

INITIAL STUDY ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST FORM

1. Project title:

Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E), Paradise Power Line Reinforcement Project
Application Number A.00-01-026

2. Lead agency name and address:

California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC)
Energy Division
505 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94102

3. Contact person and phone number:

Beth Shipley, Project Manager
Energy Division
(415) 703-1729

4. Project location:

PG&E proposes to upgrade their existing 60kV power line and substation that serves the Town of Paradise and the surrounding communities to a 115kV power line and 115kV transformer at the existing substation site. The primary components of the project include a new double-circuit 115kV power line, approximately 6.1 miles long and a new 115kV transformer and related operating equipment at the existing Paradise Substation to replace the 60kV equipment. The proposed project is located within portions of unincorporated Butte County, and the Town of Paradise. In unincorporated Butte County, the southern end of the proposed route begins at the Table Mountain-Butte 115kV power line. From the existing Table Mountain-Oroville 115kV power line, the proposed power line would head north, paralleling a PG&E gas pipeline, Neal Road, and the Centerville-Table Mountain-Oroville 60kV power line to Skyway. At Skyway, the route turns east and continues along Skyway as it enters the incorporated Town of Paradise. As the route approaches the intersection of Neal Road, it will head northeast along the Paradise Memorial Trailway until it enters the Paradise Substation, approximately 500 feet north of Elliot Road. (See Figures B-1 and B-2)

5. Project sponsor's name and address:

Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E)
245 Market Street
San Francisco, CA 94104
Attn: Steve Stielstra
(415) 973-8229

6. General plan designation:

The proposed power line would be within existing utility easements, Paradise roadway right-of-ways, or on private lands immediately adjacent to existing easements or right-of-ways. Within the Town of Paradise, general plan designations along or adjacent to the proposed route include: Town Residential; Public

Institutional; Recreational; Multi-Family-Residential; Community Service; Town Residential; Rural-Residential; Neighborhood Commercial; and Sphere of Influence. Outside the Town of Paradise (within unincorporated Butte County), general plan designations along the proposed route include: Agricultural Residential; and Grazing and Open Land.

7. Zoning:

Within the town of Paradise, zoning districts along or adjacent to the proposed route include: Rural Residential – ½ acre minimum; Rural Residential – 2/3 acre minimum; Rural Residential – 1 acre minimum; Town Residential – 1/3 acre minimum; Town Residential ½ acre minimum; Multiple Family Residential; Neighborhood Commercial; Community Commercial; Community Facilities; Community Service; Rural Residential – 2/3 acre minimum Planned Development; and Town Residential – 1/3 acre minimum Planned Development (Town of Paradise, 1999). Outside the Town of Paradise (within unincorporated Butte County), zoning along or adjacent to the proposed route includes: Agricultural – Residential, Foothill Recreational 5 acre minimum, Foothill Recreational 10 acre minimum, Foothill Recreational 20 acre minimum, Foothill Recreational 40 acre minimum, Foothill Recreational 160 acre minimum, and Unclassified (BCDDS, 2000).

8. Description of project:

The new 115kV power line would extend between the existing Table Mountain-Butte #3 115kV line (the source of the 115kV power) and the Paradise Substation. It would be approximately 6.1 miles long and the corridor would be up to 85 feet wide. The entire route primarily follows existing utility right-of-way (ROW) corridors or road ROWs. The proposed route is described by the segments below:

- Segment 1: Beginning approximately 2,000 feet east of Neal Road, the new power line will proceed northeast, parallel to an existing PG&E natural gas pipeline ROW to and across Neal Road
- Segment 2: Parallel the west side of Neal Road for approximately 1.5 miles, until it reaches the Centerville-Table Mountain-Oroville 60kV line
- Segment 3: Proceed northwest along the west side of the Centerville-Table Mountain-Oroville line to Skyway
- Segment 4: Follow Skyway, in the same alignment as the existing Paradise Tap #1, to the Paradise Memorial Trailway
- Segment 5: Continue to follow the existing Paradise Tap #1 along the Trailway to the Paradise Substation.

The Proposed Project also involves upgrading the Paradise Substation from a 60kV to a 115kV operating system. The primary substation upgrades would include:

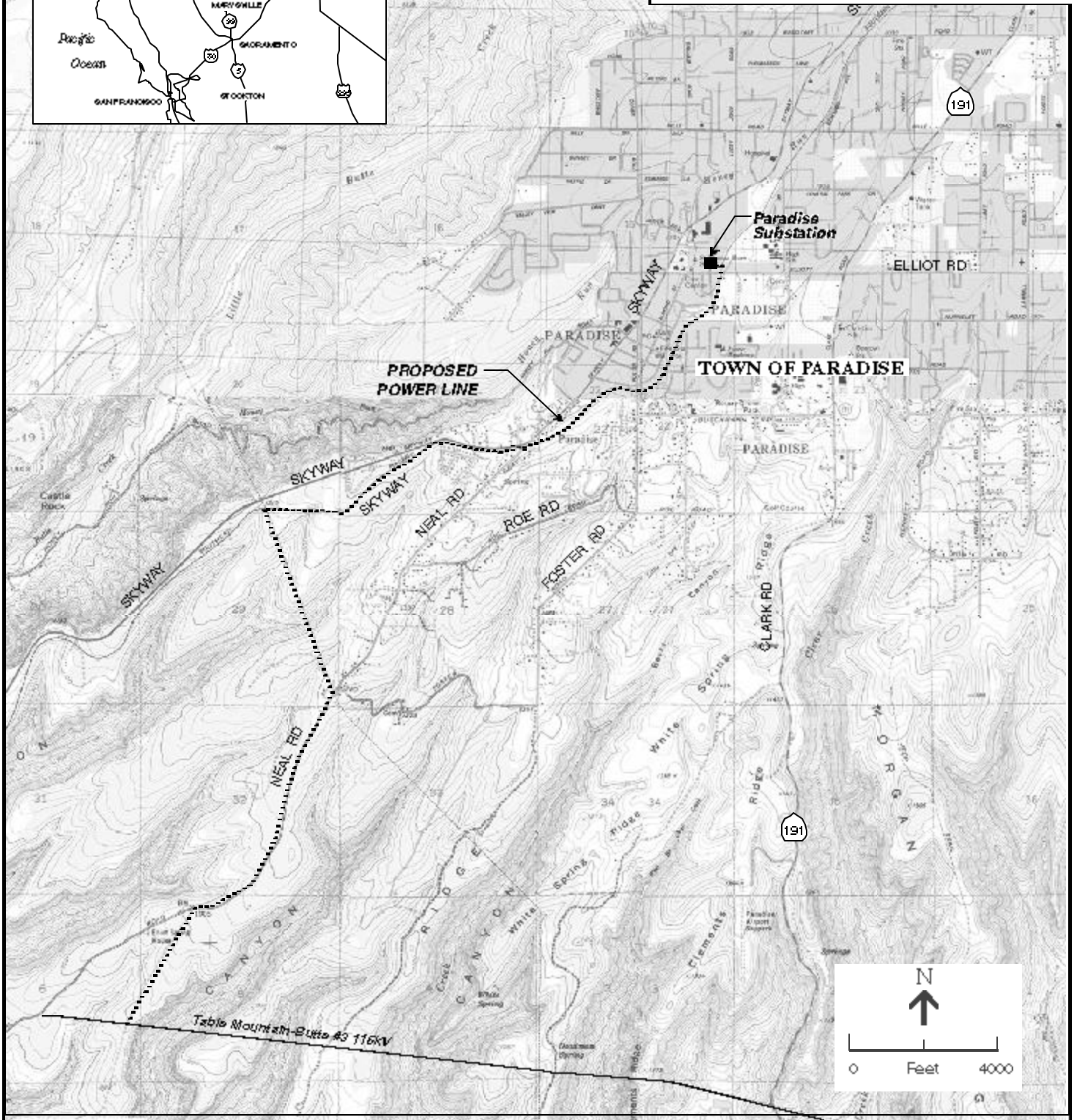
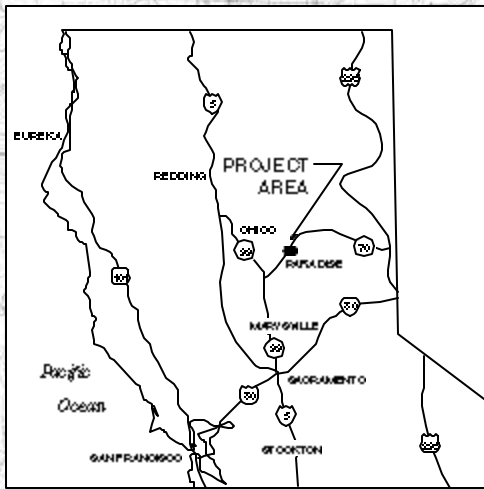
- Replacing the existing 60/12kV, 27 MVA Transformer Bank #1 with a 115/12kV, 45 MVA transformer
- Installing new line and transformer protection equipment, breakers, and switchers
- Installing metering and circuit disconnect switch controls in the existing empty control building.

It should be noted that although this project involves the replacement of one transformer (Bank #1), as part of other substation work, Transformer Bank #2 would be replaced with a 115/60/12 kV transformer (PG&E, 2000). Combined, the two new transformers will contain 11,500 gallons of mineral oil. This is less than the volume of oil now contained in Bank #1 and #2 so the existing spill prevention and control pond and related systems will accommodate all of the oil in the two new transformers in the event of an oil release.

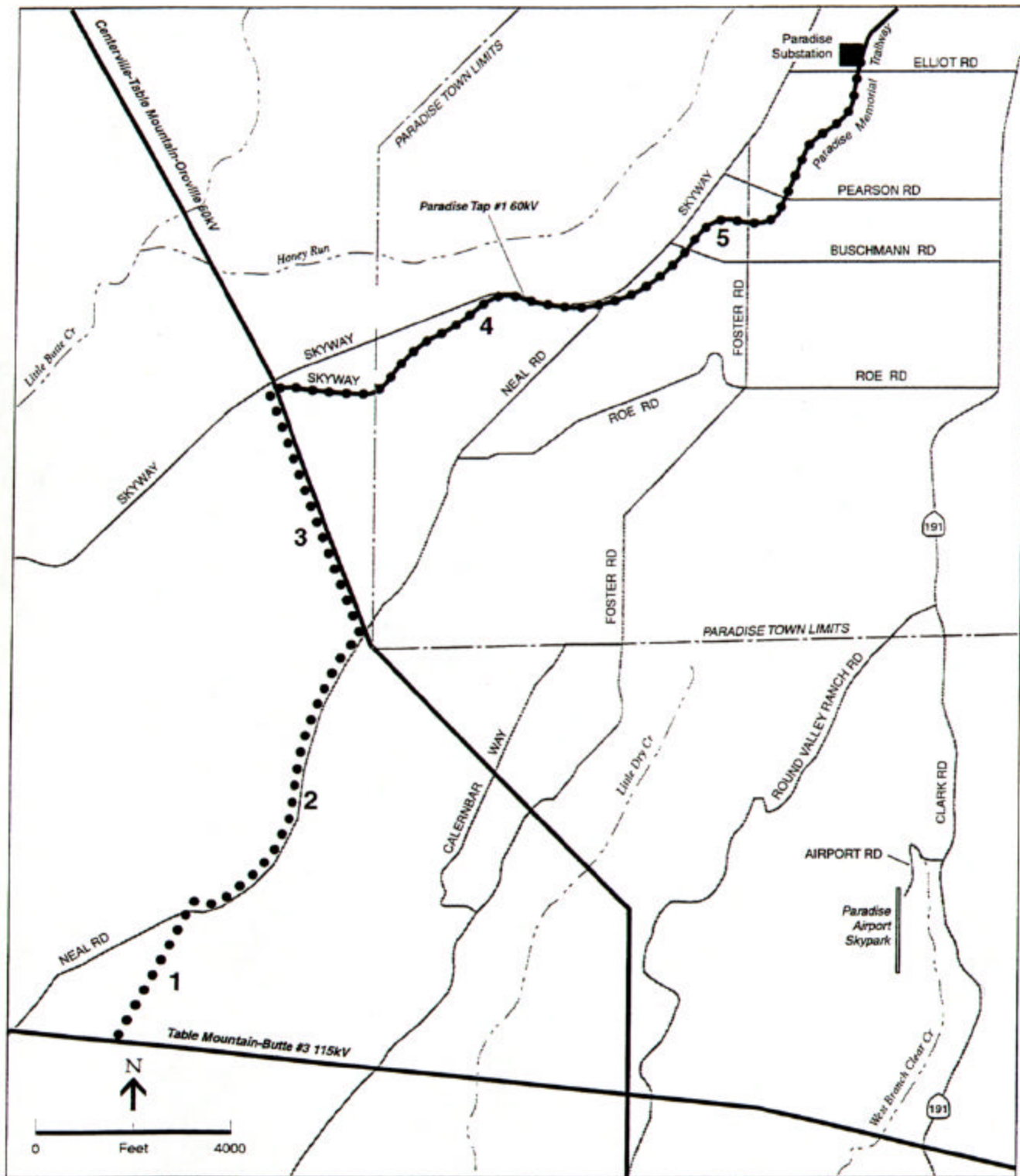
**Paradise Area
Reinforcement Project**

Figure B-1
Project Location

Aspen
Environmental Group



Source: PEA, 2000



- Segment 1 - Table Mountain-Butte #3 115kV to Neal Road (Parallels PG&E gas pipeline right-of-way)
- Segment 2 - Neal Road to Centerville-Table Mountain-Oroville 60kV
- Segment 3 - Parallel Centerville-Table Mountain-Oroville 60kV to Skyway
- Segment 4 - Skyway to Paradise Memorial Trailway, existing 60kV alignment
- Segment 5 - Paradise Memorial Trailway to the Paradise Substation

- Existing Power Line
- Proposed Power Line
- Proposed Power Line will replace the Existing Paradise Tap #1 60kV
- Roads
- - - Creeks

Paradise Area Reinforcement Project

**Figure B-2
Proposed Power Line Route**

Aspen
Environmental Group

Proposed Construction Schedule

Power Line construction and substation upgrades are expected to begin in February 2001, and extend through May 2001. Pole and transformer foundation construction will occur in February and March, and pole setting, conductor stringing, and substation modifications will occur in April and May. Construction activities will therefore occur over a four-month period, following vegetation removal. Vegetation clearing will occur during an approximately four-week period between August 2000 and February 2001 to avoid impacts to nesting birds and raptors. Areas disturbed by project construction will be revegetated immediately after construction.

115kV Double-Circuit Pole Design

The new power line would use tubular steel poles, a majority of which would be approximately 85 to 95 feet tall (Figure B-3). The pole spans would be 600 to 800 feet. Pole height would vary with design requirements (e.g., span lengths, topography, angles in the alignment) and the CPUC's Electric and Magnetic Field (EMF) mitigation requirements. A minimal number of poles would be approximately 100 to 115 feet tall to accommodate spacing required for electrical distribution, telephone, and cable television that are lower on the poles. The poles would turn gray in the open country and brown in forested areas to best blend with the surroundings. Each pole would be set on a reinforced concrete foundation, five to six feet in diameter. Each pole would carry six conductors. Non-specular conductors would be used because this type doesn't reflect light, and has minimal contrast with its surroundings.

Existing Wood Poles

Paradise Tap #1 would be removed because the new 115kV power line would be placed in the same alignment. However, Tap #1 would not be removed all at once. It would be removed in stages during construction of the new power line so that it could be re-energized quickly in case a severe outage occurs along Tap #2 during construction. Up to eight of the existing wood poles along the Paradise Memorial Trailway portion of Tap #1 (just south of Paradise Substation) would remain because they support other power or utility lines (e.g., electrical distribution, telephone, cable television) that are lower on the pole known as underbuild. Conductors with the highest voltage are on top. The wood poles that remain with underbuild would be shortened since they would no longer need to support the 60kV line.

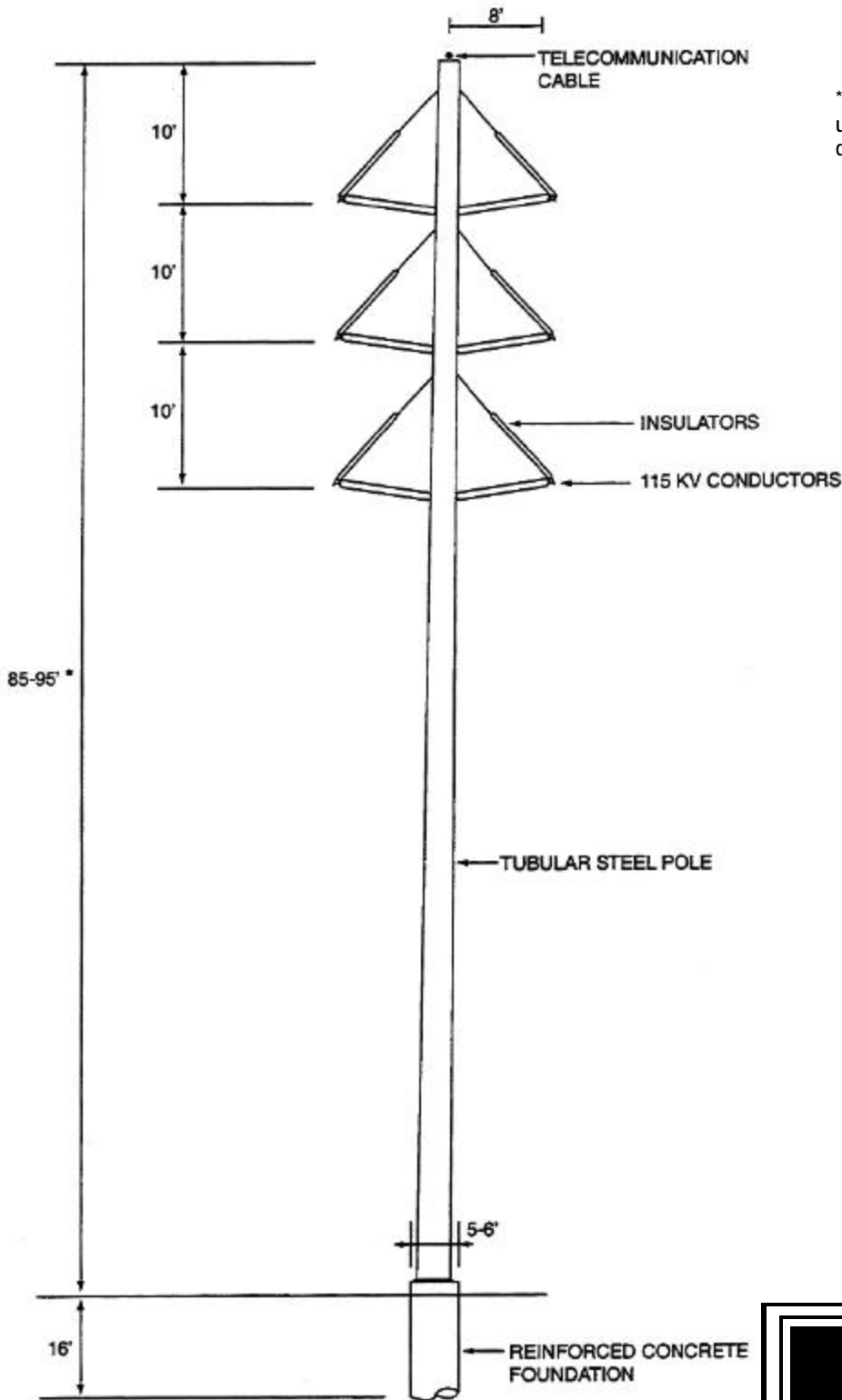
Where possible, the underbuild would be put onto the new 115kV poles. If the underbuild cannot span 600 to 800 feet distances between the new poles, new wood interest poles would be used to support the underbuild. There would likely be few new wood interest poles.

Paradise Tap #2 would not be removed because it may be energized at distribution voltage, allowing it to supplement the area's distribution system.

Electric and Magnetic Fields (EMF)

The CPUC is aware of the public's concerns regarding the potential health effects from exposure to Electric and Magnetic Fields (EMFs) from electric facilities. This issue continues to be controversial in the scientific community and other public organizations researching this issue, given that no resolution or agreement has been reached on whether EMF exposure poses a human health threat or not.

In January of 1991, the CPUC began an investigation into this issue to develop policies and procedures for addressing the potential health effects, if any, of EMFs. As a result of this investigation and extensive input from a number of stakeholders representing various diverse interests and perspectives, in November of 1993, the CPUC setup a research program under the direction of the California Department of Health Services. In



*A minimal number of power poles will be up to 115 feet tall where there are electric distribution line underbuild requirements.

The poles will be two colors, to best match the surrounding landforms:

1. A gray-galvanized surface in the more open areas, corresponding approximately to the areas outside the Paradise Town Limits.
2. A dark brown surface in the forested areas within the Paradise Town Limits.

Paradise Area Reinforcement Project

Figure B-3
Power Pole Structure

Aspen
Environmental Group

addition, at the recommendation of California EMF Consensus Group (CCG)¹, the CPUC established an interim EMF reduction policy for all new and upgraded electrical facilities.

This interim policy adopted in the CPUC's Decision (D.) 93-11-013 requires California's Investor Owned Utilities (IOUs) to implement no- and low-cost (a 4% benchmark of total project cost) EMF reduction measures applicable to all new and upgraded electrical facilities, if a noticeable reduction could be achieved. PG&E has committed to CPUC's Electric and Magnetic Field (EMF) mitigation requirements.

Applicant Proposed Mitigation Measures

PG&E's proposed project includes a number of mitigation measures to reduce or avoid potential environmental impacts associated with project construction and maintenance. PG&E's mitigation measures are considered part of the proposed project and are summarized in Table B-1. Through consultation with CPUC staff, PG&E has modified, or withdrawn several of its applicant proposed mitigation measures since it submitted its PEA to the CPUC in January, 2000. Modified applicant proposed mitigation measures are indicated in Table B-1 with asterisks. One measure (MM 12-2; installation of a fire alarm at the Paradise Substation) was withdrawn because PG&E and CPUC have determined that a fire alarm at the substation site is not necessary because it is constructed of concrete and steel.

Table B-1 Applicant Proposed Mitigation Measures

Applicant Measure	Text
Air Quality	
MM 4-1 Worker Training	All personnel working on the project will be trained prior to starting work on methods for minimizing air quality impacts during construction.
MM 4-2 Fugitive Dust	<p>Although the fugitive dust associated with project construction is insignificant relative to the ambient PM₁₀ levels, the following measures have been incorporated into the project to ensure PM₁₀ emissions are minimized during construction activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All construction areas, unpaved access roads, and staging areas will be watered as needed during dry soil conditions, or soil stabilizers will be applied. • All trucks hauling soil and other loose material will be covered or have at least two feet of freeboard. Construction vehicles will use paved roads to access the construction site wherever possible. • Vehicle speeds will be limited to 15 mph on unpaved roads and construction areas, or as required to control dust. • Streets will be cleaned daily if visible soil material is carried onto adjacent public streets. • Soil stabilizers will be applied to inactive construction areas on an as needed basis. • Exposed stockpiles of soil and other excavated materials will be enclosed, covered, watered twice daily, or applied with soil binders as needed. • Vegetation will be replanted in disturbed areas as quickly as possible following the completion of construction.
MM 4-3 Vehicle Emissions.	<p>Although short-term construction vehicle emissions are minimal relative to the ambient emission levels and would not result in significant impacts, the following measures will be incorporated into the project to reduce emissions during construction activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carpooling will be encouraged among construction workers through contractor bid specifications and project orientation training for workers. • Vehicles used in construction activities will be tuned per the manufacturers' recommended maintenance. • Vehicle idling time will be minimized.
Biological Resources	
MM 5-1 Preconstruction	PG&E will provide a qualified botanist to survey the proposed power line in Butte County for special-status plants that bloom in April or May and that may occur in the project area. Based on the presence of suitable

¹ The CPUC formed the California EMF Consensus Group (CCG) which consisted of 17 stakeholders representing citizen groups, consumer groups, environmental groups, state agencies, unions, and municipal and investor-owned utilities.

Applicant Measure	Text
Surveys for Special-Status Plants.	<p>habitat, these species include Butte County fritillary (<i>Fritillaria eastwoodiae</i>), Red Bluff dwarf rush (<i>Juncus leiospermus</i> var. <i>leiospermus</i>) and veiny monardella (<i>Monardella douglasii</i> ssp. <i>venosa</i>). A survey is not required in the Town of Paradise because no suitable habitat for these species is found in the Town of Paradise limits along the power line route.</p> <p>If any of these or any other special-status species are found in the power line route, PG&E will ensure avoidance of these populations through one or more of the following techniques:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relocating power poles or laydown areas • Careful removal of canopy trees • Temporary construction fencing • Construction worker training and construction monitoring by a qualified botanist <p>The method(s) used to avoid populations of special-status plants will be proposed by PG&E Technical and Ecological Services and approved by the California Department of Fish and Game prior to implementation. If populations of special-status plants cannot be avoided, PG&E will modify the project to minimize impacts to special-status plants. In addition, PG&E will design and conduct mitigation for direct impacts to special-status plants in proportion to the status and rarity of the species and the magnitude of the impact. Such mitigation will be approved prior to implementation by the CDFG and the CNPS.</p>
MM 5-2 Birds Nesting in Poles	<p>If construction of the proposed project occurs outside the nesting season for special-status birds or birds protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (i.e., if construction does not occur between March and July), no pre-construction mitigation will be required. If construction takes place during the nesting season for any of the species listed in Table 5-6 or for species protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, pre-construction surveys should be conducted in late winter (February-March) to locate nests that could be destroyed during construction. These nests should be avoided, if possible. If they cannot be avoided nests should be removed before the adults return and begin reproduction.</p> <p>The wooden poles along Segments 4 and 5 that would be removed should be surveyed at the same time for evidence of cavities used by cavity nesting birds. Any cavities should be inspected thoroughly to insure that they harbor no wildlife. If a cavity is empty, it should be covered with sheet metal to prevent nesting. The wooden poles should be inspected shortly before removal to determine whether a cavity used by nesting birds is present at the time of construction (despite precautions taken). If a nest is present, the pole should be left in place until nesting is complete, if possible. If this is not possible, the section of pole containing the cavity should be mounted at a similar height on a pole set nearby.</p>
MM 5-3 Preconstruction Surveys for Aquatic Species	<p>In order to assess the impacts on special-status amphibians, habitat assessments will be conducted prior to construction activities. Due to the seasonal nature of the water courses, habitat assessments and surveys should be completed immediately prior to construction activities rather than during a previous year or alternate season to best assess true impacts on a species. Based on the results of the initial habitat assessments, species-specific surveys may be completed. In any case and regardless of the results of the surveys, impacts to any identified special-status species will be avoided or at least minimized to a level of no significance by implementing the mitigation procedures described below.</p>
MM 5-4 Riparian and Wetland Habitats	<p>To reduce impacts to the riparian habitat along Segment 3, the width of the clearing required for vehicles will be minimized. After construction, the area disturbed will be revegetated with native species found in that drainage to a condition similar to that found prior to disturbance. The noxious plant Himalayan blackberry will be removed from the revegetation site and from up to 25 feet from the revegetation areas. The revegetation will be designed, conducted, and monitored by a qualified botanist or revegetation specialist. Impacts to riparian and freshwater seep vegetation in the northern and southern tributaries of Nance Creek (Segment 3) will be avoided. Construction equipment will cross these drainages in areas devoid of vegetation. If disturbance to vegetation cannot be avoided, vegetation will be restored to pre-construction conditions under the direction of a qualified specialist in wetland restoration.</p>
MM 5-5 Noxious Plants	<p>To reduce the chance of spreading or introducing noxious plants in the project area, PG&E will ensure that all construction vehicles are thoroughly washed prior to entering wildlands (i.e., prior to going off-road). In the growing season after construction, a qualified biologist will survey the power line corridor for new infestations of yellow star thistle or substantial new infestations of any other noxious weeds, including those listed in Table 5-2. If such infestations are found, PG&E will eradicate them using proven methods such as herbicides or biological control agents. PG&E will coordinate these efforts with the Butte County Department of Agriculture.</p>
MM 5-6 Birds	<p>To prevent destruction of active nests of bird species that are either special-status or protected by the</p>

Applicant Measure	Text
Nesting in Trees	Migratory Bird Treaty Act, all trees and shrubs should be removed outside the nesting season (i.e., vegetation removal for the project should take place between August and February).
MM 5-7 Loss of Wildlife Habitat	To mitigate loss of biological diversity and to prevent the further spread of French broom on the Paradise Memorial Trailway, PG&E will develop a vegetation management plan in consultation with the Town of Paradise to reduce the amount of this noxious weed present.
MM 5-8 Pallid Bat	To reduce the chance of affecting pallid bat roosts during winter hibernation or during reproduction, if hollow trees are to be removed, they will be inspected first to insure that no bat roosts are present. Removal of a tree that provides roosting cover will be delayed until the tree can be removed without impacts to pallid bats. Trees containing bats will not be removed until they are unoccupied.
MM 5-9 Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle	<p>PG&E will comply with Endangered Species Act requirements for mitigating impacts to valley elderberry longhorn beetle. PG&E will avoid and protect the habitat whenever possible in the “core” and “buffer zones.” The core area is within 20 feet of the dripline of any elderberry plants; the buffer zone is within 100 feet of any elderberry plant. Protective measures to be followed are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fence and flag all areas to be avoided. Provide a minimum construction setback of at least 20 feet from the dripline of each elderberry plant and a minimum setback from vegetation clearing of 100 feet from any elderberry plant. • Brief all workers on the need to avoid damaging the elderberry plants and the possible penalties for not complying with these requirements. • Put up signs identifying the location of the habitat to be avoided. • Restore damage done, including providing erosion control and revegetating with appropriate native species • No pesticides or fertilizers should be used in the core and buffer areas. <p>Where it is not possible to avoid elderberry plants, they shall be transplanted if they are likely to survive the transplant effort. For every elderberry stem that is 1.0” or greater in diameter at ground level that is adversely affected, mitigation acceptable to the USFWS will be developed. All necessary permits will be obtained, in consultation with USFWS.</p>
MM 5-10	Should construction activity become necessary outside of the biological resources survey area identified above (Section 5.1), any affected areas will be surveyed by a qualified biologist prior to initiating the activity in order to ensure that no special-status biological resources will be impacted.
MM 5-11 Avoidance of Riparian Habitat	To avoid further disturbance to riparian vegetation along Segment 3, maintenance access to the proposed 115kV power line and the existing 60kV power line will be from Neal Road and Skyline Boulevard but will not cross Nance Creek between the two access points except in emergencies. Vehicles will cross tributaries to Nance Creek only in areas devoid of vegetation.
Cultural and Historical Resources	
MM 6-1 Train Depot	The train depot and immediate vicinity shall be spanned by the power line if practicable to avoid potential indirect impacts to this structure.
MM 6-2 Worker Training	Prior to construction, all construction personnel will receive environmental training. Training will emphasize the importance of the cultural resource sites in the vicinity and discuss the possibility that previously unidentified cultural resources may become apparent during ground-disturbing activities, and how to respond if they are discovered.
MM 6-3* Procedures During Construction	If previously unidentified cultural materials and/or features are discovered during construction, all work in the immediate area will cease, and PG&E’s Cultural Resources Specialist and CPUC’s Environmental Monitor will be immediately contacted for identification and evaluation. In accordance with Article 5, Section 15064.5.f. of the CEQA Guidelines, the specialist will determine appropriate mitigation measures if he materials and/or features are determined to be significant and cannot be avoided. If human remains are encountered, PG&E’s Cultural Resources Specialist and the County Coroner will be contacted for identification and appropriate measures will be undertaken in accordance with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) and Article 5, Section 16054.5.e of the CEQA Guidelines.
MM 6-4*	Should ground disturbing activity become necessary outside of the cultural resources survey area identified above (Section 6.1), any affected areas will be surveyed by PG&E’s Cultural Resources Specialist and CPUC’s Environmental Monitor prior to initiating the activity in order to ensure that no cultural resources sites will be impacted.
Utilities and Service Systems	
MM 7-1 Service Disruption	<p>Mitigation measures will ensure that impacts to other utilities will be less than significant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PG&E will conduct surveys prior to construction to locate underground and overhead utilities. All

Applicant Measure	Text
	<p>utilities near project facilities will be put on the construction plan maps.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During construction, before any ground disturbance occurs, Underground Service Alert (USA) will be contacted to verify the location of existing underground utilities. • Representatives from non-PG&E utilities will be notified in advance of construction if construction will be occurring near their lines, and PG&E will coordinate with them. • PG&E will locate poles and string conductors at a safe distance from intersecting and adjacent power line structures, conductors, and telephone wires in accordance with the distances specified in the CPUC General Order No. 95.
Geology and Soils	
MM 8-1 Slope Stability	A geologist or geotechnical engineer will evaluate slope stability and assist in selection of power line pole locations in steep slope areas to eliminate or minimize potential impacts from landslides, rock falls, or other slope instability. All poles will conform with the structural requirements of the CPUC's General Order 95.
MM 8-2 Expansive Soils	Over excavation and replacement with engineered fill or other ground treatment will be implemented where necessary.
Hydrology and Water Quality	
MM 9-1 Surface Water Quality	<p>PG&E will prepare an erosion and sediment transport control plan that will be submitted to Butte County and the Town of Paradise along with the grading permit application. This plan will follow the standards in the Manual of Erosion and Sedimentation Control Measures (ABAG 1981), and practices recommended by the Natural Resources Conservation Service. Implementation of the plan will stabilize graded areas and waterways, and minimize erosion and sedimentation. The plan will designate Best Management Practices (BMPs) for construction. The construction crews will install erosion controls such as hay bales, water bars, covers, sediment fences, sensitive area access restrictions (e.g., fencing), vehicle mats in wet areas, and retention/settlement ponds where necessary and appropriate before initiating extensive clearing and grading. Subsequent mulching, seeding, or other suitable stabilization measures will protect exposed areas during, and subsequent to, construction activities.</p> <p>A workers' training program will be established to communicate environmental concerns and appropriate work practices to all field personnel. A construction monitoring program will ensure that the plans are followed throughout construction.</p>
MM 9-2 Accidental Release of Environmentally Deleterious Materials	<p>PG&E will prepare a Hazardous Substance Control and Emergency Response Plan that will include preparations for quick and safe cleanup of accidental spills. This plan will be submitted with the grading permit application. The plan will prescribe procedures for reducing the potential for significant impacts to surface and ground water in the unlikely event of an oil spill, prescribe methods for safe collection and disposal of hazardous substances generated during construction activities, and include an emergency response program to ensure quick and safe cleanup of accidental chemical spills. The plan will identify areas where refueling and vehicle maintenance activities, temporary storage of unused concrete, and storage of hazardous materials will be permitted.</p> <p>A workers' education program will be established for all field personnel prior to initiating field work to provide training in appropriate spill response methods. A monitoring program will be established to ensure that the plans are followed.</p> <p>The existing SPCC containment system will be used at the substation to retain a release in the extremely unlikely event of a catastrophic failure of oil-filled electrical equipment during equipment removal, installation, or operation. Additionally, oil-absorbent material, tarps, and storage drums may be used to contain and control any minor releases.</p> <p>Excess water and liquid concrete that escapes the pole foundation pours will be directed to bermed areas adjacent to the borings where the water will infiltrate or evaporate and the concrete will remain and begin to set. Once the excess concrete has been allowed to set up (but before it is dry), it will be removed and recycled or transported to an approved landfill for disposal.</p>
MM 9-3 Surface Disturbance	<p>New dirt and gravel power line access roads are proposed in rural, undeveloped areas where waterways occur. No culverts or outfalls exist in the vicinity of the proposed roads. Best Management Practices for road construction in watershed areas, including water bars and detention basins, will be used to manage runoff volumes and rates as closely as possible to pre-project conditions.</p> <p>At each pole site, a concrete foundation approximately six feet in diameter and up to 16 feet deep will be constructed. This impervious material will restrict stormwater infiltration within the foundation footprint. However, impact from construction of the pole foundations will be insignificant, because the total area</p>

Applicant Measure	Text
	impacted by pole foundations will be very small.
MM 9-4 Water Quality Degradation Caused by Accidental Releases of Mineral Oil	PG&E will revise their Spill Prevention, Countermeasure, and Control (SPCC) plan for the Paradise Substation in response to alterations due to the proposed project. The plans will include engineered methods for containing and controlling any oil release (e.g., retention pond, mote, berms, or some combination), and preparations for a quick and safe cleanup. The plan will be submitted to Butte County for review.
Land Use	
MM 10-1 Landowner Notification	Prior to construction, PG&E will notify landowners immediately adjacent to proposed construction about construction activities. The notice will contain information about the timing and nature of the activities. A PG&E contact person will be designated and a telephone number and address provided to the notified parties to allow them to obtain information and comment about project construction.
Noise	
MM 11-1 Shielding	Compressors and other small stationary equipment will be shielded with portable barriers as necessary to reduce noise to nearby receptors.
MM 11-2 Quiet Equipment	"Quiet" equipment (i.e., equipment that incorporates noise control elements into the design; compressors and jackhammers have "quiet" models) will be used during construction.
MM 11-3* Exhaust Stacks	Equipment exhaust stacks/vents will be directed away from buildings when feasible.
MM 11-4 Truck Traffic	Truck traffic will be routed away from noise-sensitive areas where feasible.
MM 11-5 Sound Barriers	Temporary sound barriers or sound curtains will be employed, if necessary, under the following conditions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction within 100 feet of businesses • Sensitive receptors will be exposed to construction noise for more than one day
MM 11-7 Transformer Specifications	Design specifications for the proposed transformers must meet or exceed 45 MVA, 115/12kV transformers will meet 69 dBA, OA rating and 72 dBA, FA rating.
MM 11-8 Transformer Operation	To achieve lower nighttime noise, the new transformer may be operated at reduced loading and without fan cooling between the hours of 10:00PM and 7:00AM.
Public Health and Safety	
MM 12-1 Fire Prevention	PG&E vehicles used in construction activities will be equipped with portable fire extinguishers weighing five pounds or more, and/or a five gallon, back carried extinguisher. In addition to any requirements imposed by the Butte County and Paradise Fire Departments, the following measures will be implemented during the construction of the power line: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In accordance with the 1994 Uniform Fire Code Section 1109.5, PG&E will inform its construction and maintenance workforce that "Lighted matches, cigarettes, cigars or other burning objects shall not be discarded in such a manner that could cause ignition of other combustible material." • Any motor, engine, welding equipment, cutting torch, grinding device or equipment from which a spark, fire or flame may originate will not be used without first (a) clearing away all flammable material for a distance of 10 feet, and (b) having on hand a round-point shovel with an overall length of not less than 46 inches and a water-filled backpack pump fully equipped and ready to use. This does not apply to power saws and other portable tools powered by a gasoline-fueled internal combustion engine (Public Resources Code 4427). • Any portable gasoline-powered tool (chainsaws, etc.) will not be used within 25 feet of any flammable materials without providing one round-point shovel with an overall length of not less than 46 inches or a fire extinguisher having a rating of 2-BC or larger. The fire tools must be unobstructed and within 25 feet of the tool operation at all times (PRC 4431). • Motor vehicles will not be parked or operated outside of cleared work areas except for the specific purpose of vegetation clearing. • Construction equipment and fire fighting equipment shall meet the following requirements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The exhausts of all equipment powered by gasoline, diesel, or other hydrocarbon fuel will be equipped with effective spark arrestors. • The spark arrestor must prevent the escape from the exhaust of carbon or other flammable particles over 0.0232 of an inch.

Applicant Measure	Text
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Motor trucks, truck tractors, buses, and passenger vehicles, except motorcycles, are not subject to this provision if their exhaust systems are equipped with mufflers (PRC 4442). In addition to the requirements of PRC 4427 described above, all welding rigs shall be equipped with a minimum 20 lb. (or 2-10 lb.) fire extinguisher and a minimum of 5 gallons of water in a fire-fighting apparatus.
MM 12-3 Tree Clearances	PG&E will adhere to the CPUC's General Order No. 95 concerning the requirements for maintaining appropriate tree clearances from power line facilities. PG&E will conduct routine surveillance of the power line, monitoring tree growth to ensure that safety and operation requirements are adhered to.
MM 12-4 Hazardous Materials and Wastes	PG&E shall update the Hazardous Material Business Plan and SPCC Plan as needed, and will employ proper use, storage and disposal methods for hazardous materials and wastes. (See MM 9-2 for additional hazardous waste mitigation efforts.)
Socioeconomics and Public Services	
No Applicant Proposed Mitigation Measures	
Transportation and Traffic	
MM 14-1 Roads in the Project Area— Lane Closures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction activities shall occur on road shoulders or in non-traffic lanes, where feasible, to avoid unnecessary lane closures. Coordination shall occur between PG&E and the Butte County and Town of Paradise Departments of Public Works to minimize conflicts with the design, location, and construction of other projects. PG&E shall notify Town of Paradise and Butte County residents of scheduled lane closures. PG&E shall use traffic control personnel during lane closures. Standard traffic control techniques will include flagmen, warning signs, cones, and lights.
MM 14-2 Roads in the Project Area— Emergency Access	Access to all residences and properties near the project will be maintained at all times.
MM 14-3 Roads in the Project Area— Damage to Roads and the Trailway	PG&E will repair and restore damage to public roads and nearby areas caused by project construction.
MM 14-4 Public Transportation and Alternative Forms of Transportation— Buses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Butte County Transportation Authority shall be notified of lane closures that will potentially affect bus stops in the project area. The Paradise Unified School District and the Town of Paradise shall be notified of lane closures that will potentially affect bus stops in the project area.
MM 14-5 Public Transportation and Alternative Forms of Transportation— Paradise Memorial Trailway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PG&E will notify Town of Paradise residents of scheduled lane closures. Signs will be placed at the main trailway crossroad points (Neal Road, Foster Road, Fir Road, and Elliot Road) notifying Trailway users of trail closures.
Visual Resources	
MM 15-1 Contrast and Reflection Reduction	<p>To reduce the potential for reflection of sunlight from project facilities, reduce color contrasts, and visually unify the project with the surrounding characteristic landscape, PG&E will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Throughout the project area, though not standard practice, use only non-specular conductors that do not reflect sunlight. As seen from the Paradise Memorial Trailway and Skyway, use self-weathering steel poles. Self-weathering steel poles will oxidize over time thereby reducing reflection and color contrasts.
MM 15-2 Pole Reduction	To reduce the number of power line poles along the Paradise Memorial Trailway, PG&E will coordinate the placement of poles to accommodate existing service lines as much as possible.
MM 15-3* Revegetation	<p>To reduce the perceived scale of power poles, to compensate for the loss of shade, and to mitigate for the loss of privacy to adjacent residences along the paved portions of the Paradise Memorial Trailway, PG&E will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prior to project construction, prepare revegetation planting plans and specifications in coordination with the Town of Paradise. Emphasize design goals of using native shrubs of sufficient height to screen the trail user from adjacent land uses; provide low trees that could be easily maintained to reflect power line maintenance and fire management guidelines yet also provide shade on the trail; and screen the base of the power line poles as seen from the trail.

Applicant Measure	Text
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> During the first spring after project construction, implement revegetation designs. Maintain plants, until re-established, for a two-year establishment period.
MM 15-4* Placement	To reduce the need for vegetation clearing and pruning along the Paradise Memorial Trailway and Neal Road, PG&E will site power line poles such that conductors use the clear space along the trail and roadway as much as practicable. PG&E will site power line poles away from the trail as much as practicable to allow vegetative screening of the base of the poles as seen from the trail.
MM 15-5* Minimize Clearing	<p>To minimize the need for excessive vegetation clearing from the power line right-of-way, PG&E will prepare a detailed power line clearing plan for power line Segment 5 (along the Paradise Memorial Trailway) and power line Segment 4 (along Skyway) in consultation with the Town of Paradise that takes into account:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic principles of feathering and scalloping the power line easement. Pruning ponderosa and foothill pine trees where possible along the sides of the power line easement rather than removing them. Retaining lower vegetation under power line conductors based on current clearance guidelines. <p>Prior to clearing activities, PG&E will identify and tag in the field those trees and major shrubs (taller than 10 feet) to be removed, trees to be pruned, and trees to remain within the power line easement. PG&E shall continue to coordinate with and seek input from the Town of Paradise, Butte County, and the Paradise Fire Department.</p>
MM 15-6 Reduce Contrast	To reduce the contrast and dominance of the Paradise Substation as seen from the Paradise Memorial Trailway and the Paradise High School baseball field, PG&E will paint the existing block wall a non-contrasting, and non-reflective (i.e., flat) color to match the foreground color of the ponderosa pine forest. PG&E will select colors as determined in the field using the Munsell Soil Color Coding.

*Indicates that measure has been modified since PG&E submitted its PEA to the CPUC in January, 2000.

Source: PEA, 2000

PG&E, 2000a. Personal communication with Steve Stielstra of PG&E on May 10, 2000.

CPUC Proposed Mitigation Measures

In addition to PG&E's proposed mitigation measures, the CPUC has recommended two mitigation measure (see Table B-2 below), which PG&E has agreed to include in the project.

Table B-2 CPUC Recommended Mitigation Measures*

CPUC Measure	Text
Air Quality	
Measure III-1	All plant debris generated by clearing and pruning activities during construction and operation of the proposed project shall be disposed of in a manner other than controlled burning. With implementation of the air quality applicant proposed measures listed in Table B1 and the BCAQMD mitigation measure, air quality impacts should be reduced to a level that is less than significant.
Biology	
Measure IV-1	Where feasible, tree trimming and removal of shrubs and trees should be avoided during the nesting period of March through July. PG&E shall submit a plan to CPUC outlining the criteria and conditions that would make tree trimming and removal of shrubs and trees necessary within the said nesting period. The plan shall also provide specific procedures that PG&E will follow prior to and during trimming activities to ensure that impacts associated with disturbance of birds protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act are less than significant.

*The numbering of the CPUC mitigation measures link to the corresponding sections in the Initial Study. For example, Measure III-1 is in section III- Air Quality.

10. Other public agencies whose approval is required:

In addition to the Permit to Construct required by the CPUC, PG&E would likely be required to obtain permits and or approvals from other federal, state, and local agencies. See Table B-3 for a listing of agencies whose approval may be required.

Table B-3 Agencies Other Than CPUC Whose Approval May Be Required

Agency	Jurisdiction/Purpose
Federal Agencies	
Army Corps of Engineers	Waters of the United States including wetlands and overhead crossing of drainages
US Fish and Wildlife Services	Threatened and Endangered Species Biological Opinion
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation	Cultural Resource Management Plan (if appropriate)
State Agencies	
California Department of Fish and Game	Threatened and Endangered Species Biological Opinion and crossing drainages
State Historical Preservation Office	Cultural resources
Local Agencies	
Town of Paradise	Temporary Lane Closures, power line construction, fire prevention, and noise ordinance
Butte County	Temporary Lane Closures fire prevention, and power line construction
Butte County Air Quality Management District	Air emission reduction and monitoring

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 9 Aesthetics | 9 Agricultural Resources | 9 Air Quality |
| 9 Biological Resources | 9 Cultural Resources | 9 Geology / Soils |
| 9 Hazards & Hazardous Materials | 9 Hydrology / Water Quality | 9 Land Use / Planning |
| 9 Mineral Resources | 9 Noise | 9 Population / Housing |
| 9 Public Services | 9 Recreation | 9 Transportation / Traffic |
| 9 Utilities / Service Systems | 9 Mandatory Findings of Significance | |

DETERMINATION:

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

- 9 I find that the Proposed Project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- I find that although the Proposed Project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the applicant. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- 9 I find that the Proposed Project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.
- 9 I find that the Proposed Project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant impact unless mitigated" on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets, if the effect is a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated." An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.
- 9 I find that although the Proposed Project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR pursuant to applicable standards and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the Proposed Project, nothing further is required.


Natalie Walsh, Manager
Analysis Branch
Energy Division
California Public Utilities Commission

Date: May 18, 2000

EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS:

I. AESTHETICS. <i>Would the project:</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	9	9	9	:
b) Damage scenic resources, including but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	9	9	9	:
c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?	9	9	:	9
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views of the area?	9	9	:	9

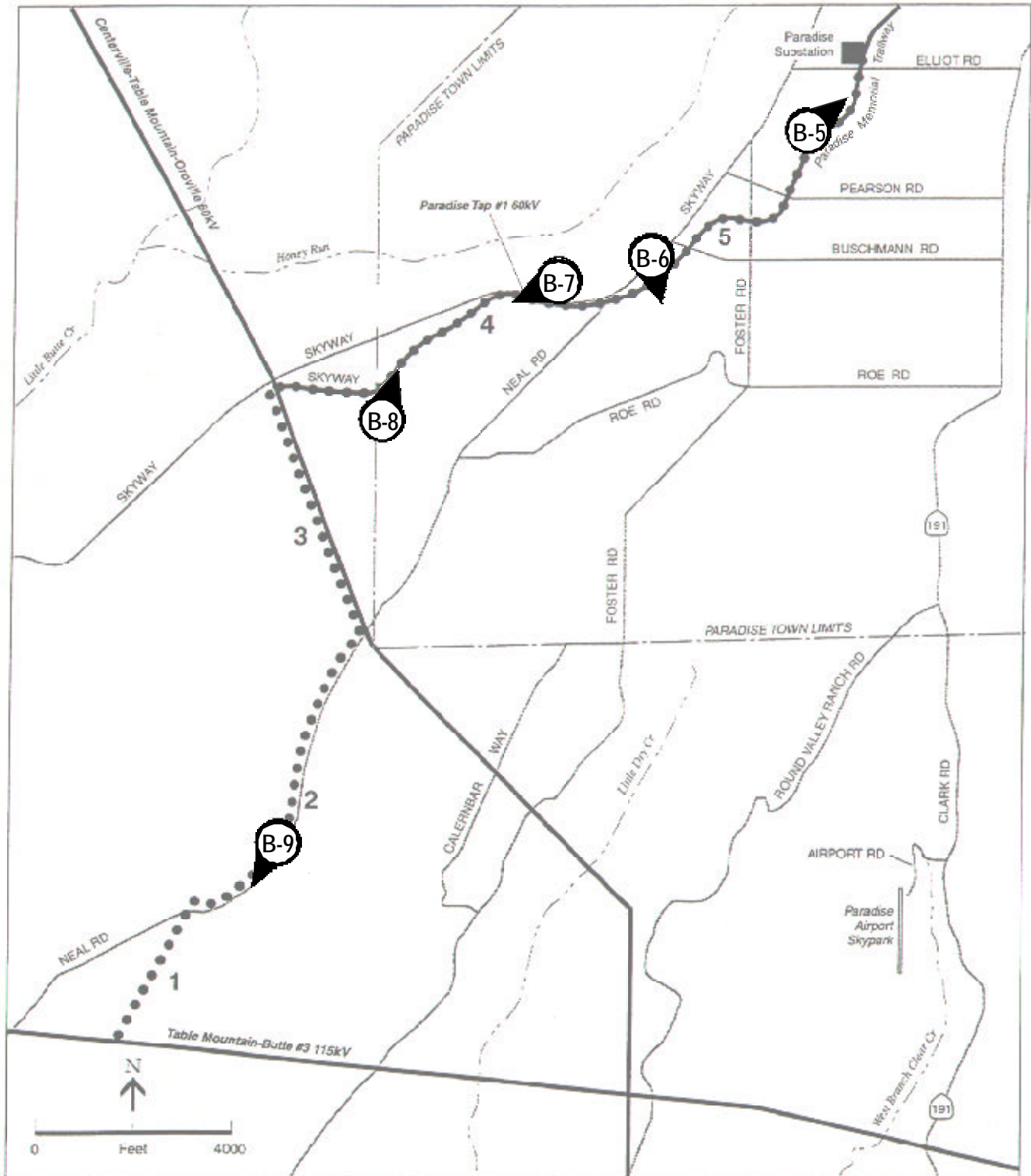
Explanation:

- a) **No Impact.** The proposed project is not within the vicinity of a scenic vista. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would not have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista.
- b) **No Impact.** The proposed project is not within view from a state scenic highway. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would not damage scenic resources within a state scenic highway.
- c) **Less-than-Significant Impact.** During a portion of the construction period, the Paradise Memorial Trailway will be closed in segments approximately four times at each segment. Short-term construction impacts to scenic vistas would be noticeable to trail users, motorists along Skyway and Neal Road, and some residents. The majority of aesthetics impacts associated with construction are unavoidable, but are considered temporary and less than significant.

With regard to long-term operational impacts, significant changes in the appearance of the project area would result from the introduction of tubular steel power poles, raising conductors at or above the existing forest canopy, and the removal of vegetation for construction, power line maintenance, and fire management purposes. Because the new power poles would be steel and have an increased scale (height and diameter), the new power poles would become a more dominant feature along the Paradise Memorial Trailway, Skylane, and Neal Road, which could adversely affect trail users and drivers aesthetic experience (see Figures B4 through B9). However, PG&E has committed to a mitigation measure (Applicant Proposed Measure MM 15-2, see Table B-1) that would reduce the number of power line poles along the Paradise Memorial Trailway as much as possible. Along Neal Road and Skyway, potential impacts to motorist traveling along Skyway are considered less than significant because of the relatively short viewing duration that would expose drivers to the power lines and poles.

In addition, vegetation removal along the Paradise Memorial Trailway could result in a loss of shade along the trail during warm seasons and could visually expose the trail user to adjacent land uses, as well as result in a reduction in privacy for some adjacent residents along the trail (see Figures B-4 through B-9). PG&E has committed to mitigation measures (Applicant Proposed Measures MM 15-3 and 15-4, see Table B-1) that would reduce impacts related to vegetation removal along the power line ROW.

- d) **Less-than-Significant Impact.** The construction work schedule would be limited to general daytime hours so no potential for significant impact from light or glare associated with nighttime construction is anticipated. During operations, there would be no new sources of permanent light because the poles would not be lit. Vegetation clearing may result in an open pathway to existing light causing less than significant impacts. With regard to glare during operations of the proposed project, non-specular conductors and self-weathering steel poles along forested areas, and gray poles along open, non-forested areas would be used. This would reduce the contrast and glare of the new poles and conductors with the surrounding environment. Impacts related to glare from the proposed project are considered to be less than significant.



B-9 Letter/number sequence corresponds to Figures (i.e. Figure B-9)

B-9 Arrow corresponds to direction of photoview

- Segment 1 - Table Mountain-Butte #3 115kV to Neal Road (Parallels PG&E gas pipeline right-of-way)
- Segment 2 - Neal Road to Centerville-Table Mountain-Oroville 60kV
- Segment 3 - Parallel Centerville-Table Mountain-Oroville 60kV to Skyway
- Segment 4 - Skyway to Paradise Memorial Trailway, existing 60kV alignment
- Segment 5 - Paradise Memorial Trailway to the Paradise Substation

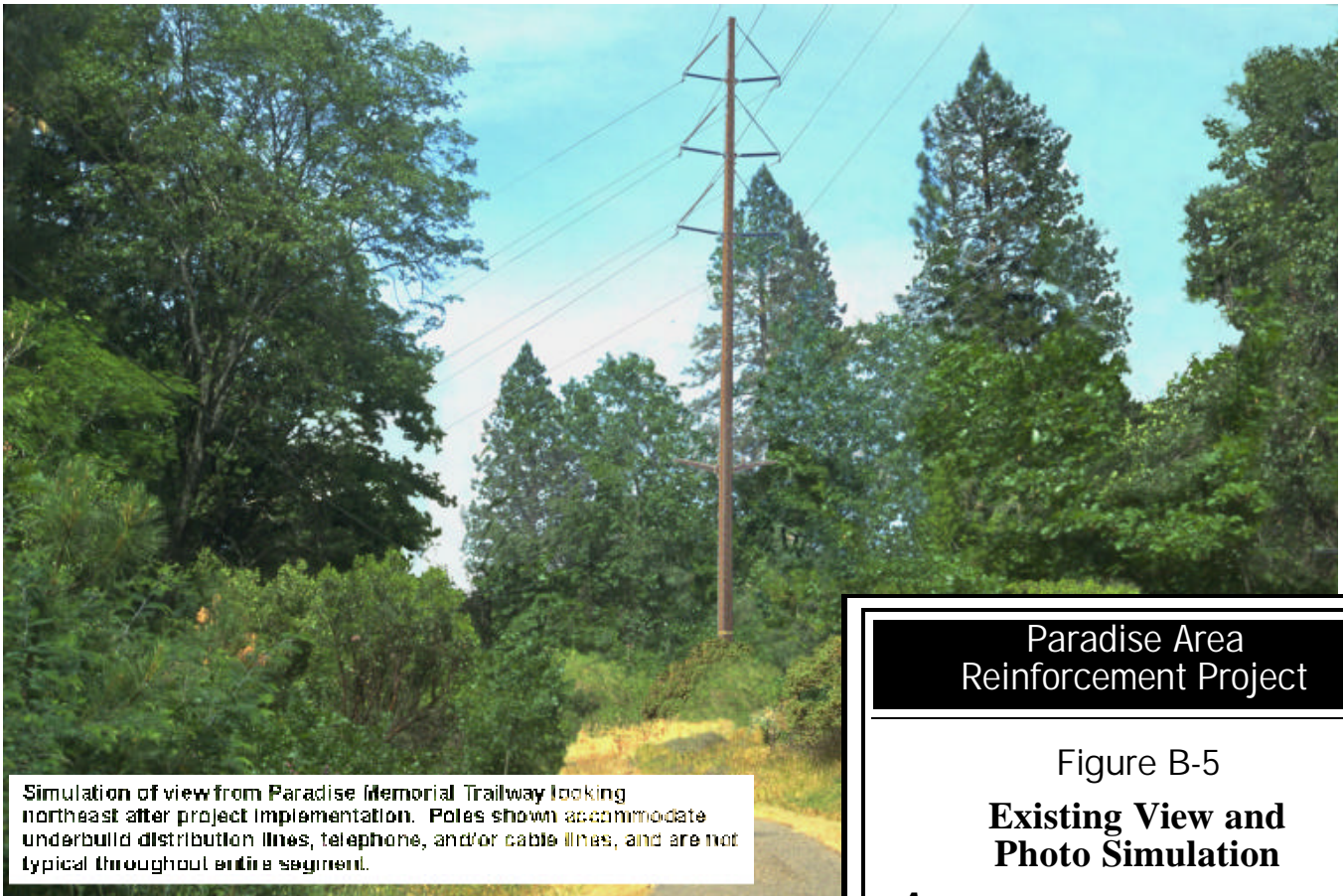
Paradise Area Reinforcement Project

Figure B-4 Photo Simulation Points

Aspen
Environmental Group



Existing view from Paradise Memorial Trailway looking northeast.



Simulation of view from Paradise Memorial Trailway looking northeast after project implementation. Poles shown accommodate underbuild distribution lines, telephone, and/or cable lines, and are not typical throughout entire segment.

Paradise Area
Reinforcement Project

Figure B-5
Existing View and
Photo Simulation

Aspen
Environmental Group



Existing view from Skyway looking southeast.



Simulation of view from Skyway looking southeast after project implementation.

Paradise Area
Reinforcement Project

Figure B-6
Existing View and
Photo Simulation

Aspen
Environmental Group



Existing view from Skyway at the Paradise town limit looking northeast.



Simulation of view from Skyway at the Paradise town limit looking northeast after project implementation.

Paradise Area
Reinforcement Project

Figure B-7
**Existing View and
Photo Simulation**

Aspen
EnvironmentalGroup



Existing view from Skyway at Longview Drive looking west.



Simulation of view from Skyway at Longview Drive looking west after project implementation. Poles shown accommodate underbuild distribution lines, telephone, and/or cable lines, and are not typical throughout entire segment.

Paradise Area
Reinforcement Project

Figure B-8
**Existing View and
Photo Simulation**

Aspen
Environmental Group



Existing view from Neal Road at Goa Way looking southwest.



Simulation of view from Neal Road at Goa Way looking southwest after project implementation. Poles shown accommodate underbuild distribution lines, telephone, and/or cable lines, and are not typical throughout entire segment.

Paradise Area
Reinforcement Project

Figure B-9
Existing View and
Photo Simulation

Aspen
Environmental Group

II. AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES. <i>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 prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. Would the project:</i>	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of statewide Importance (Farmland) to non-agricultural use?	9	9	:	9
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?)	9	9	9	:
c) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could individually or cumulatively result in loss of Farmland, to non-agricultural use?	9	9	:	9

Explanation:

- a) **Less-than-Significant Impact.** According to the Proponent’s Environmental Assessment (PEA, 2000), there is no agricultural land in Paradise. However, the Interim Farmland Map identifies portions of the project area within the County as “grazing land”. Pole foundations associated with the proposed project would occupy approximately 905 square feet of grazing land and during construction, grazing may be restricted from parts of the construction zone. However, much of the power line alignment along Neal Road contains scrub brush that may be cleared and replaced with grass. This could offset the relatively small amount of grazing land lost to pole foundations and construction zones. Potential impacts to grazing land are considered less than significant.
- b) **No Impact.** There is no land subject to a Williamson Act Contract in the area proposed for construction. The proposed project would not conflict with existing zoning for agricultural land because the area affected by the project is relatively small (see a, above), and agricultural uses including grazing would continue in close proximity to the project.
- c) **No Impact.** Refer to a) above.

III. AIR QUALITY. <i>Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:</i>	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable Air Quality Attainment Plan or Congestion Management Plan?	9	:	9	9
b) Violate any stationary source air quality standard or contribute to an existing or projected air quality violation?	9	:	9	9
c) Result in a net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions that exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?	9	:	9	9
d) Create or contribute to a non-stationary source “hot spot” (primarily carbon monoxide)?	9	9	9	:
e) Expose sensitive receptor to substantial pollutant concentrations?	9	9	:	9
f) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?	9	9	9	:

Explanation:

- a) **Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation is Incorporated.** As described in the PEA, construction of the proposed 6.1 mile power line and substation modifications would occur over a period of approximately 4 months. Power line construction emissions can be distinguished as onsite or offsite. Onsite air pollutant emissions during construction would principally consist of exhaust emissions (e.g., noxides, carbon monoxide, and ozone) from heavy-duty diesel

and gasoline-powered construction equipment, as well as fugitive particulate matter (dust) from material handling. Offsite exhaust emissions would result from workers commuting to and from the project site, from trucks hauling wire, poles, and other equipment and supplies to the construction ROW, dump trucks hauling away dirt and vegetation debris, and trucks delivering fresh concrete to pole sites along the proposed power line route.

Based on a discussion with staff of the Butte County Air Quality Management District (BCAQMD), fugitive dust produced during construction would be the primary potential air quality impact associated with the proposed project. Although BCAQMD does not mandate thresholds for project construction emissions, PG&E has committed to several measures that are designed to minimize fugitive dust during project construction activities. In addition to the air quality applicant proposed measures listed in Table B1, BCAQMD has requested that the following mitigation measure be incorporated as part of the project description:

Measure III-1: All plant debris generated by clearing and pruning activities during construction and operation of the proposed project shall be disposed of in a manner other than controlled burning. With implementation of the air quality applicant proposed measures listed in Table B-1 and the BCAQMD mitigation measure, air quality impacts should be reduced to a level that is less than significant.

- b) **Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation is Incorporated.** See a) above.
- c) **Potentially Significant unless Mitigation is Incorporated.** The BCAQMD is in non-attainment status of the State Ambient Air Quality Standard (AAQS) for PM10 and ozone (BCAQMD, 000). However, with implementation of the air quality applicant proposed measures listed in B-1 and Measure III-1, project construction emissions and PM10 levels should be reduced to a level that is less than significant.

With regard to operations, pollutant emissions and fugitive dust levels associated with inspection and maintenance activities would be minimal. As a result, project emissions and PM10 levels associated with the operation of the proposed project would be less than significant.

- d) **No Impact.** Construction or operation of the proposed project would not create or contribute to a non-stationary source "hot spot". A "hot spot" is usually associated with a project that would contribute to an increase in vehicle traffic or congestion near the project area.
- e) **Less-than-Significant Impact.** Sensitive receptors are present through out the proposed project area. However, temporary emissions associated with project construction would not generate substantial pollutant concentrations. Furthermore, emissions would be spread out over the entire length (6.1 miles) and duration (4 months) of the project. Therefore, the proposed project would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.
- f) **No Impact.** The construction and operation of the proposed project would not create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people.

IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES. <i>Would the project:</i>	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Adversely impact, either directly or indirectly or through habitat modification any endangered, threatened or rare species as listed in Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations (sections 670.2 or 670.5) or in Title 50, Code of Federal Regulations (section 17.11 or 17.12)?	9	9	:	9
b) Have substantial adverse impacts, either directly or indirectly 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?	9	9	:	9
c) Have a substantial adverse impact 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?	9	9	:	9

d) Adversely impact federally protected wetlands, (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc) either individually or in combination with known probable impacts of the activities through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	9	9	:	9
e) Interfere substantially with the movement of any resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of wildlife nursery sites?	9	9	9	:
f) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as tree preservation policy or ordinance?	9	9	:	9
g) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Conservation Community Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	9	9	9	:

Explanation:

- a) **Less-than-Significant Impact.** The valley elderberry longhorn beetle, federally listed as endangered, may be present in the elderberry plants that exist in the project area. Prior to construction, all existing elderberry plants would be identified and marked. These plants would be avoided during construction of the project thereby reducing potential impacts to the valley elderberry longhorn beetle. If avoidance, consistent with the USFWS guidelines for mitigating impacts to the Valley Elderberry Beetle, is not possible, the applicant will consult with the USFWS and abide by any additional measures resulting from the consultation. Several individuals of butte county calycadenia (*Calycadenia oppositifolia*), a CNPS List 4 annual herb that is endemic to Butte County, have been observed along Segment 3. Prior to construction, this species would be identified in the field and marked. This species would be avoided during construction. No other special-status species were found during surveys for this project. However, several special-status plants that bloom outside the survey period may occur within the proposed power line corridor. Applicant Proposed Measure MM 51 requires pre-construction surveys for these special-status species. If special-status plants occur, specific techniques outlined in MM 5-1 (see Table B-1) would be followed to avoid them or mitigate impacts to a level that is less than significant.
- b) **Less-than-Significant Impact.** See IV a) above. Table 5-6 (page 5-31) of PG&E's Biological Resources Assessment (BRA) for the project lists sensitive bird species that may nest in the vicinity of the project area. The list omits Cooper's Hawk (*Accipiter cooperi*) and Sharp-shinned hawk (*Accipiter striatus*) as nesting species when the likelihood of these species nesting in the project area is high. Although these species are included in the complete list of sensitive species in Appendix B of the BRA, they are omitted from the list of potential breeding species in Table 5-6. In addition, Yellow Warblers (*Dendroica petechia*) and Yellow-breasted Chats (*Icteria virens*) are the only other species indicated in Table 5-6 which likely breed within the project impact area.

Potential impacts to special status migratory birds protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act would be avoided by constructing the project outside of the March through July nesting period to avoid disturbance to nesting birds. Applicant Proposed Mitigation Measure 5-6 requires construction activities outside of the breeding season, which would reduce potential construction impacts caused by tree trimming and removal of shrubs and trees to a level less than significant. Tree and shrub trimming along the powerline right-of-way (ROW) would also be periodically required during operation of the proposed project. To reduce impacts to nesting birds protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act during project operations, the following mitigation is required:

Measure IV-1: Where feasible, tree trimming and removal of shrubs and trees should be avoided during the nesting period of March through July. PG&E shall submit a plan to CPUC outlining the criteria and conditions that would make tree trimming and removal of shrubs and trees necessary within the said nesting period. The plan shall also provide specific procedures that PG&E will follow prior to and during trimming activities to ensure that impacts associated with disturbance of birds protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act are less than significant.

- c) **Less-than-Significant Impact.** The proposed project would temporarily disturb approximately 600 square feet of riparian scrub along Segment 3. However, Applicant Proposed Measure MM 5-4 would ensure that this habitat would be restored to pre-project conditions after project construction. In addition, Applicant Proposed Measure 5-11 would limit maintenance access roads from crossing this sensitive habitat. Applicant Proposed Measures MM 5-4 and 5-11 would reduce potentially significant impacts to riparian scrub to a level that is less than significant.

- d) **Less-than-Significant Impact.** The proposed project would disturb approximately 0.01 acre (approximately 400 ft²) of wetland during construction. Other wetlands in or near the proposed power line corridor would be avoided during construction and operation. Temporary impacts to wetlands of this size are considered to be less than significant.
- e) **No Impact.** The proposed project would not interfere with the movement of any resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of wildlife nursery sites. The proposed power line would cross several small intermittent and one perennial stream; however, a power line crossing several small streams would not interfere with the movement of any resident or migratory fish or wildlife species.
- f) **Less-than-Significant Impact.** Construction of the proposed project would require tree clearing in the Town of Paradise and unincorporated Butte County. The exact location, number, size, and type of trees to be cleared or trimmed are not known at this time. PG&E would coordinate with the Town of Paradise and Butte County to minimize tree removal and to avoid conflict with the Town of Paradise Tree Preservation Ordinance in Chapter 8.12 of the Town of Paradise Municipal Code (Town of Paradise, 1999a).
- g) **No Impact.** There are no adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Conservation Community Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plans within the proposed project area (PEA, 2000).

V. CULTURAL RESOURCES. <i>Would the project:</i>	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource which is either listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, the California Register of Historic Resources, or a local register of historic resources?	9	:	9	9
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of unique archaeological resources (i.e., an artifact, object, or site about which it can be clearly demonstrated that, without merely adding to the current body of knowledge, there is a high probability that it contains information needed to answer important scientific research questions, has a special or particular quality such as being the oldest or best available example of its type, or is directly associated with a scientifically recognized important prehistoric or historic event or person)?	9	:	9	9
c) Disturb or destroy a unique paleontological resource or site?	9	:	9	9
d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	9	:	9	9

Explanation:

- a) **Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated.** Previous archeological investigations conducted near the proposed power line route indicate that six cultural resource sites lie within or directly adjacent to the proposed power line route and adjacent corridor. One of the sites (CA-BUT-587) had been previously destroyed by grading and two others are located outside the proposed project route (CA-BUT-255, CA-BUT-588). PG&E conducted a field survey along Neal Road to locate the three remaining sites. The surveyors could not relocate the remaining three sites though it is believed that the sites still exist. In addition, one new site was recorded as part of a survey for this project. The new site consists of a segment of the historic Neal Grade Road (Site 04-001477-H), which was constructed in 1844. However, construction of the power line along the existing natural gas pipeline corridor would avoid impacts to these historical sites located along Neal Road.

The historic Paradise Train Depot is just outside of the proposed route corridor. A portion of the historic Butte County Railroad grade (unpaved bike path) lies between the existing Paradise Tap #1 60 kV line (proposed route) and the depot. The Old Paradise Train Depot was constructed in 1903 and completed by the Diamond Match Company in 1904. The depot was one of three along the railroad between Chico and Strilling City. On April 24, 1982, the depot was designated a California Point of Historical Interest (No. BUT-011). Currently, the depot is used as a "flea market".

Construction of the proposed power line along the existing Centerville-Table Mountain-Oroville 60kV and Paradise Tap #1 could disturb historical resources if construction activities are not confined to the proposed power line corridor and the areas previously surveyed as defined in the PEA. The Applicant has committed to Applicant Proposed Mitigation Measure MM 6-1 (see Table B-1) to avoid indirect impacts to the historic Paradise Train Depot.

Implementation of the applicant proposed measures under cultural and historical resources defined in Table B-1 would reduce potential impacts to cultural resources to a level less than significant.

- b) **Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated.** Refer to a) above.
- c) **Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated.** Refer to a) above.
- d) **Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated.** Refer to a) above.

VI. GEOLOGY AND SOILS. <i>Would the project:</i>	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Expose people or structures to 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?	9	9	9	:
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	9	9	:	9
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	9	9	:	9
iv) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?	9	9	9	:
v) Landslides?	9	9	:	9
vi) Flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?	9	9	9	:
vii) Wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas and where residences are intermixed with wildlands?	9	9	:	9
b) Would the project result in substantial soil erosion or loss of topsoil?	9	9	:	9
c) Would the project result in the loss of a unique geologic feature?	9	9	9	:
d) Is the project located on strata 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?	9	9	:	9
e) Is the project located on expansive soil creating substantial risks to life or property?	9	9	:	9
f) Where the sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater, is the soil capable of supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems?	9	9	9	:

Explanation:

- a) i **No Impact.** No portions of the proposed project fall within an active fault zone. The closest faults to the project area include: Paradise Fault (about four miles to the northeast of the substation); Chico Monocline Fault (about six miles west of the substation), Magalia Fault (about six miles to the northeast), and Cohasset Ridge Fault (about 11 miles to the north) (PEA, 2000). Therefore, fault rupture would not expose people or structures to substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury or death.
 - ii **Less-than-Significant Impact.** The estimated level of peak ground motions likely within the area of the power line facilities and the substation is relatively low, 0.12 g (percent gravity). Standard substation and power line design requirements would take into account ground shaking and seismic activity. As a result, potential impacts as a result of strong seismic ground shaking are less than significant.
 - iii **Less-than-Significant Impact.** Because the presence of hard rock at shallow depths and a general lack of shallow groundwater (shallow groundwater occurs mostly in fractured zones in the bedrock) within the project area, the potential threat of seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction is less than significant.
 - iv **No Impact.** The proposed project is located within the interior of California where there is no threat of a tsunami. The project is not adjacent to any large bodies of water and, therefore, could not be impacted by seiches. Mudflows are not known to occur in the project area.
 - v **Less-than-Significant Impact.** Power line poles that are located on steep slopes may be exposed to potential slope instability, which could cause tilting or loss of foundation support. Generally, power line construction does not cause or contribute to potential slope instability if proper access road construction and pole excavation and backfilling measures are employed. Implementation of Applicant Proposed Mitigation Measure MM 81 (see Table B-1) would reduce potential slope stability impacts to less than significant.
 - vi **No Impact.** Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) flood maps indicate that no portions of the project area are within a predicted 100-year flood zone. There is no potential for significant impacts by flood because the proposed power line route is on a ridge (PEA, 2000).
 - vii **Less-than-Significant Impact.** Refer to h) in Section VII Hazards and Hazardous Materials.
- b) **Less-than-Significant Impact.** Power line construction activities such as grading, trenching, pier drilling, and backfilling have the potential to cause accelerated soil erosion to surface disturbance and removal of vegetation. However, Applicant Proposed Measures MM 9-1 and MM 9-3, which include the preparation of an erosion and sediment transport control plan, and implementation of erosion control measures such as vehicle mats in wet areas, mulching, seeding, and other suitable stabilization measures would reduce potential erosion impacts associated with the proposed project to less than significant.
 - c) **No Impact.** No unique geologic features are known to occur on the project site (PEA, 2000).
 - d) **Less-than-Significant Impact.** Refer to a-iii and a-vi) above.
 - e) **Less-than-Significant Impact.** The soils derived from volcanic deposits commonly contain clays that may shrink or swell with changes in water content. Expansive soils could potentially affect the long-term performance of equipment foundations and paving in the substation area due to settlements or groundcracking. Implementation of Applicant Proposed Measure MM 82 (see Table B-1) would ensure that potential impacts as a result of expansive soils are less than significant (PEA, 2000).
 - f) **No Impact.** The proposed project would not result in an increase in wastewater in the area. Refer to a-f) in Section XVI, Utilities and Services.

VII. HAZARDS & HAZARDOUS MATERIALS. <i>Would the project:</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use or disposal of hazardous materials?	9	9	:	9
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the likely release of hazardous materials into the environment?	9	9	:	9
c) Reasonably be anticipated to emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	9	9	:	9
d) Is the project 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 create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	9	:	9	9
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?	9	9	9	:
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?	9	9	9	:
g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	9	9	:	9
h) Expose people or structures to the risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires, including where wildland are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?	9	9	:	9

Explanation:

- a) **Less-than-Significant Impact.** Some of the electrical equipment in use at the Paradise Substation contains mineral oil, which contains polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) in concentrations up to 122 parts per million. The new transformers will contain mineral oil with no PCBs. Prior to removing the existing oil-filled transformer bank at the Paradise Substation, the oil will be removed and processed consistent with state and federal regulations. Although oil spills due to electrical equipment failure are rare, the possibility exists that an oil spill could occur. The Substation will continue to be operated and maintained in accordance with California Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasures (SPCC) guidelines. The Substation is graded to direct surface runoff from areas where mineral oil-filled equipment follows the natural south and southeast surface drainage pattern of the site and surrounding properties. The SPCC plan would be updated (Applicant Proposed Measure MM 12-4) to reflect the mineral oil volumes of new electrical equipment. Potential impacts associated with a mineral oil leak are less than significant because if a leak were to occur the spill would be contained within the substation site. Any hazardous waste generated during construction of the power line, which is considered a remote operation, will be taken to either the Chico Service Center in Chico or to the Table Mountain Substation in Oroville. They are both legal waste consolidation sites. Any wastes generated at the substation will be manifested directly with an EPA number. Substations are not considered remote generators.
- b) **Less-than-Significant Impact.** Potential hazardous materials releases include the release of battery acid and mineral oil. Substation battery acid would be contained in a sealed steel case and would be located inside a metal enclosed compartment. The probability of release of battery acid to the environment is extremely low. Mineral oil would be used as an insulating medium and coolant in the substation transformers. In the event a mineral oil release were to occur, the SPCC plan ensures that no mineral oil would release to the environment.
- c) **Less-than-Significant Impact.** Refer to a) above.
- d) **Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated.** The substation site is not located on the list of hazardous material sites (PEA, 2000). However, eight properties on or adjacent to proposed power line were identified in regulatory databases searched by Environmental Data Resources, Inc. as having known or potential chemical contamination that could be encountered during project construction. (See Table B-4)

Table B-4 Potentially Contaminated Sites in the Project Area

Name and Site No. (as shown on Figure B-2)	Address and Location Relative to the Project	Nature of Contamination
USA Service Station, Site 1	6148 Skyway Road, adjacent to the proposed power line	An unleaded gasoline leak prior to 1995 has affected the aquifer. Information indicates that the site is upgradient of the proposed project.
Paradise Veterans Memorial Hall, Site 2	6550 Skyway, located ¾ mile west of the proposed power line.	A diesel fuel release occurred at the site in 1990. Currently, diesel contaminated soil remains under the Veterans building at a depth of 8 to 9 feet. Groundwater in the area flows southwest (away from the project area)
Paradise Fire Department, Site 3	767 Birch Street, 1/8 mile west of the proposed power line.	Site contamination of waste oil and diesel fuel. Information indicates that the site is upgradient of the proposed project
Paradise Corporation Yard Drive, Site 4	5640 Black Olive Street, 1/8 mile west of the proposed power line.	The status of this facility is unknown and no releases have been identified at this property. Information indicates that the site is upgradient of the proposed project.
Pacific Bell, Site 5	772 Elliot Road, Adjacent to and west of the proposed power line.	The site has USTs storing gasoline, diesel fuel, and waste oil. No releases have been reported. Groundwater in the area flows southwest (away from the project area).
Wolfe Construction, Site 6	711 Willow Street, ¼ mile west of the proposed power line.	The site has a UST that stores diesel fuel. No releases have been reported. Groundwater in the area flows southwest (towards the project area).
The Paradise Irrigation District Office, Site 7	5640 Black Olive Drive, ¼ mile west of the proposed power line.	An active UST is on site. The type of material stored and the status of this UST is unknown. Groundwater in the area flows southwest (towards the project area).
Paradise Lumber Company, Site 8	5757 Skyway, ¼ mile north of the proposed power line.	An active UST is on site. The type of material stored and the status of this UST is unknown. Groundwater in the area flows southwest (away from the project area).

Source: PEA, 2000

As listed in Table B-4, several sites are adjacent to or upgradient to the proposed power line route. If contaminants associated with the sites have migrated under the proposed power line corridor, construction activities associated with excavation or grading could potentially expose construction workers, nearby members of the public, and the environment to unanticipated contaminated soils. Special care would be taken to avoid pole locations in the immediate vicinity of the above sites, and proper precautions would be taken to avoid contamination exposure to project construction workers and the environment.

- e) **No Impact.** The project is located more than two miles from the nearest public airport (PEA, 2000).
- f) **No Impact.** The project is not located within the vicinity of a private airstrip (PEA, 2000).
- g) **Less-than-Significant Impact.** One lane would be closed on Skyway south of the Neal Road and Skyway intersection, and along the southern portion of Neal Road periodically during pole removal and replacement, and conductor stringing. Lane closures could potentially impact emergency response in the project area. Applicant Proposed Measure MM 14-1 is designed to reduce lane closure impacts. Traffic diversion plans would be laid out according to the Caltrans Traffic Manual, County Guidelines, and encroachment permits (PEA, 2000). Applicant Proposed Measure MM 14-2 assures that access to all residences and properties near the project would be maintained at all times. MM 14-2 would reduce potential emergency access impacts to less than significant.
- h) **Less-than-Significant Impact.** The proposed project area has high fire hazard during the designated fire season. For the Paradise area, the critical fire season usually begins July 1 and ends October 1, depending on various climatic conditions. If construction commences during the designated fire season, the Butte County and Paradise Fire Departments would review the specific construction methods and equipment and define any additional requirements that would minimize the potential for wildfires.

With regard to fire hazards during the operation of the power line, the applicant would take into account normal and unusual structural loads, such as wind and snow that could cause conductors to break. The applicant would also select the appropriate materials and construct the power line in order to minimize the potentially significant fire-related impacts. The potential exists for trees growing within or adjacent to the power line to interfere with the electrical wires, causing outages or potential for fires. PG&E would clear all vegetation within a radius of 10 feet from the

power lines to minimize the chance of fire [Public Resources Code (PRC) 4293]. Also, PG&E would remove or trim all hazardous trees that are dead, decadent, decayed, diseased, or are leaning into the line and which may fall into or onto the line pursuant to PRC 4293. PG&E has committed to several additional measures to reduce potential fire impacts (see Applicant Proposed Measures MM 12-1, MM 12-2, and MM 12-3).

Clearing of vegetation consistent with Section 4293 and CDF Guidelines in addition to implementation of Applicant Proposed Measures MM 12-1, MM 12-2, and MM 12-3 would reduce potential impacts of fire during construction and operation of the project to a level that is less than significant.

VIII. HYDROLOGY & WATER QUALITY. <i>Would the project:</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
a) Violate Regional Water Quality Control Board water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?	9	9	:	9
b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater discharge such that there would be a net deficit in the aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (i.e., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?	9	9	9	:
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?	9	9	:	9
d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in flooding on- or off-site?	9	9	:	9
e) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems to control?	9	9	:	9
f) Place housing within a 100-year flood plain, as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other hazard delineation map?	9	9	9	:
g) Place within 100-year flood plain structures that would impede or redirect flood flows?	9	9	9	:

Explanation:

- a) **Less-than-Significant Impact.** Surface and ground water quality could potentially be affected by construction induced erosion or sedimentation, and/or by accidental releases of petroleum hydrocarbons from construction equipment or concrete associated with pole foundation construction. Implementation of Best Management Construction Practices and prevention plans as listed in Table B-1 (Applicant Proposed Measures MM 91 through MM 93) would reduce potential impacts to a level that is less than significant (PEA, 2000).

With regard to operations of the proposed project, surface and ground water quality could potentially be affected by an accidental release of mineral oil at the Paradise Substation. A release, whether from slow leaks or a large spill could wash into nearby drainages or infiltrate into groundwater. Although the mineral oil that would be used at the substation would not contain PCBs, which pose risk to human health, the Central Valley RWQCB prohibits the release of any oil to waters of the state. To reduce potential impacts associated with operation of the proposed project to less than significant, PG&E has committed to revising their Spill Prevention, Countermeasure, and Control (SPCC) plan for the Paradise Substation (Applicant Proposed Measure MM 9-4).

- b) **No Impact.** The proposed project would not deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater discharge such that there would be a net deficit in the aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level.

- c) **Less-than-Significant Impact.** Construction and operation of the proposed project would not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the subject project area. Pole foundation and road construction would reduce runoff infiltration capacity in such a small area that the project would result in a less than significant impact.
- d) **Less-than-Significant Impact.** Refer to c) above.
- e) **Less-than-Significant Impact.** Refer to c) above.
- f) **No Impact.** The proposed project consists solely of a reinforcement of an existing above-ground electrical system and its associated substation and would not result in the construction of new housing or need to construct any new housing in the project area.
- g) **No Impact.** According to Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) flood maps, the project area is not within a predicted 100-year flood zone (PEA, 2000). Therefore, no structures associated with the proposed project would be placed within a 100-year flood zone.

IX. LAND USE AND PLANNING. <i>Would the project:</i>	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Physically divide an established community?	9	9	9	:
b) Conflict with applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance)?	9	9	:	9
c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural communities conservation plan?	9	9	9	:

Explanation:

- a) **No Impact.** The proposed project would not divide an established community. The project is to reinforce an existing electrical system. The power line would be along the same route as an existing power line along the Paradise Memorial Trailway and Skyway, and proposed modifications to the Paradise Substation would occur within PG&E's existing substation property, no new space would need to be acquired.
- b) **Less-Than-Significant Impact.** The proposed power line would be located within an existing utility easement, which would be spacially separated from land uses adjacent to the trailway and Skyway. Therefore, no significant long-term land use impacts are anticipated as a result of construction of the project.

The project would permanently remove approximately 905 square feet from areas identified as "grazing" in the Department of Conservation Interim Farmland map. However, removal of shrubs during construction would improve the condition of "grazing" land by replacing shrubs with grass, resulting in a likely net gain of grazing land.

The Town of Paradise Resolution No. 95-11 has established policy and regulations prescribing specific areas, land uses, and conditions of approval of such land uses with the Paradise Memorial Trailway. The policy is that the Paradise Memorial Trailway be dedicated for perpetual use as a recreational corridor. The Town of Paradise indicates a special use permit needs to be procured relative to the "segment 5" portion of the proposed project design and that CPUC staff require an alternative project design that entails undergrounding of the power lines within project route segments 4 and 5. (Town of Paradise, 2000)

However, CPUC Decision 94-06-014 and General Order 131-D give exclusive jurisdiction to the CPUC over all privately owned utility electric facilities in California, preempting them from local agency jurisdiction, such as Resolution No. 95-11. Therefore, while CPUC does consider the physical environmental effects in this Initial Study, non-compliance with Town of Paradise Resolution No. 95-11 would not be a significant impact of land use and planning.

- c) **No Impact.** There are no habitat conservation plans or natural community conservation plans that address the proposed project area.

X. MINERAL RESOURCES. <i>Would the project:</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource classified MRZ-2 by the State Geologist that would be valuable to the region and the residents of the state?	9	9	9	:
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?	9	9	9	:

Explanation:

- a) **No Impact.** No mineral resources have been identified within the affected area of the proposed project, and there are no active mineral recovery operations within the proposed project area (PEA, 2000).
- b) **No Impact.** Refer to a) above.

XI. NOISE. <i>Would the project result in:</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
a) 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?	9	:	9	9
b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive ground borne vibration noise levels?	9	9	:	9
c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	9	9	:	9
d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	9	9	:	9
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the area to excessive noise levels?	9	9	9	:
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the area to excessive noise levels?	9	9	9	:

Explanation:

- a) **Potentially Significant Impact Unless Mitigation Incorporated.** Construction of the proposed power line and substation improvements would require the use of heavy machinery such as cranes, earth-moving equipment, compressors, air tampers, generators, trucks and other equipment. In addition, helicopters would be used in some areas to transport construction materials and to string the conductors. The maximum intermittent construction noise levels would range from approximately 80 to 88 dBA at 50 feet for power pole assembly and approximately 84 to 90 dBA during tamping operations. Helicopter noise levels are expected to range from approximately 92 to 95 dBA at 150 feet (PEA, 2000).

People near the construction site may be affected by intermittent and continuous noise levels during construction. The applicant has committed to numerous measures (Applicant Proposed Measures MM 11-1 through MM 11-5; see Table B-1) to reduce noise impacts at sensitive receptor locations. In addition, Applicant Proposed Measure MM 10-1 from Land Use specifies that landowners immediately adjacent to proposed construction be notified prior to the start of construction and a PG&E contact person would be designated and a telephone number and address provided to the notified parties to allow them to obtain information and comment about project construction.

Construction noise along the proposed power line route would be of short duration (approximately 5 months) and would be limited to between the hours of 6:00 am to 7:00 pm, per the Paradise Municipal Code noise regulations. Potential impacts are considered less than significant with implementation of Applicant Proposed Measures MM 11-1 through MM 11-5, and MM 10-1.

For long-term noise impacts associated with operations of the proposed project, refer to XI c)

- b) **Less-than-Significant Impact.** The proposed project is to upgrade of an existing above ground electrical system's reliability. However, local vibration may be possible during project construction due to the operation of construction equipment and vehicles. None of the types of equipment or vehicles to be utilized during construction are considered to be of a type that would be expected to produce excessive vibration levels. Any appreciable vibration at any given location would be temporary in nature and would be limited to between the hours of 7:00 am to 7:00 pm, per the Paradise Municipal Codes noise regulations. Impacts related to groundborne vibrations associated with the proposed project would be considered less than significant.
- c) **Less-than-Significant Impact.** Audible power line noise is generated from corona discharge, which is usually experienced as a random crackling or hissing sound. The potential for noise from corona discharge is greater with high voltage lines during wet weather. For example noise generated by a 230kV line during wet weather conditions are generally expected to be 30 to 40 dBA at 100 from the outer conductor. However, corona noise associated with proposed 150kV line would be considerably less and barely audible to noise receptors along the route due to its relatively low voltage and existing ambient noise levels. Operational noise impacts associated with corona noise would be less than significant.

With regard to operations at the substation site, one new 45 MVA transformer would replace four existing smaller, single-phase transformers of around 78 MVA each. A worst-case scenario was computer modeled using full load, daytime operating conditions at FA rating. The modeling demonstrated that the replacement of four smaller, single-phase transformers with the larger 45 MVA unit, combined with the removal of the four other existing transformers, results in a significant reduction in predicted noise levels (16 dBA to the north, 16 dBA to the west, 12 dBA to the northwest, and 12 dBA to the east) around the substation. The existing soundwall would be left in place to maximize the reduction in noise emitted from the transformers. Therefore, the proposed modifications to the Paradise Substation would not cause significant impacts to adjacent sensitive receptors.

- d) **Less-than-Significant Impact.** See XI a) and c).
- e) **No Impact.** The project is not within an airport land use plan (PEA, 2000).
- f) **No Impact.** At its closest point, the project is 2.3 miles from the north end of the Paradise Skypark Airport runway. The project would not result in excessive noise levels near the airport.

XII. POPULATION AND HOUSING. <i>Would the project:</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
a) Induce a substantial 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)?	9	9	9	:
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	9	9	9	:
c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	9	9	9	:

Explanation:

- a) **No Impact.** As stated in the PEA, the proposed project is intended to increase the reliability of the electrical service to existing customers. Without the increase in line capacity, PG&E anticipates that problems of electrical facility outages and disruptions to customer service during peak load times would be compounded as demand increases due to growth in the region. The project is not intended to induce growth, but instead is intended to accommodate anticipated growth in electric demand.

- b) **No Impact.** No residential property would be displaced by this construction (PEA, 2000).
- c) **No Impact.** Refer to b) above.

XIII. PUBLIC SERVICES. <i>Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provisions of new or physically altered government 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:</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
a) Fire protection?	9	9	9	:
b) Police protection?	9	9	9	:
c) Schools?	9	9	9	:
d) Parks?	9	9	:	9
e) Other public facilities?	9	9	9	:

Explanation:

- a) **No Impact.** The proposed project would not overburden existing fire protection services or necessitate additional services in the area. Fire protection service to the project area is adequately provided by three Town of Paradise fire departments and a California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection station. During construction, construction vehicles may temporarily slow traffic but would not prevent passage of vehicles, including emergency vehicles.
- b) **No Impact.** Adequate police protection for the project site is provided by the Paradise Police Department and the Butte County Sheriffs Office. During construction, construction vehicles may temporarily slow traffic but would not prevent passage of vehicles, including emergency vehicles.
- c) **No Impact.** The proposed project involves the upgrading of existing facilities and construction of new power poles and would not result in a direct increase of population growth or increased housing. Therefore, the proposed project would not tax existing schools nor necessitate the need for additional schools in the area.
- d) **Less-than-Significant Impact.** The proposed project would not result in a direct increase of population growth or increased housing. Therefore, the project would not tax existing parks nor necessitate the need for additional parks in the area. Although the Paradise Memorial Trailway would be closed four times in segments along the power lines during construction, these closures would be temporary and would not impact future use of the trail.
- e) **No Impact.** The project would not increase the need for other public facilities because it involves the upgrading of existing facilities and construction of new power lines on undeveloped land.

XIV. RECREATION.	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
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?	9	9	9	:
b) Does the project include recreation facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	9	9	9	:

Explanation:

- a) **No Impact.** The proposed project would not 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. It is not likely that the project would lead to an increase in the use of the Memorial Trailway.
- b) **No Impact.** The proposed project would not include recreation facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment.

XV. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC. <i>Would the project:</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
a) Cause an increase in traffic which is substantial in relation to existing traffic load and capacity of the street system (i.e., result in a substantial increase in either the number of vehicle trips, the volume to capacity ration on roads, or congestion at intersections)?	9	9	:	9
b) Exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by either by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?	9	9	:	9
c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?	9	9	9	:
d) Substantially increase hazards to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	9	9	9	:
e) Result in inadequate emergency access?	9	9	:	9
f) Result in inadequate parking capacity?	9	9	9	:
g) Conflicts with adopted policies supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks)?	9	9	9	:

Explanation:

- a) **Less-than-Significant Impact.** Skyway is the most heavily used road in the Town of Paradise. Traffic flow is predominately southbound in the mornings (commuters driving into Chico) and northbound in the afternoons. The two-way traffic volumes for the portion of the road within the project area are approximately 24,000 vehicles per day. Traffic volumes for Skyway and other roads are presented in Figure B-10.
- b) **Less-than-Significant Impact.** Construction of the proposed project would cause a minor increase in local traffic throughout the project study area. Construction traffic would include commuting workers, material deliveries, and specialized construction and crew trucks from staging areas to the project site. Approximately 40 workers would be present at the site at one time over the five month construction period. PG&E anticipates that there would be a maximum of 122 construction crew vehicular trips per day during the height of the construction period (PEA, 2000). These additional trips associated with the construction of proposed project would temporarily cause a negligible increase of traffic in the project area. In addition, one road lane would be closed an estimated four times during construction along both Neal Road and Skyway. Lane closures follow traffic diversion plans laid out in the Caltrans Traffic Manual, County guidelines, and encroachment permits (PEA, 2000). Lanes would be closed for approximately 8 to 10 hours a day. Lane closures may contribute to increases in temporary traffic delays during construction. Lane closures would occur on portions of the road (Skyway) that are at a Level of Service (LOS) C. To reduce potential lane closure impacts to a level of less than significant, the applicant has proposed measure MM 14-1 (see Table B-1).

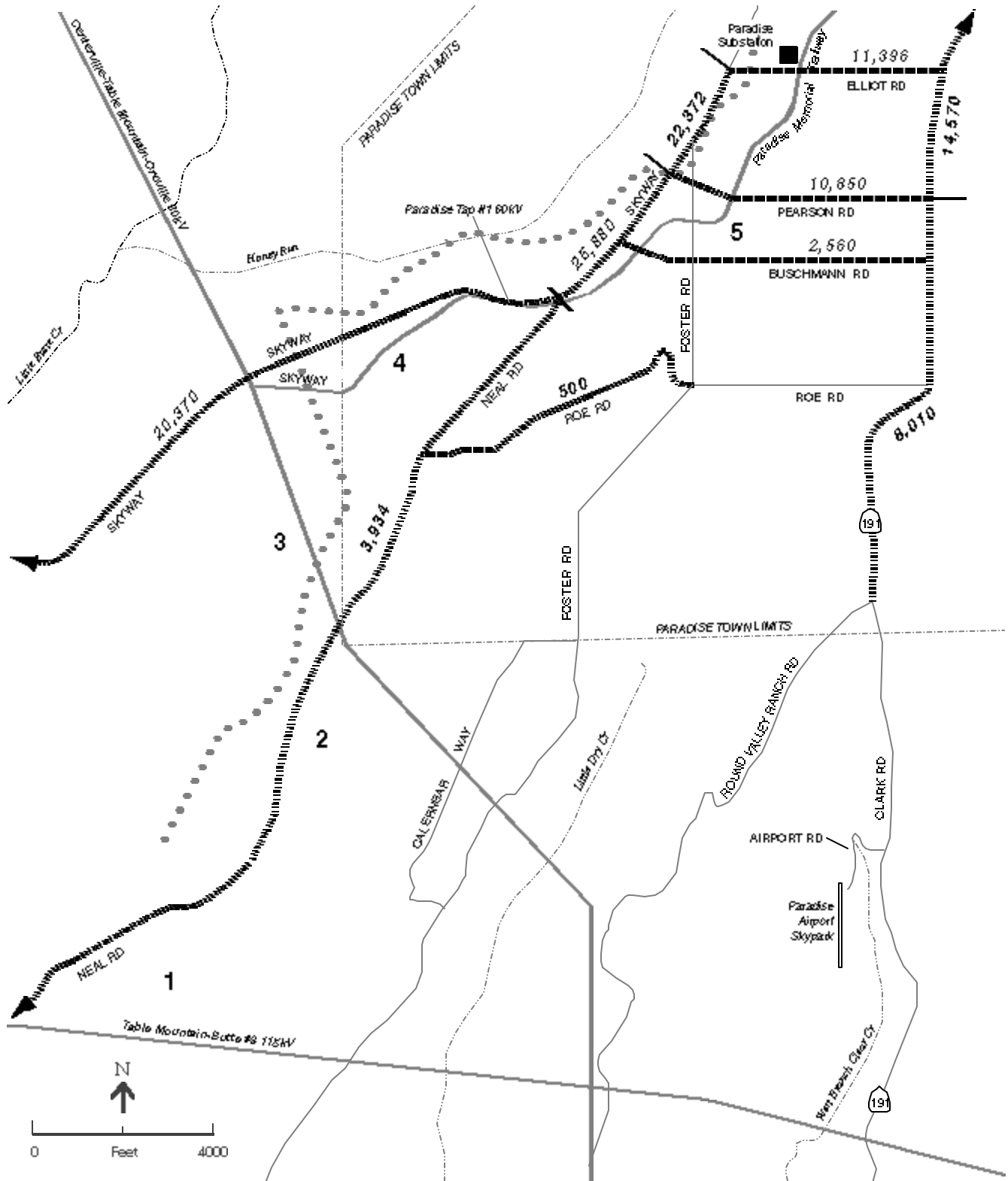
**Paradise Area
Reinforcement Project**

Figure B-10
**Traffic Volumes
on Paradise Roads**

Aspen
Environmental Group

- Existing Power Line
 - Proposed Route
 - Proposed Power Line will replace the Existing Paradise Tap #1 60KV
 - Roads
 - - - Creeks
- 500 Actual Traffic Volumes per day
- 1-5 Power Line Segments

Source: PEA, 2000



- c) **Less-than-Significant Impact.** The LOS for the portions of Skyway and Neal Road that would be affected by construction are below the LOS standard threshold for these roadways (PEA, 2000). Traffic generated during construction activities would be short-term and would not significantly impact the LOS of the subject roadways. Also, refer to XV a).
- d) **No Impact.** The proposed project would not result in a change in air traffic patterns.
- e) **No Impact.** The proposed project would not increase hazards on area roadways due to a design feature or incompatible uses.
- f) **Less-than-Significant Impact.** A one-road lane would be closed an estimated four times during construction along both Neal Road and Skyway. However, Applicant Proposed Mitigation Measure MM 14-2 ensures that access to all residences and properties near the project would be maintained at all times for emergency access.
- g) **No Impact.** The completion of the proposed project would result in a transmission line upgrade and would not result in a demand for increased parking areas. No new facilities, which include parking areas, will be constructed.
- h) **No Impact.** The proposed project would result in an upgrade of an existing electrical system servicing existing customers. The completed project would not conflict with adopted policies that support alternative transportation

XVI. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS. <i>Would the project:</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?	9	9	9	:
b) Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities, the construction of which would cause significant environmental effects?	9	9	9	:
c) Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, construction of which would cause significant environmental effects?	9	9	9	:
d) Are sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?	9	9	9	:
e) Has the wastewater treatment provider who serves or may serve the project determined that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	9	9	9	:
f) Is the project served by the landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?	9	9	:	9

Explanation:

- a) **No Impact.** The proposed project involves the alteration of an existing electrical system and does not involve the establishment of any land uses that generate wastewater (PEA, 2000). The project site would be serviced by existing water and sewer services. No expansion of services would be required.
- b) **No Impact.** Refer to XV a) above.
- c) **No Impact.** Overall drainage patterns would not be affected. Substation improvements would be sited within the existing Paradise Substation's footprint. Construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities would not be required as part of the proposed project.
- d) **No Impact.** Existing water supplies would serve project needs. No new entitlements would be required.
- e) **No Impact.** Refer to XV a) above.

- f) **Less-than-Significant Impacts.** Construction debris would go to a contracted landfill with sufficient capacity. When feasible, debris would be recycled. Poles that are removed would be recycled and reused depending on their condition. Construction debris would not significantly reduce landfill capacity.

XVI. MANDATORY FINDING OF SIGNIFICANCE.	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
a) Does the project have the potential to 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, 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?	9	9	:	9
b) Does the project have the potential to achieve short term, to the disadvantage of long-term, environmental goals?	9	9	9	:
c) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? <i>Cumulatively considerable</i> 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.)	9	9	:	9
d) Does the project have environmental effects that will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	9	9	:	9

XVII. EARLIER ANALYSES.

Some of the explanations contained in the preceding Evaluation of Environmental Impacts are derived from the Proponent’s Environmental Assessment, submitted with the original application (January 28, 2000). PG&E staff prepared this document. Additional information was obtained during a visit to the project site on February 8, 2000, by personnel from PG&E, the California Public Utilities Commission, and Aspen Environmental Group.

XVIII. REFERENCES.

BCAQMD (Butte County Air Quality Management District). 2000. Personal communication with Gail Williams of BCAQMD on February 15, 2000.

BCDDS (Butte County Department of Development Services), 2000. Personal communication (fax) with Dave Doody of BCDDS, Planning Division. April 4.

PEA. 2000. Proponents Environmental Assessment, Paradise Area Reinforcement Project

PG&E, 2000. Pacific Gas and Electric Company’s response to data request. March 25.

PG&E, 2000a. Personal communication with Steve Stielstra of PG&E on May 10, 2000.

Town of Paradise, 1999. Town of Paradise Zoning Map, Last Updated April 7, 1999.

____, 1999a. Town of Paradise Tree Preservation Ordinance, Chapter 8.12 of the Town of Paradise Municipal Code.

Town of Paradise, 2000. Letter from Al McGreehan, Community Development Director, March 31, 2000.

XIX. NAMES OF PREPARERS OF THIS INITIAL STUDY

Table B-5 Initial Study Preparers

Name	Agency/Firm
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