualified cultural resources monitor. The timing and intensity of the monitoring may vary according to the type of resource and the nature of the work planned and shall be determined in consultation with consulting tribes, as appropriate.
- CR-6 Prepare monitoring reports.** Upon completion of cultural resources and tribal cultural resources monitoring, SCE shall prepare a single report that summarize the monitoring efforts and the results, analyses, and conclusions of the monitoring program. Individual volumes per land ownership will be included and provide additional details. Copies of the report shall be submitted to both the CPUC and BLM within 60 days of the close of construction. Thereafter, consistent with individual agency policy, each agency will disseminate to the consulting tribes the report applicable to land under that agency's jurisdiction. Draft reports under CPUC jurisdiction will be submitted to consulting tribes for a 30-day review and comment period concurrent with agency review. If no new resources were discovered during construction, a letter report shall be submitted to the CPUC and BLM summarizing monitoring efforts. If resources were identified during construction, the reports shall be consistent with the California Archaeological Resources Management Reports (ARMR) and commensurate with the nature and significance of the identified resource(s). If artifacts are collected, they shall be curated at a recognized curation facility unless consulting tribes request that the Native American artifacts be reburied on site. Documentation associated with any newly identified resources shall be filed with the CHRIS, if appropriate.
- CR-7 Inadvertent discovery of human remains on state owned land or private property.** In the event that human remains or suspected human remains are identified, SCE shall comply with California law (Heath and Safety Code Section 7050.5; PRC Sections 5097.94, 5097.98, and 5097.99). The area shall be flagged off and all project activities within 200 feet (60 meters) of the find shall immediately cease. The CPUC-approved Cultural Resources Specialist and SCE shall be immediately notified. SCE shall immediately contact the Medical Examiner at the County Coroner's office, BLM, CPUC as well as representatives of consulting tribes. The Medical

Examiner has two (2) working days to examine the remains. If the Medical Examiner believes the remains are Native American, they shall notify the California Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) within 24 hours. If the remains are not believed to be Native American, the appropriate local law enforcement agency will be notified.

The NAHC will immediately notify the person or tribe it believes to be the most likely descendant (MLD) of the remains, and the MLD has 48 hours to make recommendations to the landowner or representative for the respectful treatment or disposition of the human remains and any associated grave goods. If the MLD does not make recommendations within 48 hours, the remains shall be reinterred in the location they were discovered and the area of the property shall be secured from further disturbance. If there are disputes between the landowner and the MLD, the NAHC shall mediate the dispute and attempt to find a solution. If the mediation fails to provide measures acceptable to the landowner, the landowner or their representative shall reinter the remains and associated grave goods and funerary objects in an area of the property secure from further disturbance. The location of any reburial of Native American human remains shall not be disclosed to the public and shall not be governed by public disclosure requirements of the California Public Records Act, Cal. Govt. Code § 6250 et seq., unless otherwise required by law. The Medical Examiner shall withhold public disclosure of information related to such reburial pursuant to the specific exemption set forth in California Government Code Section 6254(r).

CR-8 Inadvertent discovery of human remains on federal land. If potential human remains are discovered during any Project activity on lands administered by federal agencies, all activities within 200 feet that will cease immediately. SCE will take appropriate steps to secure and protect human remains and any funerary objects from further disturbance. SCE will notify the BLM and the County Coroner (California Health and Safety Code 7050.5(b)) immediately. If the remains are determined to be Native American or if Native American cultural items pursuant to the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) are uncovered, the remains shall be treated in accordance with the provisions of NAGPRA (43 CFR 10) and the Archaeological Resources Protection Act (43 CFR 7). SCE shall assist and support the federal agency, as appropriate, in all required NAGPRA and Section 106 actions, government-to-government and consultations with Native Americans, agencies, and consulting parties as requested by the federal agency. SCE shall comply with and implement all required actions and studies that result from such consultations.

(ii) a resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe?

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION. AB 52 consultation with tribes resulted in the identification of the Mojave Trails Landscape as a Tribal Cultural Resource with boundaries that overlap with the Proposed Project area. Based on information received from tribes during AB 52 consultation, the CPUC considers all of the prehistoric resources within the CEQA Areas of Direct and Indirect Impacts to be eligible for the CRHR under Criteria 1 as contributors to the Mojave Trails Landscape. All of these resources are also considered eligible as contributors to the Mojave Trails Landscape under Criteria 4 for their ability to yield information important in history and prehistory.

Direct Impacts: In the California portion of the Proposed Project area, 1 ethnohistoric resource, 18 multi-component resources and 28 prehistoric resources are within the CEQA Area of Direct Impacts and are considered eligible to the CRHR as contributors to the Mojave Trails Landscape. In the Nevada portion of the Proposed Project area, 3 known prehistoric resources are within the CEQA Area of Direct Impacts and are considered contributors to the Mojave Trails Landscape; if the resources in Nevada were in California, they would be considered eligible for the CRHR. These resources are potentially subject to direct impacts from the Proposed Project. Direct impacts to these known resources would be addressed by Mitigation Measure CR-5 (Avoidance of Cultural and Tribal Cultural Resources), which would protect the resources from destruction through avoidance and monitoring during construction.

Direct effects could occur to TCRs previously unidentified. These would be eligible for the CRHR. Impacts to known resources and inadvertently discovered resources would be addressed by the implementation of Mitigation Measures CR-1 through CR-8, which would reduce these impacts to less than significant levels.

Indirect Impacts: In the California portion of the Proposed Project area, 319 known prehistoric resources are within the CEQA Area of Indirect Impacts and are considered eligible to the CRHR as contributors to the Mojave Trails Landscape. In the Nevada portion of the Proposed Project area, 50 known prehistoric resources are within the CEQA Area of Indirect Impacts and are considered contributors to the Mojave Trails Landscape. If the resources in Nevada were in California, they would be considered eligible for the CRHR. These resources are potentially subject to indirect impacts from the Proposed project.

Proposed Project activities would be clearly visible from these sensitive resources. Construction activities would be temporary or short-term in nature and would cease with the end of construction. Permanent visual changes (e.g., series capacitor facilities and repeater facilities) would be of a similar nature and scale as existing visible facilities on the ROW and in the vicinity. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource or TCR. As such these resources are not subject to indirect effects from the Proposed Project and no mitigation is necessary.

Operations and Maintenance

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. O&M activities would occur in previously disturbed locations. No ground disturbance that would cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a TCR is anticipated to occur during routine O&M activities. Therefore, the impact is less than significant during O&M.

Mitigation Measures

- CR-1 Cultural Resources Staff.**
- CR-2 Cultural Resources Environmental Awareness Training.**
- CR-3 Cultural Resources Monitoring and Treatment Plan.**
- CR-4 Inadvertent Discovery of Cultural or Tribal Cultural Resources**
- CR-5 Avoidance of Cultural and Tribal Cultural Resources.**
- CR-6 Monitoring Reports.**
- CR-7 Inadvertent Discovery of Human Remains on State Owned Land or Private Property.**
- CR-8 Inadvertent Discovery of Human Remains on Federal Land.**

5.18.7 References

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5.19 Utilities and Service Systems

UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry, and multiple dry years?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Generate solid waste in excess of state or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Significance criteria established by CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G.

5.19.1 Environmental Setting

This section describes the utilities and service systems in the vicinity of the Proposed Project components and whether physical deterioration, damage, or disruption of any utilities or service systems facilities would occur or be accelerated as a result of the project. Utility and services system facilities associated with electricity, domestic (potable) water supply, stormwater, solid waste, communications, and natural gas are provided and maintained by a variety of local purveyors, including cities, counties, special districts, water agencies, and private companies. In the project vicinity there are also interstate natural gas transmission lines.

Section 5.15, Public Services, describes the setting and potential impacts on the demand for schools, parks and other public facilities.

Utility and service system information was obtained from the general plans and urban water management plans (UWMPs) for the County of San Bernardino, the City of Hesperia, Clark County, and the City of Boulder City. Internet searches were also conducted to gather information regarding utility service providers in the vicinity of the Proposed Project (SCE, 2018).

Electricity and Natural Gas

San Bernardino County. Within San Bernardino County, retail electric service is provided by SCE. Depending on location, natural gas is provided by Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas), Southwest Gas Corporation, and Victorville Municipal Utilities Services (SCE, 2018). SoCalGas has a natural gas transmission line that is parallel to portions of the Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line in central San Bernardino County (SoCalGas, 2019a; SoCalGas, 2019b).

Clark County. Within Clark County, electrical service is provided by Nevada Power, Overton Power District #5, and Valley Electric Association. Nevada Power Company provides electrical service to the Las Vegas

Valley and the outlying Clark County. The City of Boulder City owns and operates its own municipal electrical distribution system (SCE, 2018).

Water Pipelines

San Bernardino County. San Bernardino County's domestic water sources are supplied through both local and imported water sources. For the entire county, it is estimated that, on average, 85 percent of the domestic water is supplied by local sources and 15 percent is imported water purchased from other sources. Imported water is primarily purchased from the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD) and the State Water Project (also known as the California Aqueduct) (SCE, 2018).

Water purveyors in San Bernardino County available to support construction activities near Lugo Substation (SCE, 2018), include:

- City of Hesperia Water District (approximately 65-million-gallon capacity).
- Phelan Piñon Hills Community Service District (approximately 1.4-billion-gallon capacity).
- City of Victorville Water District (approximately 11.4-billion-gallon capacity).
- San Bernardino County Service Area 42 – Oro Grande (approximately 246,000-gallon capacity).

SCE anticipates that the Golden State Water Company (approximately 1.7-billion-gallon capacity) in the City of Barstow would provide water for construction activities conducted in the vicinity of Pisgah Substation (SCE, 2018).

Clark County. Water in southern Nevada is managed by the Southern Nevada Water Authority (SNWA), a cooperative, not-for-profit agency charged with managing the region's water resources. The SNWA is responsible for water treatment and delivery, as well as acquiring and managing long-term water resources for southern Nevada. Approximately 90 percent of southern Nevada's water comes from the Colorado River and is stored in Lake Mead, which has a storage capacity of approximately 9.4 trillion gallons (SCE, 2018).

The water purveyor in Clark County most likely to support construction activities near Mohave Substation (SCE, 2018) is EPCOR Water (approximately 9.8-million-gallon capacity). Construction near Eldorado Substation could utilize water from the City of Henderson Utility Services (approximately 97-billion-gallon capacity), Las Vegas Valley Water District, and the Utilities Department of North Las Vegas (approximately 11.4-million-gallon capacity) (SCE, 2018).

Sewer and Wastewater Pipelines

San Bernardino County. In the unincorporated areas of San Bernardino County, wastewater disposal is largely provided by septic systems. Near the City of Hesperia, wastewater treatment is provided by the Victor Valley Wastewater Reclamation Authority (VWVRA), which operates as a Joint Powers Authority and serves San Bernardino County, as well as the City of Hesperia, the Town of Apple Valley, and the City of Victorville (SCE, 2018).

Clark County. The Clark County Water Reclamation District (CCWRD) is responsible for wastewater treatment and reclamation in all of the unincorporated areas of Clark County, including the communities of Blue Diamond, Indian Springs, Laughlin, Searchlight, and Moapa Valley. Incorporated cities within the Las Vegas Valley handle wastewater within their individual jurisdictions. Approximately 150 million gallons of wastewater are collected and transported each day through pipelines to the Clark County Water Reclamation Treatment Facility. In areas where public sewers are not available to carry wastewater to municipal wastewater treatment plants, individual sewage disposal systems (i.e., septic tank systems) provide the functions of both sewer collection and treatment plant (SCE, 2018).

San Bernardino County. The San Bernardino County Flood Control District (SBCFCD) is responsible for providing flood control and related services to unincorporated areas and incorporated cities within the county. SBCFCD provides flood protection on major streams, water conservation, and storm drain construction, and is responsible for implementing the Drainage Area Management Plan. The cities in San Bernardino County implement construction and maintenance of local storm drains that feed into the County's area-wide system (SCE, 2018).

Clark County. Within Clark County, flood control and stormwater management are administered by the Clark County Regional Flood Control District. Construction activities would be located primarily within the Montana Wash-Colorado River, Piute Wash, and Bullhead City-Colorado River watersheds. Where stormwater management is provided in the Las Vegas Valley, the storm drain system carries discharge off of city streets and routes it into curbside catch basins.

Communications Lines

San Bernardino County. Cable and Internet service in San Bernardino County is provided by Charter Communications and Time Warner Cable. Additional providers of telephone and Internet service include AT&T and Verizon (SCE, 2018).

Clark County. Cable and Internet service in Clark County is largely supplied by Cox Communications in the Las Vegas Valley. In the outlying areas of the county, various cable companies provide service. Clark Cablevision provides service to Laughlin and Searchlight. Telephone service in the Las Vegas Valley is largely provided by Embarq. Other providers include Nevada Bell, Nextlink, XO Communications, and Idacomm (SCE, 2018).

Solid Waste Disposal

San Bernardino County. The County of San Bernardino Solid Waste Management Division is responsible for the operation and management of the County of San Bernardino's solid waste disposal system, which consists of five regional landfills and nine transfer stations. The Solid Waste Management Division administers the county's solid waste handling franchise program and the refuse collection permit program, which authorizes and regulates trash collection by private haulers in unincorporated areas. Within the City of Hesperia, sanitation services are administered by Advance Disposal. Advance Disposal also operates a Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) where recyclables are diverted from landfills (SCE, 2018).

Clark County. Clark County contracts with Republic Services for solid waste and trash disposal service, and the County is served by two Class I landfills, Apex Regional Landfill and Transfer Station and Laughlin Landfill. Within the City of Boulder City, solid waste and recycling services are provided by B.C. Waste Free and B.C. Disposal. Solid waste and recyclables are disposed of at the Boulder City Landfill, a Class I Disposal Site. This facility accepts municipal solid waste, construction and demolition waste, industrial process waste, and transportation equipment waste (SCE, 2018).

5.19.2 Regulatory Background

State and Local

California Government Code – Protection of Underground Infrastructure. The responsibilities of California utility operators working in the vicinity of utilities are detailed in the California Government Code (CGC), "Protection of Underground Infrastructure" (CGC Title 1, Division 5, Chapter 3.1 §§4216-4216.24). This law requires that an excavator must contact a regional notification center at least two days prior to excavation of any subsurface installation. Any utility provider seeking to begin a project that may dam-

age underground infrastructure can call Underground Service Alert, the regional notification center. Underground Service Alert will notify the utilities that may have buried lines within 1,000 feet of the project. Representatives of the utilities are required to mark the specific location of their facilities within the work area prior to the start of project activities in the area. The code also requires excavators to probe and expose underground facilities by hand prior to using power equipment.

California Integrated Waste Management Board Solid Waste Policies, Plans, and Regulations. The Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989, or Assembly Bill (AB 939) as codified in the Public Resources Code (PRC §40050 et seq.), administered by the California Integrated Waste Management Board (CIWMB), requires all local and county governments to adopt a Source Reduction and Recycling Element to identify means of reducing the amount of solid waste sent to landfills. To assist local jurisdictions in achieving these targets, the California Solid Waste Reuse and Recycling Access Act of 1991 established requirements for all new developments to include adequate, accessible, and convenient areas for collecting and loading recyclable and green waste materials.

Local

The CPUC has sole and exclusive jurisdiction over the siting and design of the Proposed Project components located in the State of California. Pursuant to CPUC G.O. 131-D, Section XIV.B, “Local jurisdictions acting pursuant to local authority are preempted from regulating electric power line projects, distribution lines, substations, or electric facilities constructed by public utilities subject to the CPUC’s jurisdiction. However, in locating such projects, the public utilities shall consult with local agencies regarding land use matters.” Consequently, public utilities are directed to consider local regulations and consult with local agencies, but the county and cities’ regulations are not applicable as the county and cities do not have jurisdiction over the Proposed Project. No local Utilities and Service System regulations applicable to the Proposed Project were identified. The Proposed Project is subject to local regulations in the State of Nevada.

Federal

Utilities and service systems are provided regulatory oversight primarily by state and local programs. No federal laws or regulations pertaining to utilities or service systems would be applicable.

5.19.3 Applicant Proposed Measures

The Proposed Project does not include any APMs related to Utilities and Service Systems.

5.19.4 CEQA Significance Criteria

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR 15000 et seq.) provides guidance on assessing whether a project would have significant impacts on the environment. Consistent with Appendix G, the Proposed Project would have significant utilities and service system impacts if it would:

- a. Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects*
- b. Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry, and multiple dry years*

- c. Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments*
- d. Generate solid waste in excess of state or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals.*
- e. Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste*

5.19.5 Methodology

The analysis compares Proposed Project activities against the capabilities of utilities and service systems described in the environmental setting of this section, with consideration to the significance criteria identified in Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines. This approach was used for local, state, and federal lands. The discussion addresses whether the Proposed Project could disrupt existing utility and service systems or cause a collocation accident and determines whether construction of the Proposed Project would directly or indirectly impact existing utility infrastructure through deterioration, damage, or disruption of service, thus requiring the construction or relocation of facilities. The analysis also addresses potential effects on natural gas transmission pipeline facilities owned by SoCalGas and identified through coordination with the gas company (SoCalGas, 2019b).

Existing utilities that may be affected by construction and operation of the Proposed Project include:

- Electricity
- Natural gas
- Water supply
- Stormwater management
- Sewer and wastewater treatment
- Cable and telephone

5.19.6 Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

- a. Would the project require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?*

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. The Proposed Project would involve construction and modification of new and existing electric power transmission and communications facilities. Construction would generate a minimal demand for water or wastewater treatment and no demand for natural gas facilities. It would not require the relocation, expansion, or development of new utility systems. However, it would require minor modifications to some existing electric power lines and the extension of power to the proposed series capacitor and fiber optic repeaters sites for nearby existing distribution lines.

Water, Wastewater Treatment or Storm Water Facilities. Construction work crews would bring their own drinking water to work areas. Staging yards would include portable sanitation facilities. An adequate number of portable toilets would be provided for all workers across the work areas, generally one for every 15 workers, and these would be maintained by a licensed sanitation contractor. The maximum volume of wastewater generated would vary up to approximately 1,610 gallons per week, which would be transferred to existing off-site disposal facilities (SCE, 2018). The need to include stormwater

diversion features in the design of the newly disturbed areas is discussed in Section 5.10 (Hydrology and Water Quality). The implementation of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) would be required by the Regional Water Quality Control Board. The use of existing groundwater supplies during construction is discussed in Section 5.10 (Hydrology and Water Quality). Existing wastewater treatment facilities would be adequate to accommodate the minimal demand for sanitary sewer service, and no new domestic water treatment facilities would be needed to satisfy the demand for potable water during construction of the Proposed Project. Thus, the project would not result in any impact related to the construction or expansion of water or wastewater treatment facilities.

Electric Power, Natural Gas, or Telecommunications Facilities. Construction of the Proposed Project would have the potential to disrupt existing underground utility systems or cause a collocation accident. Coordination with other utility system owners and compliance with California Government Code §§4216-4216.9 and CPUC General Order 95 would reduce the likelihood of accidental disruptions from a collocation accident. Prior to initiating underground construction, including drilling for TSP foundations or LST footings, SCE or its contractor would contact Underground Service Alert to identify any existing underground utilities in the construction zone.

Operation and Maintenance

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION. During routine operation and maintenance of the Proposed Project, SCE's new facilities would be unmanned and would not create any need for new or expanded utilities or service systems. However, once the Proposed Project is operational it would have the potential to affect other utilities and metallic objects in the vicinity. In particular, the Proposed Project would increase the power flow and the current flow on the existing 500 kV transmission lines.

The flow of electric current within a power line produces a magnetic field in the vicinity of the line. The strength of the magnetic field produced is directly related to the amount of current flow in the power line. Physical objects or materials such as trees, walls, or the ground do not shield the magnetic field generated by a power line. However, the strength of the magnetic field lessens relatively rapidly with increasing distance from the power line.

Electric currents and voltages can be induced in metallic objects located within the magnetic field created by power lines. An electric current can flow when an object has an induced charge and a path to ground is present. The amount of induced current that can flow depends upon the proximity of the metallic object to the power line. Two potential risks are of concern: the potential for shocks and arcing, and the potential for corrosion of underground steel pipelines. Operation of high-voltage transmission lines includes the risk of electrical shocks to people and electric arcs that could form across small gaps between conductive surfaces or objects near the transmission lines. Arcs can have the secondary effect of igniting flammable materials in the vicinity of the arc. In addition, induced currents have the potential to lead to corrosion of metallic objects, such as underground metallic pipelines, from the discharge of any induced current to ground.

The Proposed Project would install series capacitors to increase the current flow on the existing 500 kV transmission lines, resulting in increased magnetic field levels above existing conditions. Induced currents travelling from and in the immediate vicinity of electric transmission lines could accelerate the corrosion of nearby existing steel pipelines, which could lead to long-term accidental system disruption of such pipelines.

Induced currents and voltages on adjacent metallic (i.e., steel, ductile iron) or conducting objects, such as buried utility pipelines or communication wires, near the modified 500 kV facilities depend upon sev-

eral factors including: the proximity to the power lines; the length of the metallic object parallel to the power lines; the strength of the magnetic field; and any existing grounding. Other metallic objects that could be exposed to an increase in induced voltages and currents include buildings or parallel fences, if adjacent to the transmission lines.

Major natural gas pipelines parallel a portion of the Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line. One pipeline is parallel to and near SCE's Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line ROW for approximately 55 miles. This segment of gas pipeline is north of Interstate 40 and located primarily on BLM land (approximately 35 miles) and within the Mojave National Preserve (approximately 25 miles) (SoCalGas, 2019a). East of Ludlow and north of I-40, a segment of a second pipeline parallels the first pipeline for approximately 6 miles. (SoCalGas, 2019b). The pipelines' owner, SoCalGas, indicates that it has requested technical information from SCE and anticipates engaging a third-party contractor to study and determine the potential effect on SoCalGas's existing steel pipelines of increased power flow on the 500 kV transmission lines. Although the extent of any protection that may be needed is not known at this time, SoCalGas expects that it would perform the installation of any measures needed to provide appropriate protection to the pipeline (SoCalGas, 2019b).

The provision of appropriate protection to the pipelines would be considered to be a connected action stemming from the changes on the 500 kV Transmission Line proposed by SCE because such protections would not be needed in the absence of the SCE project. The actual design measures, protective features, and their locations and methods for installation would not be known until after final engineering and coordination with utility owners. The discussion below provides information on the types of actions that may be employed as a result of the connected action, which is also embodied in Mitigation Measure UT-1 to ensure that such protective measures are put into place. If implementation of a mitigation measure (e.g., UT-1) will result in effects on the environment, such impacts must be discussed. Therefore, this discussion also addresses the effects of implementing Mitigation Measure UT-1 and adds Mitigation Measure UT-2 to ensure that impacts will be less than significant.

An AC (alternating current) study will be performed by SoCalGas to help determine the effect of the increased electrical load of the Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line on the gas pipelines and the type, location, and amount of protective measures that may be necessary. According to SCE, SoCalGas would install any new protection. Until SoCalGas's engineering studies are completed, the extent and type of any such protection is unknown. To be conservative, this Initial Study assumes protection would be needed and installation of the protection would result in some level of ground disturbance along approximately 60 miles of gas pipeline. The pipelines are adjacent to existing maintained access roads and little, if any, additional roadwork would be needed to facilitate access for installation of any protection that may be required. The pipeline ROWs were disturbed when the pipelines were originally constructed, but except for the access roads, the land has largely naturally revegetated.

While actual protective measures and construction methods would be determined based on the engineering studies, typical forms of protection used on previous transmission projects located near or crossing gas pipelines have included deep ground rods, zinc ribbon wire, and gradient control mats. These three potential methods are described below by way of illustration. No information is currently available on what methods of protection may be used, if needed.

- **Deep Ground Rods (DGR).** Installation of DGRs may require an area of disturbance for drilling equipment and material laydown. Depending on final project design, this laydown area may be wholly or partially on the existing access road parallel to the pipeline. To install the rods, an approximate six-inch-diameter hole would be drilled 5 feet from the pipeline to a depth that would be determined by the depth below ground of the pipeline itself. If needed, standard drilling fluids would be used to

maintain the borehole in an open condition. Soil cuttings may be temporarily stockpiled at the site and then transported to an appropriate off-site landfill for disposal. Ground rod pipes (typically ranging from 0.5 to 1.5 inches in diameter) would be placed in the hole. The top of the pipe would then be connected to the existing gas pipeline with a wire, which is installed a minimum of 2 feet below grade. Finally, the hole would be backfilled with a bentonite clay, electrically conductive material pumped to the bottom of the hole through the ground rod pipes until it returns to the surface. This material is compatible with groundwater, remains stable over time, and prevents water transport through the borehole. Finally, the top of the borehole would be sealed with a bentonite clay plug, which is then covered with native soil.

- **Zinc Ribbon (ZR) Mitigation Wire.** Installation of ZR requires a 10-foot-wide disturbance along a trench with a work area on either end of the trench. ZR or a Faraday Shield would be installed underground approximately 5 feet from the existing gas pipeline. The ZR wire would be connected to ground rods and connected to the existing pipeline with wire. These mitigation features would be installed approximately 2 to 3 feet below grade
- **Gradient Control Mat (GCM).** Installation of GCM may require a disturbance area of approximately 30 feet by 60 feet. The GCM's function is to provide a safe, uniform voltage gradient at the surface of the earth in the immediate vicinity of above ground appurtenances (i.e., gas valves, fences, above ground pipes) on an influenced pipeline. These mats would be installed near such features.

With protective measures such as these installed, induced current effects on existing underground pipelines and other underground facilities would be avoided.

Mitigation Measure UT-1 would ensure that SCE would take the necessary steps in coordination with other parties to minimize any potential effects on pipelines through appropriate measures, such as providing increased cathodic protection or utility relocation, if needed.

The primary environmental impacts of implementing Mitigation Measure UT-1 are expected to be to biological resources (vegetation removal and disturbance). Based on the proximity to each other of the transmission line and the pipelines, the vegetation and wildlife near the pipelines and any environmental impacts caused by installing protective measures would be similar to those identified for the transmission line aspects of the ELM Project. If previously undisturbed ground is affected by the cathodic protection installation, impacts to cultural and tribal cultural resources could occur.

Mitigation Measure UT-2 would ensure that the mitigation measures required to ensure that the Proposed Project's impacts with regard to implementing pipeline protection are less than significant would apply to work associated with the installation of any required pipeline or underground utility protection. It is anticipated that SCE will pay for some or all of the work required to provide protection to the pipelines affected by the Proposed Project. Because installation of protective measures along the pipelines would be undertaken by a third party (namely, SoCalGas or its contractor) that is not a party to SCE's CPUC Application for the ELM Project, Mitigation Measure UT-2 is needed to ensure that other applicable mitigation measures imposed on SCE for the ELM Project are also implemented during any related pipeline protection work growing out of the ELM Project's implementation.

Standard operating procedures would minimize the potential exposure of workers and the public to electrical shock hazards from direct contact with conductive objects. The potential for inductive and conductive interference between the 500 kV transmission lines and existing conductive objects within or in close proximity to the transmission corridor could increase with the increased power flow achieved by the Proposed Project. Potential conductive objects include steel structures supporting the existing overhead lines or near the transmission line ROW, street light poles, metal fences or gates, or steel pipelines.

Induced currents and voltages on conducting objects near the modified 500 kV facilities would not pose an electrical shock threat in the environment if the conducting objects are sufficiently protected. Because the significance of the risk of shock hazards depends on the details of existing grounding and ungrounded objects, which are not known in detail at this time, this analysis recommends mitigation to identify the risk and provide safety features where needed.

Mitigation Measure UT-3 would determine what nearby metal objects could present a shock or arc hazard due to induced currents, determine the details of the grounding or other measures to be installed, and ensure their timely implementation.

With Mitigation Measures UT-1, UT-2, and UT-3 the potential impact caused by the Proposed Project due to induced voltages or currents on utilities or other adjacent metallic objects would be less than significant with mitigation.

Mitigation Measures

UT-1 Provide cathodic protection. Prior to commencing construction or as soon as such data are available, if it is not available before construction, SCE shall determine and report to CPUC and BLM the location of adjacent utilities and other metallic or conducting objects susceptible to induced voltages and currents. The scope of SCE's report shall include the results of an alternating current interference study by SoCalGas on the natural gas pipelines that parallel or cross portions of the Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line. Prior to the in-service date of the Proposed Project series capacitors, SCE shall ensure that the necessary grounding or other appropriate measures to provide appropriate cathodic protection has been installed and shall confirm this to the CPUC and BLM.

If SCE identifies other utilities near the 500 kV Transmission Lines that may be susceptible to increased risk of corrosion due to induced currents or voltages, SCE shall conduct or have conducted an alternating current interference study during construction of the ELM Project that evaluates the alternating current interference effects of the 500 kV transmission lines on such other utilities. The study shall include the development of a model using the maximum magnetic field levels for the transmission lines, including the conductor arrangement. For all utilities identified with a corrosion potential, SCE shall coordinate with the owner of the utility and use data gathered in the alternating current interference study to determine appropriate design measures to protect the utility from corrosion, such as ground mats or gradient control wires for cathodic protection of buried pipelines and other utilities. The study, summary of coordination with potentially affected utilities, and specifications of any design measures to be installed shall be submitted to the CPUC and BLM for review and approval at least 60 days prior to initiation of installation of such protection. All required protective and grounding work shall be completed prior to the in-service date of the Proposed Project series capacitors.

UT-2 Implement mitigation measures during pipeline protection work. Any agreement between SCE on the one hand and any party undertaking installation of pipeline protection measures required as a result of the ELM Project on the other hand shall include a requirement that applicable mitigation measures required during construction of the ELM Project also apply to and be implemented during any required pipeline-related work. At a minimum, and to the extent that they apply in the geographic area of the pipeline work, these will include mitigation measures for impacts to biological resources, cultural and tribal cultural resources, and hazards and hazardous materials. The BLM and NPS may substitute equally effective

mitigation measures or may require additional measures be implemented. A copy of the agreement between SCE and any other party for the pipeline work shall be provided to CPUC, BLM, and NPS. Business confidential information may be redacted, but the general nature of any redaction shall be identified. Absent a binding agreement between SCE and any other party to implement the required mitigation measures, or equally effective measures imposed by BLM and/or NPS, SCE will not be authorized to fund any of the required pipeline work.

- UT-3 Provide safety features for induced currents on adjacent metallic objects.** Prior to commencing construction or as soon as such data are available, if it is not available before construction, SCE shall determine and report to CPUC and BLM the location of metallic or conducting objects that may present a shock hazard to the public due to induced voltages or currents. SCE shall prepare an Induced Current Touch study that evaluates the conductive and inductive interference effects of the 500 kV transmission lines and new overhead distribution lines on the identified conductive objects. The Induced Current Touch study, including the criteria and approach that were used to determine what objects could present a shock and the details of the grounding or other measures to be installed, shall be submitted to the CPUC and BLM for review and approval. Prior to the in-service date of the Proposed Project series capacitors, SCE shall install the necessary grounding or other appropriate measures to protect the public from hazardous shocks or arcing.

- b. Would the project have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?***

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. Construction of the Proposed Project would require water supplies for dust control and would include grading and some removal of existing vegetation that would have the potential to reduce water infiltration into the soil, as the existing areas are generally uncompacted and permeable. The use of existing groundwater supplies during construction is discussed in Section 5.10 (Hydrology and Water Quality). The Proposed Project would not require the development of new water supplies or expansion of existing facilities.

Operation and Maintenance

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. During operation, the Proposed Project components would be unmanned and require no supply of water.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

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

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. The Proposed Project would generate minimal wastewater during construction. Portable sanitation facilities would be provided for construction work crews and serviced by a private company. This would generate a nominal amount of wastewater to be treated. There would be no sewer connection to any of the Proposed Project components. Existing wastewater facilities would ade-

quately accommodate the minor demand caused by project construction while serving existing commitments. Therefore, this impact would be less than significant.

Operation and Maintenance

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. During operation, the Proposed Project components would be unmanned and no new, permanent need for wastewater treatment would occur.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

- d. *Would the project generate solid waste in excess of state or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?***

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. A private contractor would collect and transport any construction-related solid waste to a landfill authorized to accept the material. Small amounts of construction debris would be related to use of building materials (such as concrete and metal). SCE would recycle waste materials (e.g., metals) as appropriate. Total solid waste generated by construction of the Proposed Project is anticipated to be minor compared to the capacity of existing landfills, and the landfills serving the Proposed Project would have adequate capacity for the expected waste. Recovered materials, such as the OHGW to be replaced, would be recycled. Therefore, the impact of solid waste disposal on landfill capacity would be less than significant.

Operation and Maintenance

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. During operation, the Proposed Project components would be unmanned and would not generate notable quantities of solid waste.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

- e. *Would the project comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?***

Construction

NO IMPACT. The California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989, which emphasizes resource conservation through reduction, recycling, and reuse of solid waste guide solid waste management, requires that localities conduct a Solid Waste Generation Study (SWGS) and develop a Source Reduction Recycling Element (SRRE). Construction activities would be in accordance with these applicable Solid Waste Management Policy Plans by recycling materials as appropriate. Construction of the Proposed Project would include replacement of existing wood poles and removal of some existing infrastructure (e.g., conductor, steel, concrete, and debris) that would be either reused, disposed of in a Class I hazardous waste landfill, or disposed of in the lined portion of a RWQCB-certified municipal landfill. Hazardous liquid materials would be subject to the Spill Prevention, Control, and Countermeasure Plan developed for the Proposed Project. All solid waste generated during construction of the Proposed Project would be temporarily stored in a designated area of laydown yards and would be reused or disposed in a manner consistent with applicable statutes and regulations related to solid waste.

As identified in Item (d) above, the landfills serving the Proposed Project would have sufficient capacity to accommodate project construction solid waste disposal needs, and project solid waste disposal would not require the need for new or expanded landfill facilities. Therefore, the Proposed Project would comply with applicable statutes and regulations related to solid waste disposal limits and landfill capacities. No impact would occur.

Operation and Maintenance

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. During O&M, the Proposed Project components would be unmanned and would not generate solid waste in excess of any standards or facility capacity, nor would it affect solid waste reduction goals. Where feasible, solid waste materials (e.g., metal, wire, wood) would be recycled.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

5.19.7 References

- SCE (Southern California Edison). 2018. Eldorado-Lugo-Mohave Series Capacitor Project: Proponent's Environmental Assessment (PEA). Volumes 1 through 8. April.
- SoCalGas (Southern California Gas). 2019a. Gas Transmission Pipeline Interactive Map – San Bernardino, Pipeline locations in San Bernardino County. <http://socalgas.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=faeed481312f4e5fb056f739ff169e02>. Accessed May 6, 2019.
- _____. 2019b. Email correspondence to CPUC Energy Division. Re: Data Request to Sempra for pipeline information regarding the SCE proposed Eldorado-Lugo-Mohave Project filed at the CPUC. April 2.

5.20 Wildfire

WILDFIRE

If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, **would the project:**

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Significance criteria established by CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G.

5.20.1 Environmental Setting

Wildland fire protection in California is the responsibility of the State, local, or federal government, depending on the location. The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) is required by law to map areas of significant fire hazards based on fuels, terrain, weather, and other relevant factors. These zones, referred to as Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZ), influence how people construct buildings and protect property to reduce risk associated with wildland fires. FHSZ maps identify the likelihood that an area will burn over a 30- to 50-year period without considering modifications that may occur, such as through fuel reduction efforts or other changes in the fuel regime (CAL FIRE, 2018). Risk is not indicated by the maps. Risk is the potential damage that can be done by a fire, based on existing conditions. Risk can be reduced by various strategies, such as creation of defensible space, fuel load reduction, and, in the case of structures, the use of sprinklers and ignition-resistant building materials and construction.

In January 2018, the CPUC adopted a Fire-Threat Map that delineates the boundaries of a new High Fire-Threat District where stricter fire-safety regulations apply to investor-owned utilities. These districts were developed by CPUC in collaboration with CAL FIRE. Figure 5.20-1. Fire Hazard Areas, shows the portion of the Proposed Project that traverses CPUC-designated fire threat areas as well fire hazard severity zones designated by CAL FIRE. Tier 2 fire-threat areas depict areas where there is an elevated risk (including likelihood and potential impacts on people and property) from utility associated wildfires. Tier 3 fire-threat areas depict areas where there is an extreme risk (including likelihood and potential impacts on people and property) from utility associated wildfires.

For the Proposed Project, the areas of fire hazard concern are from Lugo Substation in Hesperia to a point west of Lucerne Valley. In this area, the parallel Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line and Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line cross an estimated 12.5 miles of Tier 2 High Fire-Threat District and would result in an estimated 26 acres of disturbance within the district, see Figure 5.20-1. The tier designations shown on the maps drive certain maintenance, inspection, and vegetation management criteria/inspection intervals. These activities are detailed in SCE's 2019 Wildfire Mitigation Plan (SCE, 2019).

In 2007, CAL FIRE adopted FHSZ maps for State Responsibility Areas. The State Responsibility Area FHSZ maps use three fire hazard severity zone classifications: Very High, High, and Moderate. These fire hazard severity zone classifications are based on a combination of how a fire will behave and the probability of flames and embers threatening buildings.

In 2008, CAL FIRE developed recommended maps for Fire Hazard Severity Zones in Local Responsibility Areas (which also includes areas of federal jurisdiction). For areas of local (and federal) responsibility, CAL FIRE uses only two FHSZ designations: Very High or Non-Very High. The local responsibility area FHSZ rating reflects flame and ember intrusion from adjacent wildlands and from flammable vegetation found in the urban area (CAL FIRE, 2018).

The Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line and Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line cross an estimated 7.7 miles of Very High FHSZ in State and Local/Federal Responsibility Areas and 11.4 miles of High FHSZ in State Responsibility Areas east of the Lugo Substation, see Figure 5.20-1 (CAL FIRE, 2007a,b). The Proposed Project would result in an estimated 4 acres of disturbance in the very high fire severity zone and in an estimated 30.8 acres of disturbance in the high fire severity zone (CAL FIRE, 2007a,b). The remainder of the Proposed Project is not located in state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones. In general, the wildfire hazard potential in the Mojave Desert is considered very low to moderate (USFS, 2018).

Nevada does not have FHSZ mapping; however, wildland fire threat is mapped in the state by the Nevada Division of Forestry (NDF) and is presented on the Nevada Natural Resources and Fire Information Portal (NDF, 2018). Based on this mapping, most of the Proposed Project in Nevada is in very, very low to low fire threat areas, with small pockets of low to moderate fire threat near the community of Searchlight. The Mohave Substation and the immediate area is mapped as ranging from moderate to high fire threat. The fire threat is derived from historical fire occurrence, landscape characteristics including surface fuels and canopy fuels, percentile weather derived from historical weather observations, and terrain conditions (NDF, 2018).

5.20.2 Regulatory Background

State and Local

California

California Public Utilities Commission General Order 95. CPUC's GO 95 is the key standard governing the design, construction, operation, and maintenance of overhead electric lines in the State. GO 95 Rule 35 governs tree trimming requirements, including minimum vegetation clearances around power lines in extreme and very high fire threat zones in Southern California. The rule requires radial clearances be 120 inches from vegetation for bare line conductors in Extreme and Very High Fire Threat Zones in Southern California

GO 95 Rule 31.2 requires that lines be inspected frequently and thoroughly to ensure that they are in good condition, and that lines temporarily out of service be inspected and maintained in such condition so as not to create a hazard.

California Public Resources Code Sections 4294 and 4293. The California Public Resources Code (CPRC) Sections 4292 and 4293 specify requirements related to fire protection and prevention in transmission line corridors. CPRC Section 4292 states that any person that owns, controls, operates, or maintains any electrical transmission or distribution line has primary responsibility for fire protection of such areas, and shall maintain around and adjacent to any pole or tower which supports a switch, fuse, transformer,

lightning arrester, line junction, or dead end or corner pole, a firebreak which consists of a clearing of not less than 10 feet in each direction from the outer circumference of such a pole or tower (CPRC 4292). CPRC 4293 states that any person that owns, controls, operates, or maintains any electrical transmission or distribution line upon any mountainous land, or in forest-covered land, or grass covered land which has primary responsibility for the fire protection of such area, shall maintain a clearance of the respective distances.

Power Line Fire Prevention Field Guide 2008 Edition. CAL FIRE, the state's three investor-owned utilities (Pacific Gas and Electric Company, Southern California Edison Company, and San Diego Gas and Electric), and other California electric utilities have mutually developed a comprehensive field guide for their personnel. Its purpose is "to provide information and guidance to the personnel of the fire service agencies and electrical operators for minimum uniform application within the areas of their respective jurisdiction and franchise responsibilities." In addition to safety of the public, the guide details fire hazard reduction maintenance procedures for the safety of conductors and certain hardware.

Senate Bill 901. Signed into law in September 2018, SB 901, among other things, amends the Public Utilities Code to require utilities to prepare wildfire mitigation measures if the utilities' overhead electrical lines and equipment are located in an area that has a significant risk of wildfire resulting from those electrical lines and equipment. The bill requires the wildfire mitigation measures to incorporate specified information and procedures and utilities to prepare a wildfire mitigation plan.

The San Bernardino County Fire Office of Emergency Services prepared the County Emergency Operations Plan (revised January 2018) that includes fire hazard. There is no emergency route plan that overlaps the Project area. The Mountain Area Safety Taskforce developed an emergency route plan for the area immediately south of the project.

Local

No local Utilities and Service System regulations applicable to the Proposed Project were identified

Federal

A variety of line and tower clearance standards are used throughout the electric transmission industry. Nationally, most transmission line owners follow the National Electric Safety Code (NESC) rules or American National Standards Institute (ANSI) guidelines, or both, when managing vegetation around transmission system equipment. The NESC deals with electric safety rules, including transmission wire clearance standards, whereas the applicable ANSI code deals with the practice of pruning and removal of vegetation.

5.20.3 Applicant Proposed Measures

The Proposed Project does not include any APMs related to Wildfire.

5.20.4 CEQA Significance Criteria

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR 15000 et seq.) provides guidance on assessing whether a project would have significant impacts on the environment. Consistent with Appendix G, if the Proposed Project is in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, it would have significant wildfire impacts if it would:

- a. Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan*

- b. Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire*
- c. Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment*
- d. Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes*

5.20.5 Methodology

The approach to wildfire is to review the existing and proposed work within the high and very high FHSZ and determine whether the work would result in additional wildfire risk.

5.20.6 Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

a. Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. The project does not cross over or is not near any roads in the very high FHSZ nor is it within the evacuation routes; however, some state and county routes within the high FHSZ are identified as evacuation routes south of the project. SCE would implement traffic control protocols and a project-specific traffic plan under Mitigation Measure T-1 Construction Traffic Control Plan, to reduce interference with an adopted emergency response or evacuation plans. Additionally, SCE would coordinate with local county and city authorities, including emergency responders. In the event of an evacuation, construction would cease, and obstructed roads would be opened to traffic (SCE, 2018). Impacts from construction of the project related to interference with emergency response or evacuation plans would be less than significant.

Operation and Maintenance

NO IMPACT. Operation and maintenance activities would be incorporated into the existing O&M schedule for the existing transmission lines, substations, and associated facilities. Operation and maintenance activities would generally not occur in roadways; however, operation and maintenance activities associated with the Proposed Project facilities may infrequently require temporary lane closures to allow access. This occurrence would be the same as for existing facilities. No additional impact would occur because of operating and maintaining the project.

Mitigation Measures

T-1 Construction Traffic Control Plan. (The full text of this measure is in Section 5.17, Transportation. It requires a plan that minimizes interference with traffic.)

- b. Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?*

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION. The project would not result in any occupied facilities. Most activities associated with the Proposed Project would occur along existing transmission lines and are designed

to improve the efficiency of power delivery and voltage stability on the transmission lines and provide safe and reliable electrical service. Because they would primarily occur within existing ROW or at existing substations, they would not exacerbate wildfire risks. One clearance discrepancy at Tower M14-T4 on the Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line occurs within a very high FHSZ. By raising the tower to address the discrepancy, the Proposed Project would reduce wildfire risks at this location.

Project-related construction activities in the ROW, existing substations, or yards located in or near high or very high FHSZ locations have the potential to be an ignition source for a wildland fire. Examples of ignition sources include: sparks from welding or from metal striking metal or stone and igniting surrounding vegetation; parking vehicles over dry vegetation where hot undercarriages could ignite grass or shrubs; and improperly discarded smoking materials. To reduce the wildfire risk, SCE would implement standard fire prevention protocols and follow a fire prevention plan. The portions of the Proposed Project area located within moderate to very high fire hazard severity/wildfire threat zones would be grubbed of vegetation and graded before the staging of equipment (SCE, 2018). However, the standard protocols do not require SCE to coordinate the plan with agency fire experts nor require appropriate monitoring of the fire protocols during construction. To address this, Mitigation Measure WF-1 would require SCE to allow agency review of the plan and require a project Fire Marshal to ensure the plan is followed and the risk of wildfire is reduced. With Mitigation Measure WF-1, the impact of exacerbating wildfire risks during construction would be less than significant.

Operation and Maintenance

NO IMPACT. Operation and maintenance activities would be incorporated into the existing O&M schedule for the existing transmission lines, substations, and associated facilities. As with current operations and maintenance, SCE would comply with all current federal and State laws related to vegetation clearance and fire prevention. The utility would also implement the SCE Wildfire Mitigation Plan (SCE, 2019) required under SB 901 for the portions of the project that cross SCE's High Fire-risk Areas. No additional impact would occur because of operating and maintaining the project.

Mitigation Measures

WF-1 Prepare and implement a Fire Management Plan. A project-specific Fire Management Plan for construction of the ELM project shall be prepared by SCE and submitted for review and approval by the CPUC prior to initiation of construction. The draft copy of the Plan must also be provided to each responsible fire agency at least 90 days before the start of construction activities in areas designated as Very High or High Fire Hazard Severity Zones with a request for comments on the Plan's adequacy within 30 days. Plan reviewers shall include CPUC, BLM, CAL FIRE, and San Bernardino County. Comments received on the draft Plan shall be provided to SCE from all other reviewers, and SCE shall resolve each comment in consultation with the commenting agency. CPUC shall approve the final Plan, which shall be provided to the Plan reviewing agencies at least 30 days prior to the initiation of construction activities in the Fire Hazard Severity Zones. SCE shall fully implement the Plan during all construction activities.

A qualified project Fire Marshal or person of similar title and experience shall be established by SCE to implement and enforce all provisions of the approved Fire Management Plan as well as perform other duties related to fire detection, prevention, and suppression for the project. The Fire Marshal shall monitor construction activities to ensure implementation and effectiveness of the plan.

The Plan shall cover:

- The purpose and applicability of the plan;
- Responsibilities and duties;
- Preparedness training and drills;
- Procedures for fire reporting, response, and prevention that include:
 - identification of daily site-specific risk conditions,
 - the appropriate tools and equipment needed on vehicles and to be on hand at sites,
 - reiteration of fire prevention and safety considerations during tailboard meetings, and
 - daily monitoring of the red-flag warning system with appropriate restrictions on types and levels of permissible activity;
- Coordination procedures with BLM and San Bernardino County fire officials;
- Crew training, including fire safety practices and restrictions; and
- Methods for verification that Plan protocols and requirements are being followed.

c. Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION. Most activities associated with the Proposed Project would occur along existing transmission line ROWs and would rely primarily on existing paved roads and unpaved access roads for access. No fuel breaks or emergency water sources would be required. The proposed series capacitor and repeater facility sites would connect to the local electrical distribution system for facility power. New infrastructure would be required at the mid-line series capacitors, including electric distribution and telecommunication facilities, and at the fiber optic repeater facilities but none of the new infrastructure or distribution lines would be within a high or very high FHSZ. To reduce wildfire risk, this analysis recommends Mitigation Measure WF-1, Prepare and implement a Fire Management Plan. While the Proposed Project would result in additional infrastructure, it would be outside a high or very high FHSZ and because SCE would implement a fire prevention plan during construction, the increase in associated fire risk during construction would be less than significant with mitigation.

Operation and Maintenance

NO IMPACT. Operation and maintenance activities would be incorporated into the existing O&M schedule for the existing transmission lines, substations, and associated facilities. As with current operations and maintenance, SCE would comply with all current federal and State laws related to vegetation clearance and fire prevention. No additional impact would occur because of operating and maintaining the project.

Mitigation Measures

WF-1 Prepare and implement a Fire Management Plan. (The full text of this measure is provided above).

d. Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?

Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. During construction, the Proposed Project could temporarily disturb an estimated 4 acres in the very high fire severity zone and 30.8 acres in the high fire severity zone. The temporary

disturbance could result in runoff, but the ground disturbance is in isolated locations disbursed over 20 miles of transmission line ROW and no one area is large enough and near enough to residences to expose people and structures to significant risks. The largest ground disturbance footprint is associated with helicopter landing zones which are not near any structures or people and a construction yard which is located on a flat area adjacent to Lugo Substation. Not all of these locations would necessarily be used during construction. SCE would implement Best Management Practices in compliance with a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan that would further reduce the impact and the impact would be less than significant.

Operation and Maintenance

NO IMPACT. Operation and maintenance activities would be incorporated into the existing O&M schedule for the existing transmission lines, substations, and associated facilities. As with current operations and maintenance, SCE would comply with all current federal and State laws related to vegetation clearance and fire prevention. No additional impact would occur because of operating and maintaining the project.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

5.20.7 References

- CALFIRE (California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection). 2018. Frequently Asked Questions About: Fire Hazard Severity Zoning and New Building Codes for California's Wildland-Urban Interface. http://www.fire.ca.gov/fire_prevention/downloads/Doc_7_FAQs_ALL.pdf. Accessed January 9, 2019.
- _____. 2007a. SW San Bernardino County Fire Hazard Severity Zones in SRA. http://frap.fire.ca.gov/webdata/maps/san_bernardino_sw/fhszs_map.62.pdf. Accessed January 4, 2019
- _____. 2007b. SW San Bernardino County Fire Hazard Severity Zones in LRA – Hesperia. http://www.fire.ca.gov/fire_prevention/fhsz_maps/FHSZ/san_bernardino/Hesperia.pdf. Map accessed January 4, 2019.
- CPUC (California Public Utilities Commission). 2018. CPUC Fire-Threat Map GIS files. <http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/firethreatmaps/>. Accessed February 14, 2019.
- NDF (Nevada Division of Forestry). 2018. Natural Resources and Fire Information Portal website. <https://www.nevadafireinfo.org/maps/>. Accessed December 2018.
- USFS (U.S. Forest Service). 2018. Wildfire Hazard Potential Version 2018. https://www.firelab.org/sites/default/files/images/downloads/whp_2018_classified_postersize.jpg. Accessed January 9, 2019.
- SCE (Southern California Edison). 2019. 2019 Wildfire Mitigation Plan. <http://docs.cpuc.ca.gov/PublishedDocs/Efile/G000/M263/K645/263645320.PDF>. Accessed February 12, 2019.
- _____. 2018. Eldorado-Lugo-Mohave Series Capacitor Project: Proponent's Environmental Assessment (PEA). Volumes 1 through 8 and Responses to Questions and Data Requests.

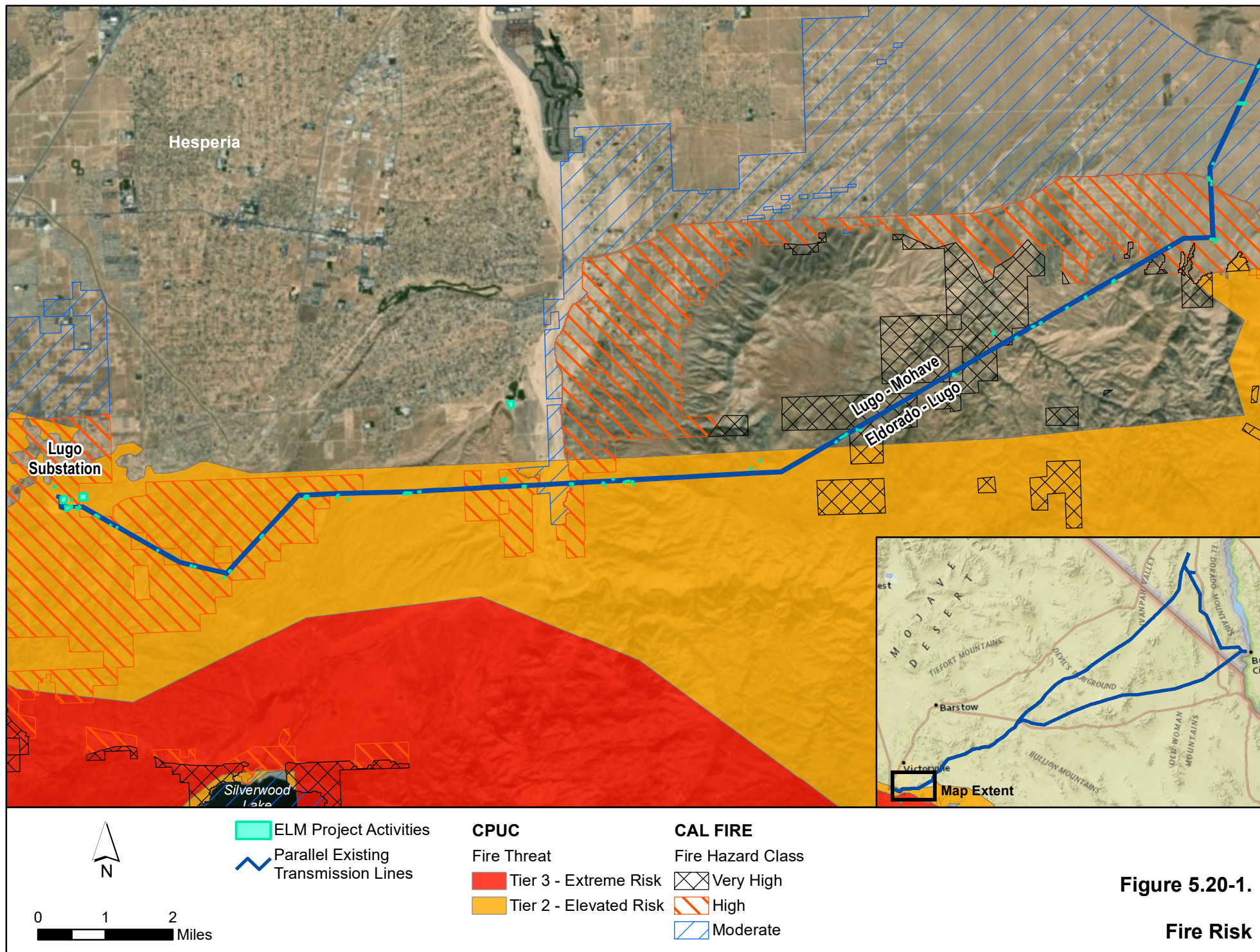


Figure 5.20-1.
Fire Risk

5.21 Mandatory Findings of Significance

MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Does the project have environmental effects that would cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Significance criteria established by CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G.

- a. Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?**

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED. Chapter 5, Environmental Setting and Environmental Impacts, identifies impacts from project implementation and the level of significance of those impacts. As appropriate, mitigation measures are identified that ensure impacts will be less than significant. With implementation of mitigation measures and applicable Applicant Proposed Measures identified in this Initial Study, construction and O&M of the Proposed Project would not:

- Substantially degrade the quality of the environment
- Substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species
- Cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels
- Threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community
- Substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, or
- Eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory.

As discussed in Chapter 4, Project Description, construction of the Proposed Project would temporarily disturb approximately 375.4 acres and permanently disturb approximately 7.0 acres. As discussed in Section 5.4, Biological Resources, construction activities could result in the removal of special-status plant species. Impacts would be minimized through the implementation of proposed mitigation measures, which include the preparation of a revegetation plan to restore vegetation communities and replace special-status plants. Desert tortoises would be protected through pre-activity surveys and monitoring, as well as other preventative measures. Nesting birds would be protected through a Nesting Bird Management Plan, including pre-construction surveys. Permanent impacts to suitable desert tortoise critical habitat would be compensated for at a 5-to-1 ratio and impacts to non-critical habitat would be compensated for at a 1-to-1 ratio, or as required by regulatory agencies. No impacts to wetlands are anticipated. Impacts to jurisdictional waters would be mitigated by Mitigation Measures HWQ-1 and HWQ-2, as described in

Section 5.4.6. Because the Proposed Project is located almost exclusively within existing and previously disturbed ROW, it would not substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species. Habitat that is impacted would be restored or replaced as required; therefore, wildlife populations would not drop below self-sustaining levels due to habitat loss (and fish populations would not be affected at all). Because vegetation communities and rare plants would be restored or replaced, the Proposed Project would not threaten to eliminate a plant or wildlife community. Finally, because the Proposed Project is located almost entirely within existing ROWs with existing transmission facilities and in existing substations, the Proposed Project would not reduce the number or restrict the range of rare or endangered plants or wildlife.

Construction of the Proposed Project would not result in permanent impacts to drainages and would not impact any wetlands under the jurisdiction of the USACE, SWRCB, NDEP, or CDFW.

As discussed in Section 5.5, Cultural Resources and Section 5.18, Tribal Cultural Resources, cultural resources surveys have been completed and consultation with Native American tribes conducted. The results of the surveys were considered during the final design of the Proposed Project to minimize impacts on cultural resources during construction. In addition, the Proposed Project would not require the modification or demolition of any historic-era buildings. Avoidance measures would be implemented to protect cultural resources and tribal cultural resources in construction areas. SCE would also develop a Cultural Resources Management Plan (CRMP) and a Paleontological Resources Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (PRMMP), both of which would provide for further monitoring and resource protection, as needed.

- b. Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (“Cumulatively considerable” means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)**

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED. CEQA requires lead agencies to consider the cumulative impacts of proposed projects under review. A project may result in significant adverse cumulative impacts when its effects are cumulatively considerable; that is, the incremental effects of an individual project are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, other current projects, and probable future projects regardless of what agency or person undertakes such other actions (Section 15130(a)(1)).

Approach to Cumulative Impact Analysis

Under CEQA, there are two acceptable and commonly used methodologies for establishing the cumulative impact setting or scenario: the “list approach” and the “projections approach.” The first approach would use a “list of past, present, and probable future projects producing related or cumulative impacts.” (Section 15130 (b)(1)(A)). The second approach is to use a “summary of projections contained in an adopted general plan or related planning document, or in a prior environmental document which has been adopted or certified, which described or evaluated regional or area wide conditions contributing to the cumulative impact.” (Section 15130 (b)(1)(B)). Because the Proposed Project extends over a considerable distance, with activities occurring at widely separated locations making use of the projections approach unwieldy, the “list” approach was selected. As used in the analysis of cumulative impacts, the term “cumulative scenario” is used to include the proposed ELM Project and other identified projects whose impacts have the potential to combine with or overlap with those of the Proposed Project.

Projects used in the cumulative impact analysis are listed in Table 5.21-1, ~~Cumulative Projects within 1 Mile of the Proposed Project, and Table 5.21-2, Cumulative Projects 1 to 5 Miles from the Proposed Project~~. The approximate locations of all the projects are shown on Figure 5.21-1, Planned and Proposed Projects within 5 Miles of the Proposed Project. (Figure 5.21-1 is found at the end of this section.)

Table 5.21-1. Cumulative Projects within 5 Miles of the Proposed Project

Project ID No. / Project Name	Project Description	Location	Proximity to Proposed Project (miles)	Nearest Proposed Project Component	Status	Anticipated Construction Schedule	Map
Tapestry Specific Plan	Construction of distinctive villages that include an approximately 15,000 mixed-density residential units; mixed-use town centers, park land; an extensive trail system; elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools; public and civic facilities; a wastewater reclamation plant and lift stations; roadways, drainage facilities, domestic and recycled water infrastructure, and other associated infrastructure; and preservation of open space. Development would be phased over a number of years.	City of Hesperia, California	<0.1	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line	Final EIR prepared in July 2015;	Begin 2019 Multi-year	1 of 8
TTE 16-00008	Construction of 12 single-family lots on approximately 7.5 acres.	City of Hesperia	0.7	Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line	Extension approved in June 2016	—	1 of 8
TTE 16-00003	Construction of a 103-lot, single-family, residential subdivision in four phases on approximately 55.2 acres.	City of Hesperia, California	0.8	Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line	Third extension approved in March 2016	—	1 of 8
Ranchero Road Corridor Project – Phases I, II, III	Phase I – Construction of a grade separation at the BNSF Railway where Ranchero Road terminates at either side of the railroad right-of-way (ROW). Phase II – Construction of a freeway interchange at Ranchero Road and Interstate (I-) 15. Environmental clearance was received in the spring of 2010. Phase III – A future joint project with San Bernardino County. The project goal is to widen Ranchero Road from two to four lanes between I-15 and the Phase I undercrossing.	San Bernardino County, California	1.0	Lugo Substation	Unfunded	—	1 of 8
Ranchero Road Improvement: Seventh Avenue to Mariposa Road	Various improvements to Ranchero Road, including the Ranchero Road Underpass, a new interchange at I-15, and the widening of Ranchero Road between the two.	City of Hesperia, California	1.5	Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line	Design	—	1 of 8
Hesperia Gateway Center/ CUP16-00002	Construction of an approximately 3,645-sq.ft. mini-mart with 12 fuel dispensers and an automated 968-sq.ft. car wash; or a drive-thru restaurant.	City of Hesperia, California	2.7	Lugo Substation	Under construction	2016–Unknown	1 of 8

Table 5.21-1. Cumulative Projects within 5 Miles of the Proposed Project

Project ID No. / Project Name	Project Description	Location	Proximity to Proposed Project (miles)	Nearest Proposed Project Component	Status	Anticipated Construction Schedule	Map
TTE16-0009	Development of 37 single-family residential lots on approximately 10 acres.	City of Hesperia, California	2.9	Lugo Substation	Third extension approved in June 2016	—	1 of 8
SPRE16-00003	Construction of an approximately 5,006-sq.ft. building expansion of an existing church on approximately 2.7 acres.	City of Hesperia, California	3.0	Lugo Substation	Extension approved in June 2016	—	1 of 8
P201100238/ WIND	Construction of an accessory wind energy system for an approximately 100-foot wind-generating tower on a portion of approximately 2.3 acres.	City of Hesperia, California	3.0	Lugo Substation	—	—	1 of 8
Love's Travel Center Project	Development of a travel center on approximately 10.6 acres with 12,271 square feet of commercial uses, including a country store, two fast food restaurants, and a vehicle service/tire care center.	City of Hesperia, California	3.0	Lugo Substation	Final EIR completed in April 2015	—	1 of 8
TTE 16-00005	Construction of 20 single-family residential lots on approximately 5 acres.	City of Hesperia, California	3.2	Lugo Substation	Extension approved in May 2016	—	1 of 8
TTE16-00004	Construction of nine single-family residential lots on approximately 2.5 acres.	City of Hesperia, California	3.2	Lugo Substation	Extension approved in May 2016	—	1 of 8
SPRE15-00007	Construction of a two-story, 84-unit apartment complex on approximately 5.6 acres.	City of Hesperia, California	3.3	Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line	Seventh extension approved in January 2016	—	1 of 8
TTE16-00006	Construction of 17 single-family residential lots on approximately 5.0 acres.	City of Hesperia, California	3.3	Lugo Substation	Extension approved in May 2016	—	1 of 8
TTE16-00010	Construction of 100 single-family residential lots on approximately 25 acres.	City of Hesperia, California	3.3	Lugo Substation	Second extension approved in June 2016	—	1 of 8
P201100308/ WIND	Construction of an accessory wind energy system for an approximately 80-foot wind-generating tower with an overall height of 93.5 feet on approximately 1.9 acres.	San Bernardino County, California	3.4	Lugo Substation	—	—	1 of 8
Deep Creek Project	Development of 202 residential lots on approximately 249 acres.	San Bernardino County, California	3.5	Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line	Environmental review	—	1 of 8

Table 5.21-1. Cumulative Projects within 5 Miles of the Proposed Project

Project ID No. / Project Name	Project Description	Location	Proximity to Proposed Project (miles)	Nearest Proposed Project Component	Status	Anticipated Construction Schedule	Map
SPR 16-00002	Construction of a four-story, 98-room hotel and a four-story, 110-room hotel on approximately 5 acres.	San Bernardino County, California	3.9	Lugo Substation	Approved in March 2016	—	1 of 8
TT15-00003	Construction of a two-story, 84-unit senior condominium development; a two-story, 131-unit senior assisted living facility; a two-story, 300-person adult day care center; a spa and wellness center; medical offices; other senior-oriented retail uses; and an approximately 4,000-sq.ft. commercial building in four phases on approximately 10 acres.	City of Hesperia, California	4.1	Lugo Substation	Approved in July 2016	—	1 of 8
CUP15-00007	Construction of a retail development comprised of an approximately 18,600-sq.ft. Aldi Market, an 11,700-sq.ft. Les Schwab Tire building, a 10,000-sq.ft. retail building, a 7,000-sq.ft. retail building, and a 3,000-sq.ft. drive-thru restaurant on approximately 7.4 acres.	City of Hesperia, California	4.1	Lugo Substation	Approved in January 2016	—	1 of 8
SPRE16-00002	Construction of an approximately 21,400-sq.ft. retail center on approximately 2.5 acres.	City of Hesperia, California	4.3	Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line	Sixth extension approved in May 2016	—	1 of 8
SPRR15-00009	Construction of an approximately 8,450-sq.ft., two-story addition to an existing 8,772-sq.ft. church.	City of Hesperia, California	4.6	Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line	Approved in February 2016	—	1 of 8
TTE15-00002	Creation of 52 single-family lots on approximately 9.4 acres.	City of Hesperia, California	4.6	Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line	Extension approved in January 2016	—	1 of 8
96 Unit Senior Apartment Complex	Construction of a 96-unit senior apartment complex.	City of Hesperia, California	4.8	Lugo Substation	Approved in April 2016	2016–Unknown	1 of 8
Rattlesnake Mountain Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) Trails	Proposal to evaluate adding OHV trails to the San Bernardino National Forest's motorized trail system. New trails would start near Rattlesnake Mountain and travel southeast to Big Pine Flat.	San Bernardino County, California	2.4	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line	Approved; pending funding	—	2 of 8

Table 5.21-1. Cumulative Projects within 5 Miles of the Proposed Project

Project ID No. / Project Name	Project Description	Location	Proximity to Proposed Project (miles)	Nearest Proposed Project Component	Status	Anticipated Construction Schedule	Map
Clean Focus Apply Valley East	Construction of a 3 MW, PV, solar-powered electricity-generating facility on approximately 23 acres.	San Bernardino County, California	4.1	Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line	Environmental review	—	2 of 8
Dynamic Development Company, LLC	Constriction of an approximately 9,026-sq.ft. general retail building on approximately 1.8 acres.	San Bernardino County, California	4.2	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line	Environmental review	—	2 of 8
High Desert Corridor	Development of a multipurpose corridor that could connect Antelope Valley in Los Angeles County with Victor Valley in San Bernardino County.	San Bernardino County, California	4.3	Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line	Final EIR completed in June 2016	—	2 of 8
Ord Mtn Solar and Calcite Substation Project	Construction of Ord Mountain Solar Project and Calcite Substation, connecting to SCE's existing Lugo-Pisgah No. 1 220 kV Transmission Line.	Community of Lucerne Valley, California	<0.1	Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line & Barstow Repeater	Draft EIR published	—	3 of 8
Sienna Solar Project	Construction and operation of a 300 MW PV solar energy facility on approximately 990 acres in the community of Lucerne Valley.	Located on Lucerne Dry Lake bed; and the northwest corner of SR-247 and Granite Road in San Bernardino County	2.2	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line	Under review	—	3 of 8
Hacienda at Fairview Valley Specific Plan	Specific plan for a master planned community, including development of 3,114 residential units; approximately 15 acres of commercial space; and approximately 336 acres of parks, equestrian and open space on 1,557 acres.	San Bernardino County, California	3.9	Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line	Environmental review	—	3 of 8
P201100112/ PREAPPDR	Development of a 10 MW, PV, solar-powered electricity-generating facility on approximately 80 acres; and a 20 MW, PV, solar-powered electricity-generating facility on approximately 128 acres.	San Bernardino County, California	4.2	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line	—	—	3 of 8
Southland Business and Industrial Park	Construction of an industrial park within the Southland proposed master plan development on over 400 acres.	Clark County, Nevada	3.5	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line	—	—	5 of 8

Table 5.21-1. Cumulative Projects within 5 Miles of the Proposed Project

Project ID No. / Project Name	Project Description	Location	Proximity to Proposed Project (miles)	Nearest Proposed Project Component	Status	Anticipated Construction Schedule	Map
UC-0337-15 Myers, Veda C., et al.	Expansion of an existing electrical substation and increase of structure height on a portion of the approximately 6.1-acre project site.	Community of Searchlight, Nevada	0.2	Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line	Approved by the Searchlight Town Advisory Board with staff conditions in September 2015	—	6 of 8
UC-0659-12 (ET-0066-16) Nevada Milling and Mining LLC, et al.	Construction of a mining operation and all accessory uses, including a modular building; hillside and foothills development in conjunction with mining operation on approximately 88.0 acres.	Community of Searchlight, Nevada	0.8	Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line	On hold	—	6 of 8
Searchlight Cottonwood Cove Road	Construction of approximately 0.8 miles of a multi-use trail along Cottonwood Cove Road to increase bicycle/pedestrian safety and enhance multi-modal transportation options	Clark County, Nevada	1.1	Eldorado-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line	Unfunded	2017–Unknown	6 of 8
Harry Allen to Eldorado 500 kV Transmission Line Project	Construction of a new 500 kV transmission line between Harry Allen Substation and Eldorado Substation in Clark County, Nevada.	Clark County, Nevada	Adjacent	Eldorado Substation	Finding of No Significant Impact in 2015; approved project sponsor selected in 2016	2019-2020	7 of 8
Energy Zone Fencing	Construction of approximately 11 miles of desert tortoise (<i>Gopherus agassizii</i>) fencing, four new desert tortoise guards, and a new desert tortoise culvert to maintain habitat connectivity between the north and south sides of Eldorado Valley Drive.	Clark County, Nevada	0.1	Eldorado Substation	Development of construction bid documents for the Energy Zone Fencing project is on hold	—	7 of 8
Techren Boulder City Solar Project	Construction of a 300 MW, PV, solar-powered, electricity-generating facility; a substation with 34.5 kV to 230 kV step-up transformers, approximately 4 miles of 230 kV transmission line; and associated facilities on approximately 2,200 acres. Both alternatives consist of a transmission line within a designated federal utility corridor that would connect the Techren Boulder City Solar Project to Eldorado Substation and the McCullough Switching Station or the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power's Marketplace Substation.	Clark County, Nevada	1.5	Eldorado Substation	Under construction	2016–Unknown	7 of 8

Table 5.21-1. Cumulative Projects within 5 Miles of the Proposed Project

Project ID No. / Project Name	Project Description	Location	Proximity to Proposed Project (miles)	Nearest Proposed Project Component	Status	Anticipated Construction Schedule	Map
Rehabilitate Five Campsites – Pilot Project for Roadside Campsite Management Plan	Restoration of campgrounds as part of a Roadside Camping Management Plan being developed for the Mojave National Preserve.	Mojave National Preserve in San Bernardino County, California	0.3	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line	Categorical exclusion under the National Environmental Policy Act was issued in June 2013	—	8 of 8
Lugo-Victorville 500 kV Transmission Line Special Protection Scheme (LVRAS) Project	Removal and replacement of existing overhead ground wire with optical ground wire within the existing right-of-way on the SCE Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line between Eldorado Substation in Nevada and Pisgah Substation in California.	Clark County, Nevada to Ludlow, California	Adjacent	Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line	Environmental review	2019	—
Eldorado-Lugo Project	Reconductor and upgrade/replace 25 percent of the structures on the Eldorado-Pisgah No. 1 and No. 2 220 kV lines and the Lugo-Pisgah No. 1 and No. 2 220 kV lines.	San Bernardino and Clark Counties, California and Nevada	Adjacent	Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line	Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity filing TBD	2022–Unknown	—
San Bernardino County Master Stormwater System Maintenance Program	Long-term maintenance of flood control facilities throughout San Bernardino County.	San Bernardino County, California	N/A	—	The San Bernardino County Flood Control District is preparing a Draft EIR as of June 2014	—	—
Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan	Collaboration of the California Energy Commission, California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), BLM, and United States (U.S.) Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to conserve and manage wildlife communities and facilitate permitting of renewable energy projects.	Imperial, Inyo, Kern, Los Angeles, Riverside, San Bernardino, and San Diego Counties, California	N/A	N/A	Final EIR completed; Phase I completed	N/A	—

Table 5.21-1. Cumulative Projects within 5 Miles of the Proposed Project

Project ID No. / Project Name	Project Description	Location	Proximity to Proposed Project (miles)	Nearest Proposed Project Component	Status	Anticipated Construction Schedule	Map
TransWest Express Transmission Project	Development of a regional electric transmission system.	Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, and Nevada	2.1	Eldorado Substation	Approved	2019-2021	—
P201200107/ WIND	Construction of an accessory wind energy system to install an approximately 80-foot tower with an overall height of 93.5 feet on approximately 2.2 acres	San Bernardino County, California	3.8	Eldorado-Lugo 500 kV Transmission Line	—	—	—
Laughlin– Bullhead City Bridge Project	Construction of a new, four-lane bridge over the Colorado River between the community of Laughlin, Nevada and Bullhead City, Arizona.	Clark County, Nevada	3.8	Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line	Design	—	—

Source: SCE, 2018.

The area in which the Proposed Project would occur in San Bernardino and Clark Counties is characterized by mostly undeveloped/open space lands and utilities/infrastructure, with some low-density residential land uses. Past projects within the vicinity of the Proposed Project include solar and other energy facilities, capital improvement projects, transportation facilities, and residential and commercial developments. This section discusses whether the Proposed Project would result in cumulatively considerable significant short-term or long-term environmental impacts when combined with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects in the area. Short-term impacts are generally associated with construction of the Proposed Project, while long-term impacts result from ongoing O&M of the Proposed Project.

For affected resources, the proposed ELM Project has been determined to have no impacts or impacts that are either less than significant or are reduced to less than significant by the implementation of mitigation measures. Where there are no proposed or foreseeable other projects within 5 miles where impacts of other projects would combine with those of the ELM project, there is no opportunity for a cumulative effect to occur.¹ In those cases, the cumulative scenario consists only of the Proposed Project. This situation arises over much of the project area. As shown in Figure 5.21-1 Cumulative Projects within 5 Miles of the Proposed Project, there are extensive areas that have little or no existing development and no proposed or pending projects in the vicinity of the proposed ELM project. In these areas there would be no cumulative impacts.

Resources not considered further because there would be no cumulative impacts include the following:

- Energy – construction equipment is required to meet California efficiency standards for fuel consumption; construction of other projects in the cumulative scenario would have the same requirement. By facilitating increased delivery of energy from renewable sources, the ELM Project would help meet California renewable energy goals.
- Land Use and Planning – the ELM Project would not divide a community or conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.
- Mineral Resources – the ELM Project would not result in the loss of access to mineral resources.
- Public Services – the ELM Project would not increase population; therefore, it would not increase the need for public services or adversely affect public services. During construction, crews would be dispersed and drawn primarily for a commuting labor forces. There would be no in-migration of population that would increase the need for public services.

Cumulative impacts to the following resources could occur as a result of construction and O&M of the ELM Project when considered in conjunction with the other planned and proposed future projects in the cumulative scenario. The geographic area that could be affected by the Proposed Project in combination with other projects varies depending on the type of environmental resource being considered. Cumulative impacts from other projects in conjunction with the Proposed Project were considered for the following resource topics at the distances indicated:

- Aesthetics – to 5 miles
- Agriculture and Forestry Resources – to 1 mile
- Air quality – to 5 miles
- Biological resources – to 5 miles
- Cultural resources – to 1 mile
- Geology and Soils – to 1 mile
- Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions – to 5 miles

¹ While some resources have areas of effect less than 5 miles, to be conservative 5 miles was used for all resources.

- Hazards and Hazardous Materials – to 1 mile
- Hydrology and Water Quality – to 5 miles
- Noise – to 1 mile
- Population and Housing – Countywide
- Recreation – to 1 mile
- Transportation – to 1 mile
- Tribal Cultural Resources – to 1 mile
- Utilities and Service Systems – to 1 mile
- Wildfire – to 1 mile

These resources are discussed further in the subsections that follow.

Aesthetics

Construction. During construction, vehicles, equipment, materials, and workers would be visible at construction sites and yards associated with the Proposed Project. Except for construction of capacitor and repeater sites, all other construction activity would occur for very limited periods at various locations. When construction moves to other locations these visible elements would no longer be present. At the capacitor and repeater sites, construction would be over an extended period. However, there are no other projects identified as being planned in the vicinity of these sites. Short-term visibility of construction would not have a cumulative adverse effect. Construction activity at the capacitor and repeater sites is remote from other identified projects. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not contribute to a cumulative adverse effect during construction.

Operation and Maintenance. The Proposed Project has a number of elements that, once constructed, would result in little to no discernable visual difference when compared to existing conditions. These project elements include replacement of existing OHGW with new OPGW, installation of replacement equipment and tubular steel poles within existing substations, strengthening of selected lattice-steel tower members, and raising of selected towers. The project elements that would result in changes to the visual environment include development of two series capacitor sites and the interconnecting overhead communication line between the sites; development of three fiber optic repeater sites and their connections to local power distribution lines; and installation of marker balls on adjacent catenaries (overhead spans) at three locations.

Because the visual impact of a facility diminishes with distance, the potential area for a cumulative visual impact is less than 5 miles. If visible at all from this distance, a facility would blend with the background and any contrast would be muted by natural haze and the relative apparent size of the facility as seen from afar.

There are no cumulative scenario projects identified near the Kelbaker and Lanfair repeater sites located in the Mojave National Preserve, and the proposed facilities would be adjacent to existing towers within the transmission line right-of-way. Therefore, these facilities would not combine with other projects to result in a cumulatively significant impact. The Barstow Repeater site is approximately 0.4 miles east of Highway 247 (Barstow Road), northeast of the intersection of Haynes Road and Fern Road. If approved, a proposed solar facility, the Ord Mountain Solar and Energy Storage Project, would be located on approximately 484 acres on the east side of Fern Road, immediately north of the Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line and the Barstow Repeater site. The Ord Mountain solar project would connect to the existing Lugh-Pisgah No. 1 220 kV Transmission Line in the transmission ROW by way of the proposed Calcite Substation, which would be located on the west side of Highway 247 adjacent to the transmission line ROW. The substation would require a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity from the CPUC. The Draft

EIR for the Ord Mountain project identified significant visual impacts resulting from a change in the visual environment. The Barstow repeater facility in combination with the solar project could result in a cumulatively significant visual impact. However, the Barstow repeater facility would be of size similar to that of existing residential and outbuildings in the area and would have a relatively low profile. It would be adjacent to existing transmission towers and would not conflict with views of the surrounding mountains. Section 5.1, Aesthetics, requires mitigation AES-1 and AES-2 that would minimize the visual contrast of the project design and treat structure surfaces, further reducing the visual contribution of the Barstow repeater facility. Therefore, it has a less than significant contribution to the cumulative impact on the visual landscape.

The proposed Newberry Springs and Ludlow Series Capacity facility sites are located northeast of Interstate 40, each site approximately 0.6 miles from the highway and approximately 1.25 miles apart. The series capacitor facility sites are near an existing BNSF railway line. Multiple existing transmission lines are in the area, including both 500 kV and 220 kV circuits. The existing Pisgah Substation is in the transmission line ROW between the Interstate and the Newberry Springs site. The series capacitor facilities would be consistent with the industrial visual character of the vicinity, which is characterized by multiple transmission lines, the existing substation, the Interstate, and the railway. There are no other cumulative projects in the vicinity that would contribute additional visual impacts so there would be no cumulative impact at this location.

Marker balls would be installed on 6 spans that are in 3 locations. Two are remote locations with limited access and few viewing opportunities. The third location entails two spans at Highway 18, northwest of Lucerne Valley. There are no cumulative scenario projects in the vicinity of the marker ball installations that would contribute to a cumulative visual impact. The nearest cumulative scenario projects are over 4 miles distant from where the transmission line crosses Highway 18. The 3-foot diameter marker balls would not contribute to a cumulative significant impact at any of the locations.

Agriculture and Forestry Resources

The Barstow Repeater site is the only location where projects in the cumulative scenario would have the potential to combine with agriculture and forestry resource impacts associated with the ELM Project. The Barstow Repeater would occupy approximately 0.13 acres of land zoned for agriculture that is fallow. The Ord Mountain Solar and Calcite Substation project is proposed for lands near the repeater site. The solar and substation facilities would occupy nearly 500 acres of land zoned LV/AG (Lucerne Valley/Agriculture) and LV/AG-40 that also is fallow. Thousands of acres of similar land are found in the vicinity and support similar desert vegetation. The Barstow Repeater would have a very small footprint (0.13 acres) in this landscape and is not on prime agricultural land. It would not have a cumulatively considerable impact on agriculture and forestry resources.

Air Quality

Construction. Vehicle and equipment use would occur along the entire project length and at staging yards. As described in Section 5.3, Air Quality, sources of construction-based air pollution would include fugitive dust and tailpipe emissions. With the implementation of the APMs and MMs described in Section 5.3, Air Quality, the Proposed Project's controlled emissions would be below the applicable MDAQMD and USEPA annual emission thresholds for NO_x, CO, PM₁₀, PM_{2.5}, and other pollutants. As a result, all emissions would be below the applicable thresholds, and impacts would be less than significant. SCE's construction timeline could potentially overlap with construction activities for 3 of the cumulative scenario projects within 1 mile and 1 project within 5 miles. In addition, the construction schedules for nine additional projects within 1 mile and 33 projects within 5 miles are unknown and could potentially overlap with the Proposed

Project, as could additional projects occurring elsewhere within the Mojave Desert Air Basin beyond the 5-mile buffer used of the cumulative impact analysis. However, these and other projects within the project area would be required to comply with local ordinances and regulations concerning air quality during construction, including dust control. Given that ELM Project activities would occur at various times and dispersed locations along the transmission line corridors, the dispersed nature of other projects in the region, and the requirement to comply with applicable air quality regulations, cumulative impacts to air quality are anticipated to be less than significant.

Operation and Maintenance. During O&M, a significant impact may occur if a project is inconsistent with the rules and regulations of the MDAQMD and Clark County DAQ's annual thresholds, or if it induces population growth. Cumulative scenario projects that would contribute to a potential cumulative air quality impact generally include those that would induce population growth, such as the large residential and condominium developments, and commercial development. O&M activities associated with the Proposed Project would be similar to those currently performed for existing facilities, although additional O&M activities associated with the proposed mid-line series capacitors and fiber optic repeater facilities would result in a minor increase in O&M activity overall. As a result, there would be a minor increase in emissions due to O&M activities. The O&M-related emissions would be minor compared to overall emissions from existing vehicle use and work activities in the region. Therefore, O&M for the project would not contribute to a cumulatively considerable impact related to air quality.

Biological Resources

Construction. As discussed in Section 5.4, Biological Resources, the Proposed Project has the potential to temporarily and permanently affect sensitive natural communities, special-status plant and wildlife species, wildlife population and movement patterns, and jurisdictional waters. The project would temporarily disturb approximately 375 acres that would be restored and permanently occupy approximately 7 acres spread over 5 locations (2 series capacitor sites; 3 repeater sites). Cumulative impacts to biological resources could occur as a result of increased ground-disturbing activities by multiple cumulative scenario projects. These cumulative activities could increase the disruption of normal animal breeding, foraging, and migration behavior, the removal of suitable habitat for multiple special-status plant and wildlife species, and the degradation of jurisdictional water features.

Construction of the Proposed Project may occur simultaneously with construction of four of the cumulative scenario projects, including the LVRAS Project (in the Eldorado-Lugo transmission corridor between Eldorado and Pisgah Substations), Harry Allen to Eldorado 500 kV Transmission Line Project (from Boulder City south to Eldorado Substation), and the Ord Mountain Solar Calcite Substation Project. A number of other projects in the cumulative scenario have construction timelines that are unknown and could potentially overlap with the Proposed Project. Several are anticipated to impact some of the same sensitive natural communities, special-status species, or habitats as the Proposed Project.

One sensitive natural community — *Yucca brevifolia* Woodland Alliance (Joshua tree woodland) — occurs in both the Proposed Project area and other project areas within 5 miles, including the Tapestry Specific Plan and the Ranchero Road Corridor Project. These two projects would require the removal of Joshua trees. However, the Proposed Project's impacts to this sensitive natural community would be temporary and it is unlikely that any Joshua trees would need to be removed. The County of San Bernardino and the City of Hesperia require projects within their jurisdictions to obtain a permit for the removal of Joshua trees and to transplant or replace the trees at an appropriate ratio. With the implementation of these measures, cumulative impacts to this natural community would be negligible. The other types of sensitive natural communities present in the Proposed Project area do not overlap with other projects in the 5-mile radius, and cumulative impacts to these communities would not occur.

Special-status plant species could be impacted by the Proposed Project, but no listed threatened or endangered plants would be affected. Construction activities associated with the ELM Project have the potential to result in mortality of special-status plants that occur within temporary construction areas. However, the project disturbance areas are small and impacts to any one plant would be limited to localized work areas. Mitigation measures, which include a revegetation plan, conducting special status plant surveys prior to construction, avoiding occurrences to the extent possible, and implementing additional mitigation (off-site compensation, salvage, and/or horticultural propagation and reintroduction) would be implemented to reduce the impact to special-status plants to less than significant. One or more of the cumulative scenario projects within 5 miles of the Proposed Project, or other projects in the region (e.g., residential development or renewable energy projects) may affect special-status plants, and may lead to a cumulatively significant impact. However, due to the limited extent of any potential ELM Project impacts to special-status plants, and the absence of listed species in the area, any potential special-status plant impacts would not contribute considerably to regional cumulative impacts.

The ELM Project would temporarily impact approximately 45.8 acres and permanently impact 0.2 acres of suitable critical habitat for desert tortoise. Other proposed projects within 5 miles would impact large quantities of desert tortoise habitat (i.e., greater than 400 acres). In addition, the LVRAS Project could impact 95.1 acres of occupied desert tortoise habitat, including 44.7 acres of critical habitat. However, the [ELM project's](#) impacts would be spread across 84 miles of the alignment. Cumulatively, these projects could contribute to habitat fragmentation and degradation, removal of food and shelter resources, changing normal behavior patterns, and attracting predator species such as ravens (*Corvus corax*) and coyotes (*Canis latrans*). However, all of these projects would be subject to permitting and mitigation requirements under the Federal Endangered Species Act and California Endangered Species Act, which are intended to minimize and mitigate for impacts to species, both at the project level and in a regional context. The ELM Project would implement mitigation measures, including pre-activity surveys, monitoring, under vehicle checks, and excavation of desert tortoise burrows, and would restore disturbed land and/or compensate for permanent impacts as required by the USFWS. Other projects would be required to implement similar measures. These measures would reduce the ELM Project's contribution to cumulative impacts. Therefore, cumulative impacts to desert tortoise and its critical habitat are expected to not be cumulatively considerable after the required avoidance, minimization, and compensatory mitigation measures are implemented.

Suitable habitat for other special-status wildlife including American badger (*Taxidea taxus*), banded Gila monster (*Heloderma suspectum cinctum*), Bendire's thrasher (*Toxostoma bendirei*), desert bighorn sheep (*Ovis canadensis nelson*), golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*), Mojave fringe-toed lizard (*Uma scoparia*), pallid bat (*Antrozous pallidus*), and western burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*) would be affected by the ELM Project. There is evidence of the presence of desert bighorn sheep in the Proposed Project area, but the other species were not observed during surveys. Other projects in the cumulative scenario may also impact suitable habitat for one or more of those species. For example, the TransWest Express Transmission Project that terminates north of Eldorado Substation will impact potential habitat for desert bighorn sheep, banded Gila monster, and pallid bat. The Laughlin-Bullhead City Bridge Project will also impact banded Gila monster habitat. The Rattlesnake Mountain OHV Trails Project is expected to impact habitat for pallid San Diego pocket mouse, American badger, and pallid bat. (However, many of the effects of the latter project are expected to be beneficial to the habitat and the impacts were determined to be less than significant by the U.S. Forest Service.) Impacts to these species and their habitat would be reduced or avoided by the ELM Project and other cumulative scenario projects by implementing measures to avoid, minimize, and/or compensate for impacts to the individual species and their habitats. One or more of the cumulative scenario projects within 5 miles of the Proposed Project, or other projects in the region (e.g., residential development or renewable energy projects) may affect these species, and may lead to a cum-

ulatively significant impact. However, due to the limited extent of any potential ELM Project impacts to special-status wildlife, and by incorporating Mitigation Measures BR-1 through BR-13, the proposed Project these impacts would not contribute considerably to regional cumulative impacts.

Construction of the ELM Project would result in permanent impacts to suitable foraging and nesting habitat for special-status avian species, including Bendire's thrasher (*Toxostoma bendirei*), golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*), and western burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*). Cumulative impacts to these species and others protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act may result from the disturbance or degradation of suitable foraging and nesting habitat within 5 miles of the ELM Project. The Tapestry Specific Plan is proposed to impact golden eagle foraging habitat. However, with the collective implementation of mitigation measures and any required compensatory habitat mitigation, cumulative contribution of the ELM Project to impacts on avian species are anticipated to not be cumulatively considerable.

The proposed facilities would be constructed in or adjacent to disturbed areas that are not suitable for use as wildlife migration corridors. The majority of the ELM Project's activities would occur within small, discontinuous areas, and would not create a barrier for terrestrial species that may use the surrounding area as a wildlife corridor. Other large projects within 5 miles, such as the Tapestry Specific Plan, may have effects on wildlife movements. However, the ELM Project would not contribute to the cumulative impact.

Construction of the Proposed Project could result in direct temporary impacts to of water features potentially under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCBs), the CDFW, and Nevada Department of Environmental Protection (NDEP). Other cumulative scenario projects have the potential to impact jurisdictional waters/wetlands and riparian areas, including the Ranchero Road Corridor Project, Hacienda at Fairview Valley Specific Plan, Tapestry Specific Plan, and TransWest Express Transmission Project. Any project impacting jurisdictional water features would obtain the necessary permits from the responsible resource agencies. Implementation of permit conditions would minimize and mitigate for impacts to these resources at the project and watershed levels. Accordingly, cumulative impacts to jurisdictional waters are expected to not be cumulatively considerable.

Operation and Maintenance. Following construction of the Proposed Project, O&M activities would be similar to current practices, with additional O&M activities associated with the proposed mid-line series capacitors and fiber optic repeater facilities. No permanent losses of habitat, special-status species, or jurisdictional waters are expected to occur during O&M activities. The majority of O&M activities would occur in previously disturbed areas. For those activities that may require work in previously undisturbed areas, impacts would be temporary, and disturbed areas would be restored to pre-activity conditions. Similarly, O&M activities associated with other proposed projects are not expected to have a cumulatively considerable impact. Therefore, cumulative impacts are anticipated to not be cumulatively considerable.

Cultural Resources

Construction. There are no projects in the cumulative scenario would combine with impacts from the Proposed Project at the Newberry Springs and Ludlow Series Capacitor sites and the Kelbaker and Lanfair Fiber Optic Repeater sites. Therefore, development of these facilities would not contribute to a cumulatively considerable impact on cultural resources.

Construction activities requiring ground disturbance for the Barstow Repeater facility would potentially disturb subsurface soils and could affect unknown buried cultural deposits or archaeological sites. The same is true of the proposed Ord Mountain Solar Project and Calcite Substation adjacent to the Barstow Repeater site. However, SCE would implement required mitigation measures to address potential effect,

including retaining qualified cultural resources staff, providing cultural resources environmental awareness training, avoiding known cultural resources, and preparing a Cultural Resources Management Plan prior to construction. The Cultural Resources Management Plan has the objectives of management, avoidance, and/or minimization of potential adverse effects on cultural resources. The small size of the Barstow Repeater site (0.13 acres) and the implementation of mitigation measures would result in a less than significant impact and would result in a less than cumulatively considerable impact.

Operation and Maintenance. O&M activities associated with the Proposed Project would be similar to those currently performed for the existing facilities, with additional O&M activities associated with the proposed mid-line series capacitors and fiber optic repeater facilities. O&M of the mid-line series capacitors and fiber optic repeater sites would involve minimal (if any) ground disturbance within previously disturbed areas. Therefore, O&M activities would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a cultural resource, and the Proposed Project would not contribute to a cumulatively considerable impact related to cultural resources.

Geology and Soils

Construction. The potential cumulative impacts that may occur as a result of the Proposed Project in conjunction with other planned and Proposed Projects include threats to human safety and structural integrity, soil erosion or topsoil loss, geologic unit instability, or construction on expansive soils. Construction of the Proposed Project and a majority of the cumulative scenario projects in the vicinity of the Proposed Project would include ground-disturbing activities and could potentially impact soils. Grading at construction sites can result in soil erosion and sedimentation, as well as loss of topsoil. The potential for soil erosion and sedimentation would be minimized through the implementation of Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plans (SWPPPs) and best management practices (BMPs), which are required for all projects that disturb 1 or more acres of soil. All projects would be designed to meet current building code and safety standards and would be required to adhere to regulations that limit developments on steep slopes and in landslide areas, thereby ensuring that the potential for long-term cumulative impacts are less than significant. As a result, the potential for a significant cumulative impact to geology and soils is low and is not expected to be significant.

No fossil localities were identified within the boundaries of the Proposed Project. However, several geologic units designated with a high paleontological sensitivity underlie the Proposed Project area. Therefore, prior to construction of the Proposed Project, SCE would implement mitigation that includes the preparation of a Paleontological Resources Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (PRMMP). The PRMMP would outline procedures for monitoring in areas that contain sensitive paleontological resources. The PRMMP would also include recovery and treatment protocols if sensitive paleontological resources are discovered during ground-disturbing construction activities. Additionally, the planned and proposed projects in the project vicinity that are underlain by geologic rock units/formations with high or very high paleontological sensitivity would be required to implement similar strategies in the event of an unanticipated discovery. Therefore, with the implementation of mitigation measures, a cumulatively considerable impact to paleontological resources is not anticipated.

Operation and Maintenance. Routine operation and maintenance of the Proposed Project would require periodic visits to project facilities for inspection and repair. No ground disturbance would be required. Therefore, operation and maintenance of the Proposed Project would not contribute to a cumulatively considerable impact.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Construction. Construction of the Proposed Project would potentially overlap with construction activities for other projects under the cumulative scenario. A cumulative GHG impact could occur during construction of the Proposed Project and other cumulative scenario projects, as well as other projects located within the greater Mojave Desert Air Basin. The main source of GHG emissions associated with the ELM Project would be fossil fuel combustion in vehicles and equipment used during construction and on-road vehicle travel associated with workers' travel. As discussed in Section 5.7, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, the total of amortized construction emissions and annual operational GHG emissions associated with the Proposed Project would be approximately 8,955.1 tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e) in 2019 and 4,297.0 tons in 2020. Because emissions generated during construction of the Proposed Project are projected to be well below the 100,000-ton CO₂e annual threshold, impacts would be less than significant. SCE would be required to meet the California Air Resources Board's standards, which would minimize the ELM Project's construction activities contribution to GHG emissions. The other cumulative scenario projects would also be required to adhere to the MDAQMD standards and requirements. As a result, the impacts are not anticipated to be cumulatively considerable.

Operation and Maintenance. Fossil fuel combustion during periodic O&M activities would be an additional source of GHG emissions. Periodic maintenance and repair activities would continue to be conducted at a similar frequency and intensity as they are for the existing facilities, with negligible increases associated with the new capacitors and repeaters. Leakage of sulfur hexafluoride from the new circuit breakers upgraded at Eldorado, Lugo, and Mohave Substations would also generate GHG emissions; however, the amortized construction emissions would be below the 100,000-ton CO₂e annual threshold. The ELM Project would not contribute to this cumulative impact because the O&M activities associated with the project would be similar to those currently performed by SCE for existing facilities, with negligible increases associated with the proposed mid-line series capacitors and fiber optic repeaters, and the Proposed Project would not facilitate an increased capacity resulting in future growth. Therefore, the cumulative impacts related to GHG emissions would not be cumulatively considerable.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Construction. Cumulative impacts from hazards and/or hazardous materials can result from the concurrent construction of planned and proposed projects and the ELM Project having increased effects on public or worker safety, including exposure to hazardous materials, increased fire potential, or physical hazards. Cumulative scenario projects have the potential to result in a cumulative impacts related to overall hazards or hazardous materials when combined with the ELM Project. Because each project requires combustion-driven construction equipment, they have the potential to create a temporary impact from accidental releases of diesel and gasoline fuel, hydraulic fluids, and other hazardous liquids. While not anticipated, there is a potential for accidental spills or leaks. This potential hazard would exist during construction when equipment is located on site; however, it is very unlikely that simultaneous spills would occur in the immediate vicinity during a similar timeframe. Large releases of hazardous materials from multiple projects are highly unlikely when projects adhere to federal and State regulations.

The ELM Project and the planned and proposed projects in the cumulative scenario would be required to comply with existing hazardous materials regulations. For the ELM Project, a project-specific Hazardous Materials Management Plan would be prepared and would be implemented throughout construction of the project. Project-specific BMPs, as part of the SWPPPs and implementation of the Worker Environmental Awareness Program (WEAP), would reduce potential impacts from hazardous material incidents from the project to a less-than-significant level. As required, small releases would be contained, cleaned up, and

disposed of properly. Hazardous materials would be disposed of at State-approved, local facilities that accept hazardous waste materials, in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations. The planned and proposed projects in the cumulative scenario are presumed to comply with the same federal and State regulations and include the same or similar measures to mitigate potential impacts from hazardous wastes; therefore, the impacts related to hazardous materials are anticipated not be cumulatively significant.

Construction of the various identified projects may require temporary road or lane closures, which could impact implementation of adopted emergency response plans. Road closures and encroachment into public roadways could increase hazards if the appropriate safety measures (e.g., proper signage, orange cones, and flaggers) are not in place. However, SCE and applicants for the cumulative scenario projects would be required to obtain the encroachment permits from the local jurisdictions and implement traffic control measures accordingly. In addition, under Mitigation Measure T-1 (Construction Traffic Control Plan) SCE would coordinate with local authorities, including emergency responders, regarding appropriate procedures. Therefore, emergency access would not be directly impacted during construction. As a result, the ELM Project's contribution to a cumulative effect on implementation of adopted emergency response plans would be less than significant.

Operation and Maintenance. During O&M, the Proposed Project would continue to operate in a manner that is similar to current conditions, though additional O&M activities associated with the proposed mid-line series capacitors and fiber optic repeater facilities would result in a minor increase in O&M activities. In addition, similar levels of hazardous materials would be stored or used on site. The ELM Project facilities are remote from most other projects. Once constructed, projects in the cumulative scenario are not likely to involve the storage, use, transport, and potential for accidental release of hazardous materials. As a result, the Proposed Project's contribution to a cumulative effect on hazards and hazardous materials would be minor and would not result in a cumulatively considerable impact.

Hydrology and Water Quality

Construction. As described in Section 5.10, Hydrology and Water Quality, the Proposed Project would obtain water from local municipal water sources to use in dust suppression during construction. Because the amount of water to be used for the Proposed Project is minor compared to the amount of water available from the list of potential purveyors, as described in Section 5.19, Utilities and Service Systems, the Proposed Project would not substantially deplete surface or groundwater supplies. With the amount of water that could be provided by the local water purveyors, local water purveyors would have enough resources to prevent a substantial depletion of groundwater supply and recharge. Reclaimed water would also be used for the Proposed Project, if feasible. It is anticipated that approximately 124,200 gallons of water per day would typically be used during construction of the Proposed Project, and approximately 146,000 gallons of water per day would be used during peak construction activities. As discussed in Section 5.10, Hydrology and Water Quality, water use would be primarily for dust control and would use less than 0.06 percent of the existing capacity of municipal water agencies in the project region. The water required by the ELM Project would be used during construction; the need would cease with completion of construction. The Proposed Project would not contribute to a cumulatively considerable depletion of surface or groundwater supplies.

Construction of the Proposed Project would result in a minor increase in the total impervious surfaces within the area. These impervious surfaces would not be contiguous and would not impede groundwater recharge. Pervious surfaces adjacent to these sites would allow rain water and stormwater runoff to continue to infiltrate the ground surface, similar to pre-construction conditions. Due to the size of the groundwater basins in relation to the planned and Proposed Project sites and the large surrounding area that is

undeveloped and pervious, the additional impervious surfaces are unlikely to negatively affect groundwater recharge capacity in the vicinity. Therefore, the ELM Project would not contribute to a cumulatively considerable impact related to groundwater recharge.

Projects in the cumulative scenario have the potential to result in a cumulative impact to surface water supply and drainage if constructed concurrently. Pollutants or sediment disturbed during grading or construction could potentially increase the potential for construction-related contaminants to reach surface water or groundwater. However, all projects impacting 1 acre or more would be required to conform to the regulations and policies of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Construction General Permit, which requires the implementation of SWPPPs and BMPs to reduce potential construction-related (and long-term) impacts on hydrology and water quality. Therefore, a cumulative considerable impact to water quality would not occur.

Operation and Maintenance. Once the Proposed Project is constructed, O&M would remain similar to current practices, with negligible increases associated with the proposed mid-line series capacitors and fiber optic repeaters. Surface water and groundwater would not be affected. With the implementation of SWPPPs and BMPs, cumulative impacts to water resources from other projects would be less than significant, and operation and maintenance of the ELM Project would not contribute to a cumulative impact.

Noise

Construction. Noise attenuates with distance; however, the simultaneous construction of multiple projects could result in a cumulative impact to overall noise levels in the vicinity of where projects are adjacent or nearby. The only ELM Project location where this is a possibility is at the Barstow Repeater site, should the proposed Ord Mountain Solar and Calcite Substation project be approved and be under construction at the same time as the ELM project. The Barstow Repeater is a small facility and would not have a protracted construction schedule. The only significant noise generation is anticipated to occur during site preparation, including grading. Construction activity is generally limited to the daytime hours specified in the local municipal codes to reduce and control potential noise impacts on sensitive receptors. A temporary noise impact during construction is not anticipated to be cumulatively considerable.

Operation and Maintenance. ELM Project facilities would be unmanned and would not have noise generating equipment (except for emergency generators at repeater sites). Maintenance and inspections visits would be infrequent. Noise from the operation of the transmission lines would be substantially similar under the project as compared to existing conditions, thus O&M of the ELM Project would not contribute to a cumulatively significant noise impact.

Population and Housing

Construction. The Proposed Project will draw its construction work force from the region, including San Bernardino and Clark County and their incorporated cities, as well as from nearby Riverside, Orange, and Los Angeles Counties. Because of the relatively short construction period and the dispersed location of work sites, it is anticipated that few workers would relocate, thereby increasing population locally and increasing housing demand. The same is true for projects in the cumulative scenario. Construction workers typically travel throughout a region to job locations. The Proposed Project would neither eliminate nor create any housing. Should some workers choose to relocate temporarily or during the work week, there are sufficient short-stay and rental properties available in western San Bernardino County and in Clark County to accommodate them. The effect on population and housing during construction of the ELM Project and projects in the cumulative scenario are expected to not be cumulatively considerable.

Operation and Maintenance. No new staff are anticipated to be needed to handle O&M of the ELM Project facilities. Therefore, there would be no cumulatively considerable effect from the project.

Recreation

Construction. The Proposed Project would not cause population growth that would result in the increased use of existing parks or require the construction of new recreational facilities. Recreational facilities would not be physically altered by construction of the project, which would be located adjacent to or would cross:

- Rodman Mountains Wilderness
- Kelso Dunes Wilderness
- Bristol Mountains Wilderness
- Dead Mountains Wilderness
- Mojave Trails National Monument
- Mojave National Preserve and Mojave Wilderness
- Lake Mead National Recreation Area
- Bridge Canyon Wilderness
- Big Bend of the Colorado State Recreation Area
- Old Spanish National Historic Trail

There are no other projects in the cumulative scenario in or near these areas. Only the Rehabilitate Five Campsites – Pilot Project for Roadside Campsite Management Plan in the Mojave National Preserve would occur near the project. ELM Project activity in this area would be limited to removing OHGW and replacing it with new OPGW. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not have a cumulative effect on recreation.

Operation and Maintenance. As previously described, O&M activities associated with the Proposed Project would be similar to those currently performed for the existing facilities, with additional O&M activities associated with the proposed mid-line series capacitors and fiber optic repeater facilities. O&M practices would not impact recreational uses or facilities in the area, and O&M would not introduce new employees into the area. Therefore, the project would not contribute to a cumulatively considerable impact related to recreation during O&M.

Transportation

Construction. During construction, cumulative traffic impacts could occur from projects that have overlapping construction timeframes. Construction of the Proposed Project would occur over approximately 1.5 years. The construction of the Proposed Project could overlap the construction timelines of projects in the cumulative scenario. As described in Section 4.17, Transportation, ELM Project-related traffic would be limited to the transport of supplies to and from construction areas and material supply sources, as well as construction crews accessing sites. Crews would be spread out and assigned to several different project components on any given day, which would prevent traffic congestion at any one location. Vehicle access would primarily occur along existing local roads, access roads, and service roads within existing SCE ROWs. The dispersed nature of ELM Project activities and of cumulative scenario project locations mitigate against there being a cumulatively considerable transportation impact.

Temporary lane closures may be necessary in areas such as during OHGW removal and OPGW stringing operations and for locations where limited trenching would occur. These are not locations where other cumulative scenario projects are found. Local and regional roads and highways in the region of the ELM Project typically have unrestricted traffic flows. The level of traffic associated with the project would not alter this condition.

All projects that encroach on roads would be required to acquire permits for the encroachments and submit similar plans to avoid or reduce impacts; Given the free flow of traffic on roads in the vicinity of the ELM Project and the requirement to obtain encroachment permits as needed, the cumulative impact associated with the project is expected to not be considerable.

Operation and Maintenance. O&M activities associated with the Proposed Project would be similar to those currently performed for the existing facilities, with additional O&M activities associated with the proposed mid-line series capacitors and fiber optic repeater facilities. O&M associated with the mid-line series capacitor sites and fiber optic repeater sites would result in a minor increase in vehicle trips per year when compared to existing O&M activities. Based on the limited frequency and duration of O&M activities at the mid-line series capacitor sites and fiber optic repeater sites, a cumulatively considerable contribution to transportation impacts would not result.

Tribal Cultural Resources

Those portions of the Mojave Trails Landscape that overlap with the CEQA Areas of Direct and Indirect Impacts were analyzed for direct and indirect effects. The ELM Project was found to have no direct impacts to the Mojave Trails Landscape with mitigation because it would avoid and protect the resources that contribute to the landscape. Similarly, the ELM Project reviewed the indirect impacts of the project on the Mojave Trails Landscape and concluded that the contribution of the project would be minor because similar industrial infrastructure already exists within the viewshed of the Landscape and the resource would not be subject to impacts from the ELM Project. Because the ELM Project would not contribute to direct or indirect impacts on the Mojave Trails Landscape, it would not have impacts that could combine with the cumulative impacts to this landscape. The cumulative effect of the ELM Project in combination with effects from projects in the cumulative scenario are similar to those discussed for Cultural Resources (see previous discussion). The cumulative impacts would be less than considerable.

Utilities and Service Systems

Construction. No extensions of sewer or water lines would be required to serve the Proposed Project, and no new or expanded water or wastewater treatment facilities would be needed. Therefore, the project would have no cumulative effect on these facilities.

Construction of the Proposed Project would typically require approximately 124,200 gallons of water per day, and approximately 146,000 gallons of water per day would be used during peak construction activities; water service purveyors have adequate water available for the Proposed Project. However, all of the applicants for the ELM Project and cumulative scenario projects that may overlap construction period would need to coordinate with water providers to ensure the providers can accommodate the demand during construction. Because the ELM Project's relatively low water demand is required only during the construction phase, the impact on a water purveyor's long-term water supply would be insignificant. Therefore, the Proposed Project's contribution to a cumulative water supply impact would not be considerable.

The Proposed Project would generate limited quantities of construction waste — approximately 10,330 cubic yards. The amount of daily construction waste for the cumulative scenario projects is unknown; however, construction debris would be generated by these projects as well. In total, the landfills near the Proposed Project and cumulative scenario projects have a combined capacity to accept approximately 235 million cubic yards of additional waste. Solid waste generated the projects would decrease the capacity of the landfills; however, the amount would not be enough to significantly affect the capacity of the landfills. In addition, SCE would reuse and recycle materials to the extent possible to reduce landfill waste. Any impacts on landfills caused by the construction and operation of the planned and proposed

projects would also be required to conform to the regulations and policies of the local jurisdictions. As a result, the cumulative impact would not be considerable.

Operation and Maintenance. O&M of the Proposed Project would use limited amounts of water and generate limited amounts of waste, which would not exceed the capacity of utilities, service systems, and landfills. Where there is potential for the Proposed Project to induce or increase the potential for electric shock or corrosion of steel pipes, SCE would conduct technical studies to identify solutions and ensure they are implemented. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not contribute to a cumulatively considerable impact related to the capacity of utilities and service systems during O&M.

Wildfire

The ELM Project would include work in high or very high fire hazard zones. These zones are in the mountainous terrain between Lugo Substation and a location approximately 6 miles west of Lucerne Valley, where the mountains give way to a flat valley floor. The work in this area would consist of replacing an OHGW with a new OPGW on the Lugo-Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line. This would require modifying tower peaks on 3 towers (M5-T4, M12-T2, and M15-T3) and modifying the body of one tower (M15-T3) to support the OPGW. Clearance discrepancies between overhead 500 kV conductor and the ground or another electric line would be addressed as well. On the Lugo-Mohave Transmission Line, approximately 3.5 feet of concrete below the conductor span between two towers (M4-T2 and M4-T3) would be removed and a distribution line (between towers M8-T1 and M8-T2) would be reframed and lowered. On the Eldorado-Lugo Transmission Line, one tower (M14-T4) would be raised.

The only project in the cumulative scenario in this region of wildfire hazard is the Tapestry Specific Plan. The nearly 10,000-acre project will include nearly 15,000 residential units, schools, public facilities, parks, town centers, conservation areas, and open space and would be developed over a number of years, with construction planned to begin in 2019. The project includes a Fire Protection Plan, and vegetation that contributes to fire hazards would be removed during development and replaced with approved vegetation.

Construction of the Tapestry project would largely occur after the ELM Project is complete. The construction activity associated with the ELM Project would not impair emergency evacuation routes, exacerbate fire risk, or expose people or structures to significant risks. Operation and maintenance of the transmission lines would be similar to current practice and would not increase wildfire risk. Therefore, the project would not have a cumulatively considerable impact to wildfire.

c. Does the project have environmental effects, which would cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED. Adverse effects on humans from construction of the Proposed Project could result from persistent excessive noise, degraded air quality, and hazards (such as soil or water contamination, hazardous material spills, unexploded ordinance, structural failure due to damage from floods and earthquakes, and shock from ungrounded metallic objects near power lines).

Noise. The project could cause substantial adverse effects on humans during nighttime construction, if the noise disturbs sleep. As discussed in Section 5.13, Noise, construction-related nighttime noise impacts would be significant if they were persistent and were to occur near residences. Implementation of MM N-1 would reduce the impact to less than significant. As well, there are few residences near the Proposed Project, and any nighttime construction would be of limited duration. Refer to Section 5.12, Noise for the full description of the mitigation.

Air Quality. As discussed in Section 5.3, Air Quality, the project would be required to comply with air district standards, including use of equipment that meets specific emission standards. Dust (particulate matter) has the potential of affect human health. The effects of fugitive dust would be less than significant with mitigation. MM AQ-1 (Avoid Visible Fugitive Dust Emissions) will ensure that dust is minimized. In addition, most construction would be short-term and would occur in locations remote from residences, schools, and other sensitive receptors.

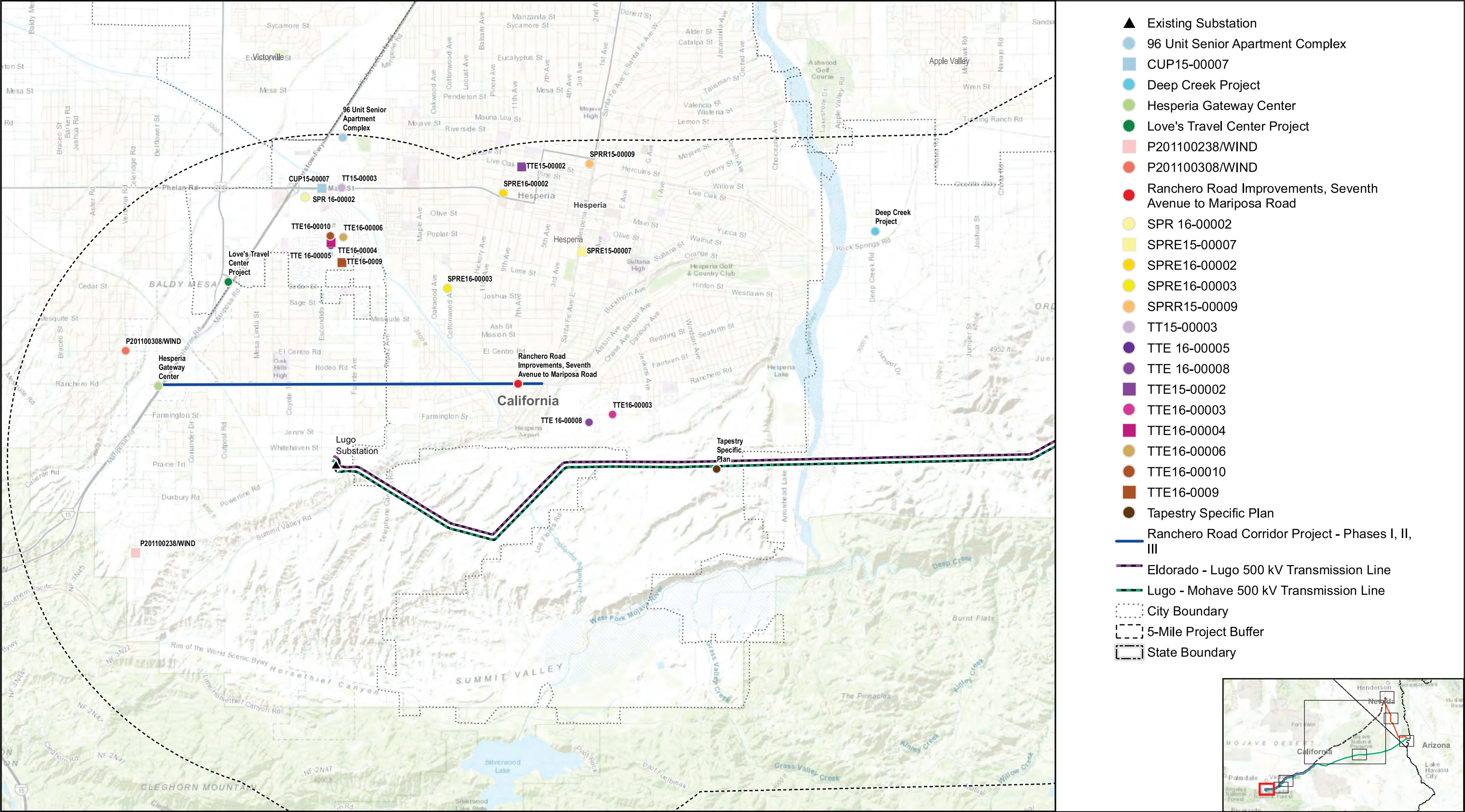
Geology and Soils: As discussed in Section 5.7, Geology and Soils, seismic impacts on workers during construction would be less than significant, and the project would not exacerbate existing seismic conditions.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials. As discussed in Section 5.9, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, hazards impacts would be less than significant. During construction, the project would be required to have spill prevention and clean-up contingency plans. Project-related excavation is limited, but if contaminated soils or groundwater are encountered, they would be handled consistent with applicable state and federal laws, as well as Mitigation Measure HAZ-1 Prepare a Hazardous Materials and Waste Management Plan. Formerly Use Defense Sites (FUDS) are found in the Mojave Desert and have the potential to contain unexploded ordnance (UXO). However, none of the Proposed Project components or work areas are within the boundaries of any of the FUDS sites. Operation and maintenance activities would be comparable to current activities and no additional impacts to human beings would occur. Project impacts would be less than significant.

Flooding. Section 5.10, Hydrology and Water Quality, addresses water-related risks. The project would not develop residences; therefore, no new residences would be constructed in flood-prone areas. The only project features known to be within floodplains are the existing Eldorado and Mohave Substations and portions of the existing transmission lines. The project changes planned at these sites would not create new obstructions to flood flow. If required, any new or replacement towers could be within unmapped floodplains, but the tower foundations would pose only minor and local obstructions to flow that would not result in adverse impact that could affect human health and safety. The only project area that could be affected by the failure of a levee or dam is where the parallel transmission lines span the Mojave River. However, the only project-related work in this vicinity is the stringing of new OPGW on existing Lugo-Mohave Transmission Line LSTs and the reframing of a 12 kV distribution east of the river to address a clearance discrepancy with the overhead 500 kV lines. There would be no possibility for the project itself to induce a dam breach. This impact is less than significant

Shock. Under Mitigation Measure UT-1 (Provide safety features for induced currents on adjacent metallic objects) SCE would be required to identify metal objects (e.g., fences, metal buildings) in the project area that could be affected by electric current in power lines. This could result in electrical shocks to people and the possibility of electric arcs that could form across small gaps between conductive surfaces. SCE would install the necessary grounding or other appropriate measures to protect the public from hazardous shocks related to operation of the Proposed Project. With implementation of UT-1 impacts would be less than significant.

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Source: SCE, 2018.

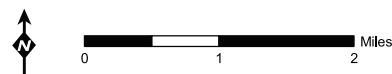


Figure 5.21-1
Cumulative Projects
Within 5 Miles of the Proposed Project
Map 1 of 8

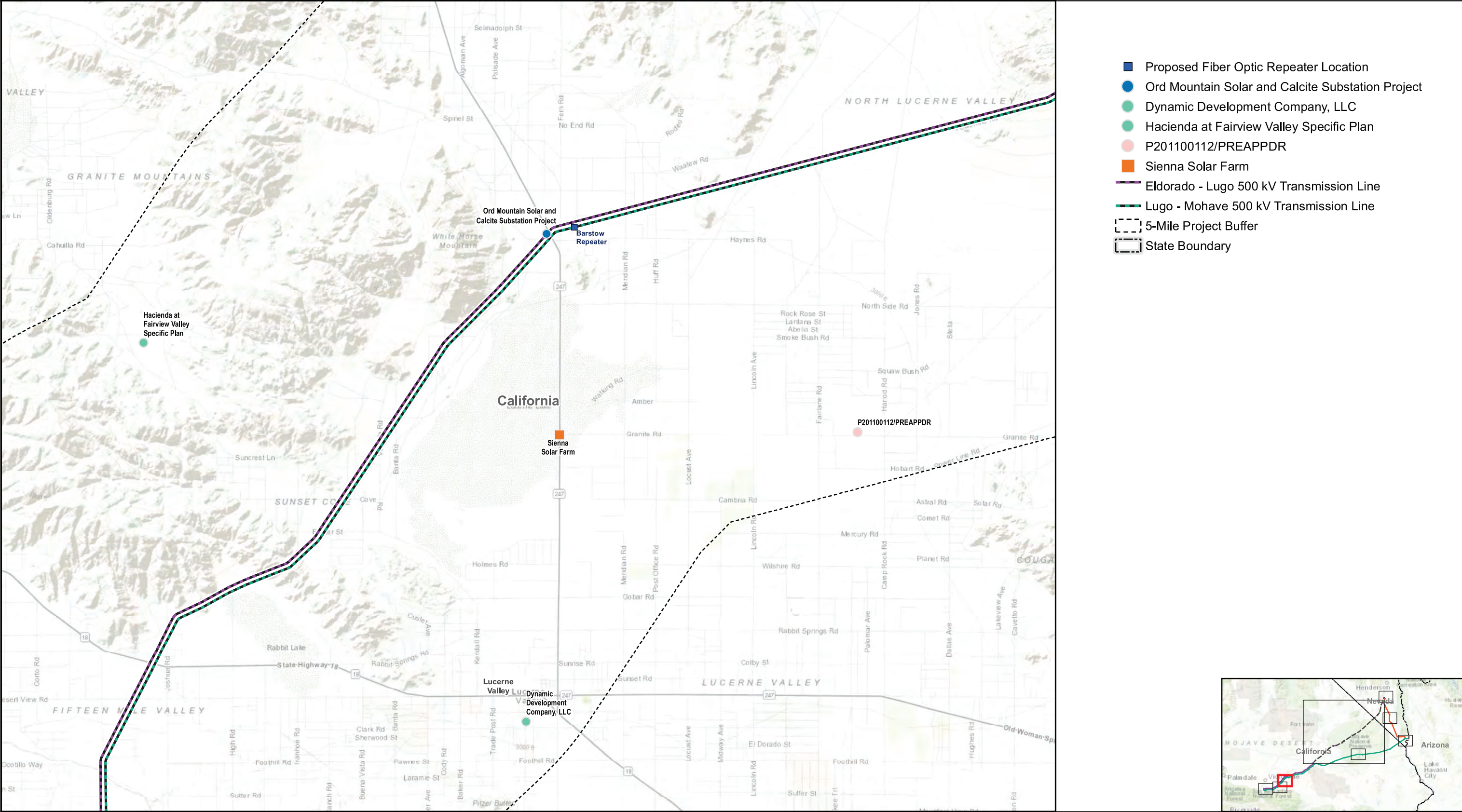
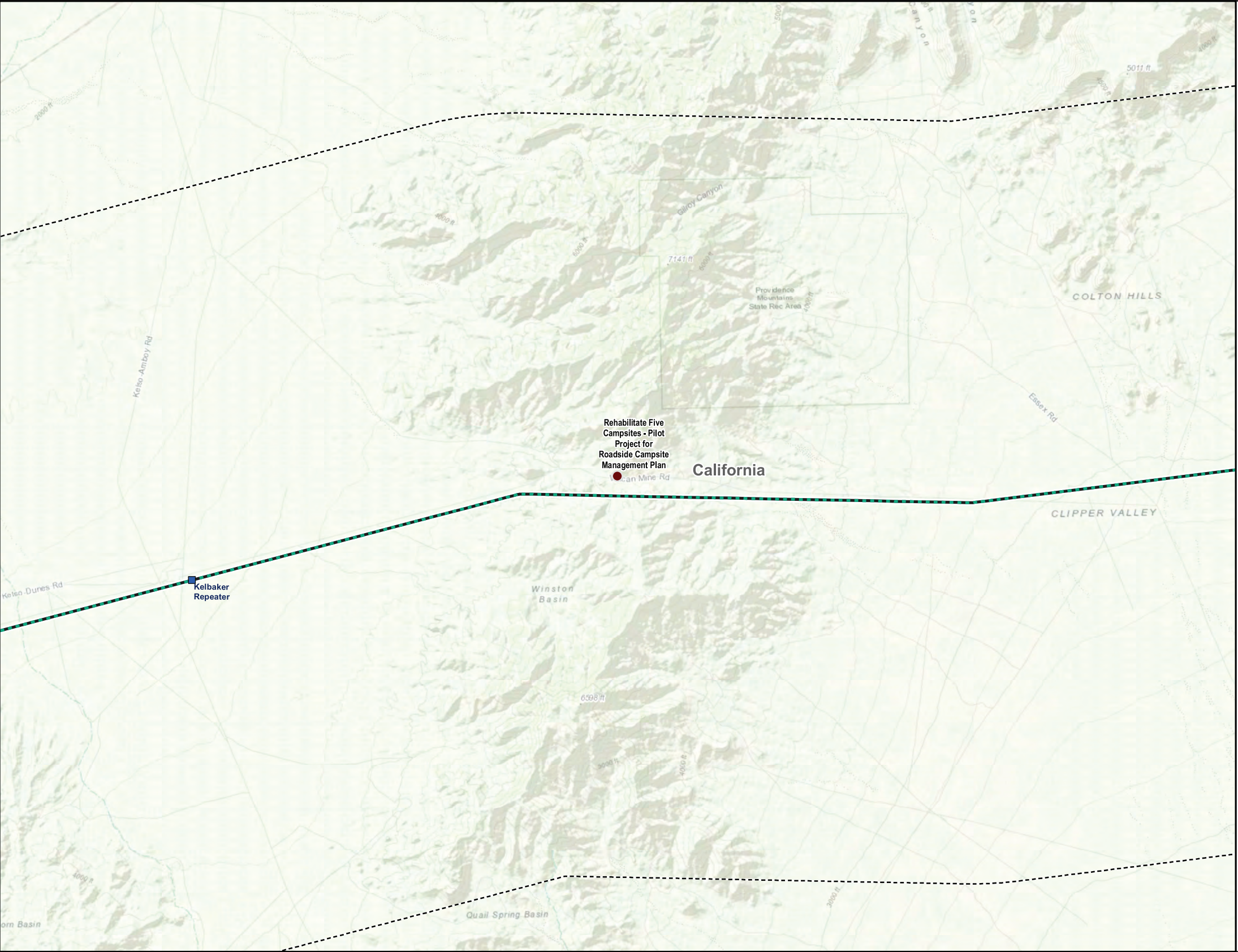
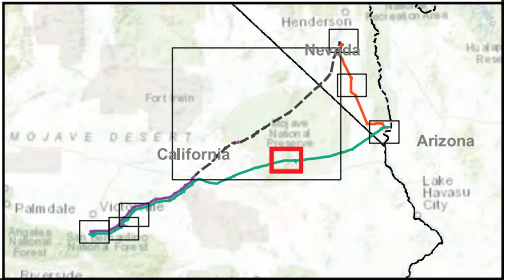


Figure 5.21-1
Cumulative Projects
Within 5 Miles of the Proposed Project
Map 3 of 8



- Proposed Fiber Optic Repeater Location
- Rehabilitate Five Campsites - Pilot Project for Roadside Campsite Management Plan
- Lugo - Mohave 500 kV Transmission Line
- - - 5-Mile Project Buffer
- ▭ State Boundary



Source: SCE, 2018.

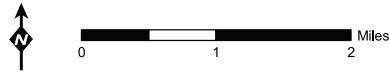
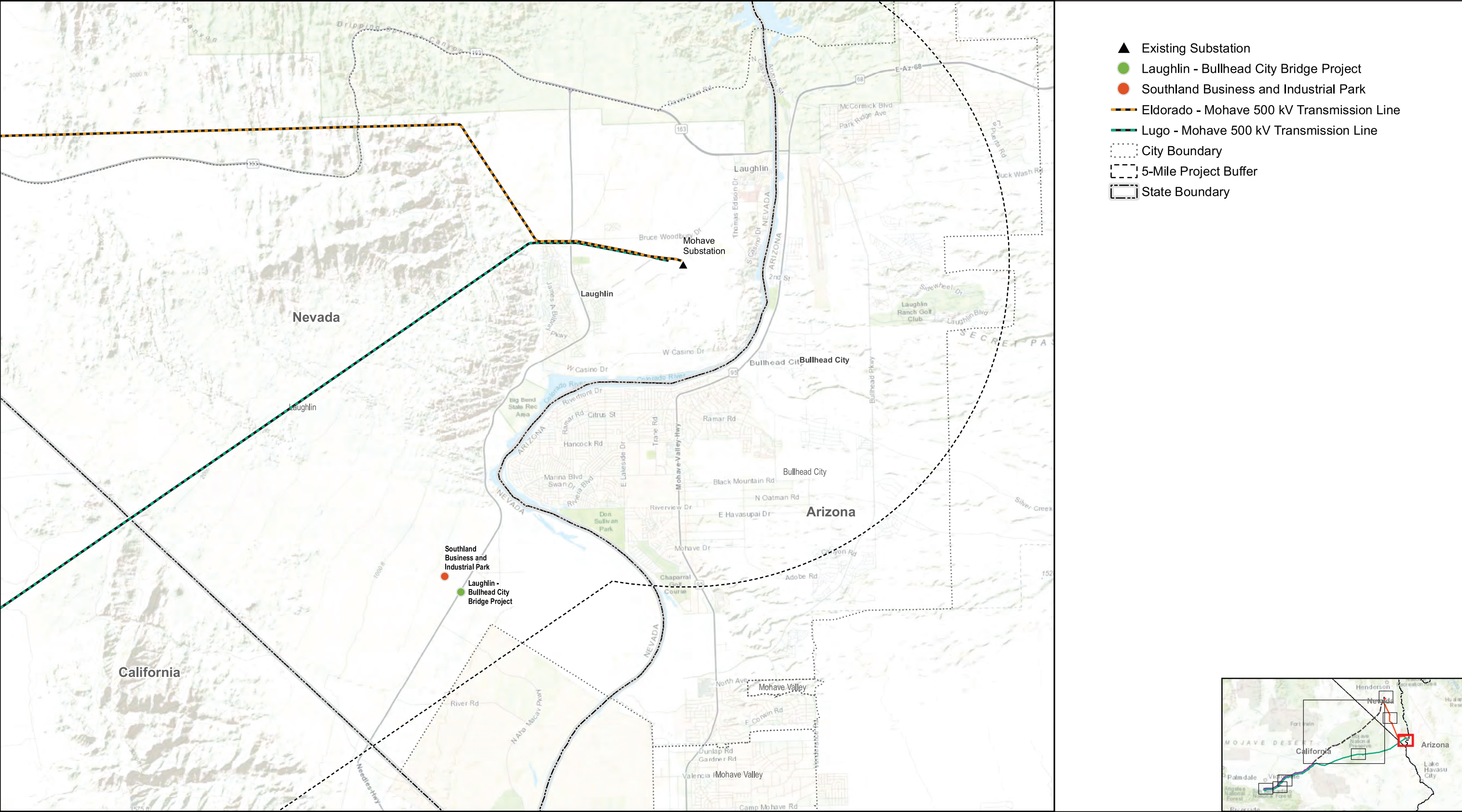


Figure 5.21-1
Cumulative Projects
Within 5 Miles of the Proposed Project
Map 4 of 8



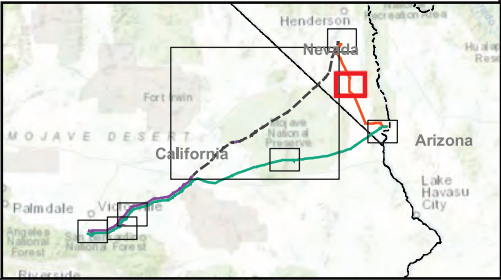
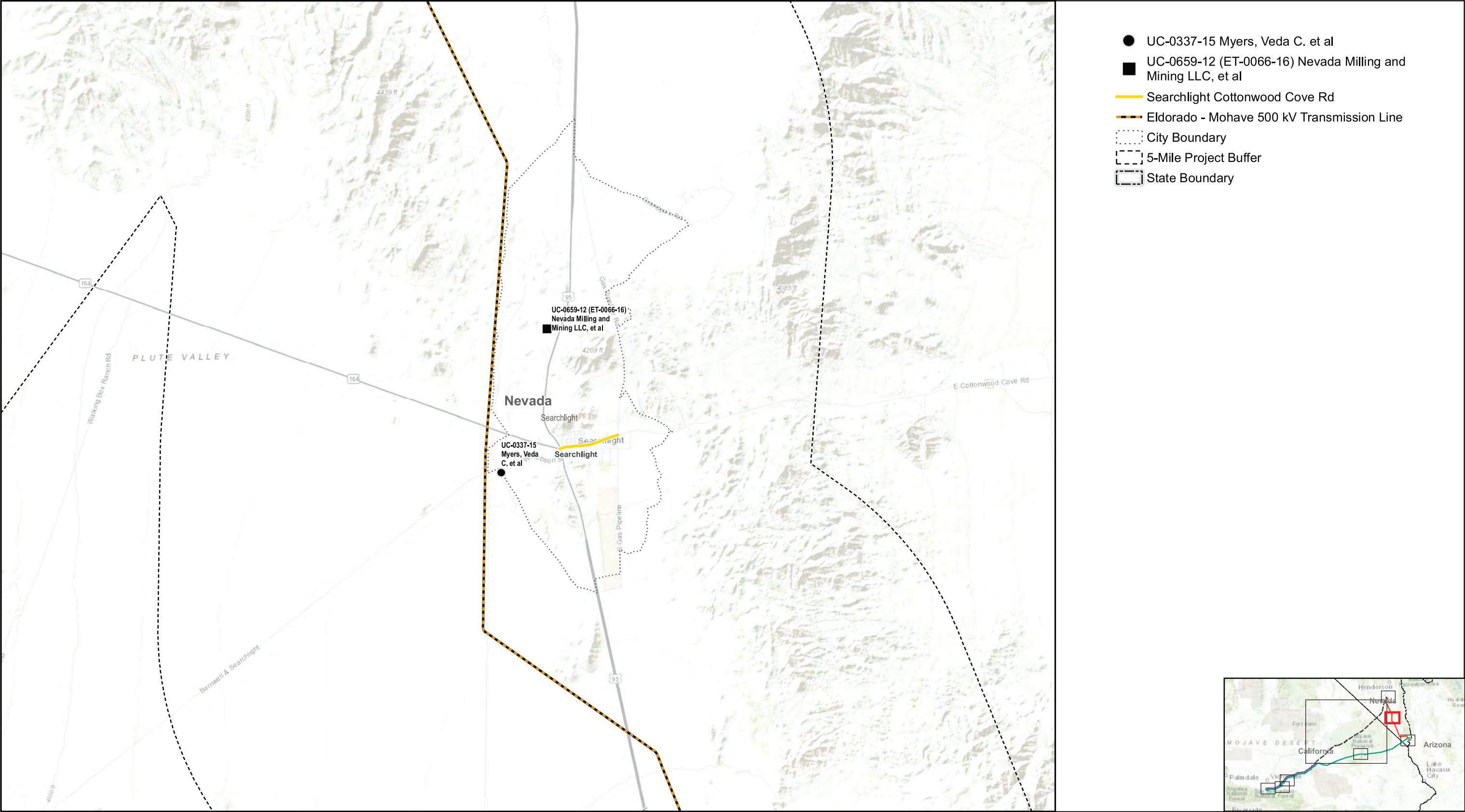
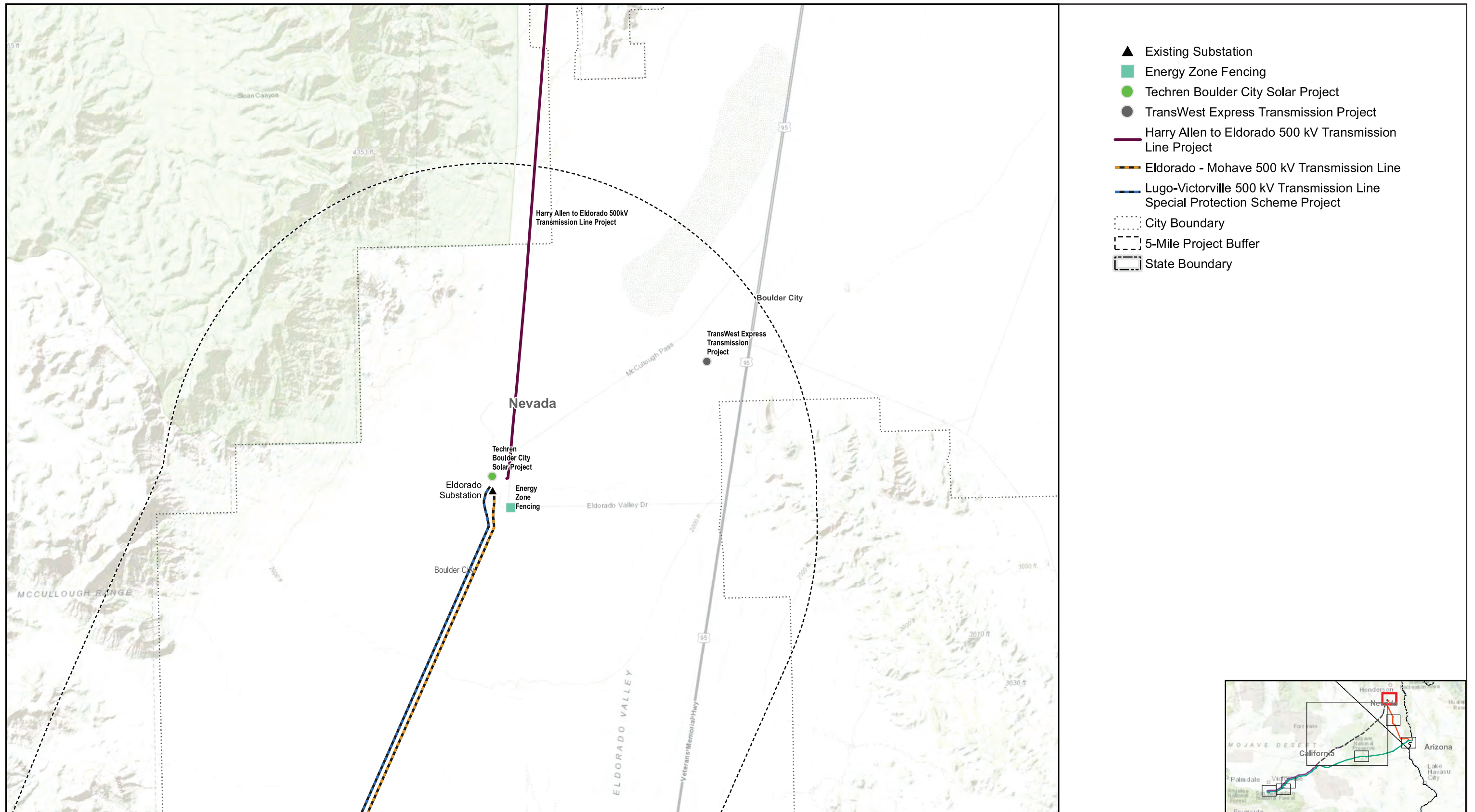


Figure 5.21-1

Cumulative Projects

Within 5 Miles of the Proposed Project

Map 6 of 8



Source: SCE, 2018.

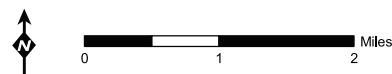


Figure 5.21-1
Cumulative Projects
Within 5 Miles of the Proposed Project
Map 7 of 8

