# C. ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

# C.1 INTRODUCTION

# PART C. ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

## C.1 INTRODUCTION

### C.1.1 INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

Part C of this document examines the environmental consequences associated with the proposed project and the alternatives to the proposed project. Analysis within each issue area includes consideration of the following project components:

- 230kV transmission line from existing Newark Substation to proposed Los Esteros Substation
- Proposed Los Esteros 230kV Substation
- 115kV upgrade along Trimble Road and Montague Expressway.

Part B offers a complete and detailed description of the proposed project and the alternative route segments. In Part C, the proposed project and each of the alternative routes are analyzed in full detail.

### C.1.2 CONTENTS OF PART C

Part C includes analyses of the 11 environmental issue areas listed below:

C.2 Air Quality
C.3 Biological Resources
C.4 Cultural Resources
C.5 Geology and Soils
C.6 Hydrology
C.7 Land Use and Public Recreation
C.8 Noise
C.9 Public Health, Safety, and Nuisance
C.10 Socioeconomics and Public Services
C.11 Transportation and Traffic
C.12 Visual Resources

Within each issue area, the proposed project and alternative projects are discussed in the following order:

- Environmental Baseline and Regulatory Setting for the proposed project
- Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures for the proposed project
- Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures: Alternatives
  - 230kV transmission line alternatives
  - substation site alternatives
  - alternatives to 115kV line upgrade
  - No Project Alternative
- Mitigation Monitoring Program
- References.

By identifying the impacts associated with each issue area and the offsetting mitigation measures, the regulatory agencies and the general public are offered a discussion and full disclosure of the significant environmental impacts of this proposed project and its alternatives.

## C.1.3 ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

### C.1.3.1 Environmental Baseline

In Part C, the analysis within each issue area begins with an examination of the existing physical or baseline setting wherein the proposed project would be placed. The regulatory setting, which includes applicable government rules, regulations, plans, and policies, is also presented in the baseline setting. For the purpose of this document, and pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, the baseline used for the impact analysis reflects the actual conditions at the time of preparation of the report.

### C.1.3.2 Environmental Consequences

The environmental consequences and potential impacts that the proposed project would bring to each issue area are quantified. Mitigation measures for each impact are identified, where feasible, and the residual impact is assessed. The analysis of impacts on the environment and specific resources is based on the Project Description as presented in Part B of this document.

**Significance Criteria.** The impacts identified by applying the assessment methodology were then compared with predetermined, specific significance criteria, and were classified according to significance categories listed in each issue area (see Section C.1.4 for discussion of significance criteria). The cumulative impacts of the project taken together with the related cumulative projects (listed in Section B.8) were assessed next, and mitigation measures for each impact were identified. The focus in the cumulative impact analyses was to identify those project impacts that might not be significant when considered alone, but contribute to a significant impact when viewed in conjunction with future planned projects. Finally, the impacts found to be significant and unavoidable or unmitigable to a non-significant level were identified. The same methodology was applied systematically to each alternative project and alternative route alignment. A comparative analysis of the proposed project and the alternatives is provided in Part D of this document.

**Applicant Proposed Measures.** The Applicant has incorporated a significant number of measures and procedures into the description of the proposed project that would avoid or reduce impacts. In the assessment of the impacts, these measures have been assumed to be part of the proposed project, and are not included as mitigation measures or in the Mitigation Monitoring Programs. The Applicant Proposed Measures that could reduce the potential impacts in an issue area (such as air quality, biology, etc.) are listed in that particular issue area.

**Mitigation Measures.** Once an impact was identified, diligent effort was taken to identify mitigation measures that will reduce the impact to a level that is not significant. Since some reviewing agencies require a demonstration of reduction of impacts to the maximum extent possible, mitigation measures were identified for all classes of impacts (except beneficial impacts). The mitigation measures recommended by this study have been identified in the impact assessment sections and presented in a

Mitigation Monitoring Program at the end of the analysis for each issue area (see also Part F for discussion of the Mitigation Monitoring Program).

### C.1.4 IMPACT SIGNIFICANCE CATEGORIES

While the criteria for determining significant impacts are unique to each issue area, the classification of the impacts was uniformly applied in accordance with the following definitions:

**Class I**: Significant; cannot be mitigated to a level that is not significant
**Class II**: Significant; can be mitigated to a level that is not significant
**Class III**: Adverse, but not significant
**Class IV**: Beneficial impacts.