

# Chapter 5—Land Use, Recreation, and Agricultural Resources

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## 5.1 Introduction

This chapter describes existing land use, recreation, and agricultural resources within the project area and analyzes potential impacts to these resources from construction and operation of project facilities. Although the location of the Dublin Substation site will reduce Williamson Act contract land and potential future medium density residential development, the project will have less than significant land use and agricultural resources impacts because of the amount of surrounding land with these designations. Public utility transmission lines are compatible with all of the land use designations in the project area. The project is compatible with all applicable environmental plans and policies adopted by local agencies responsible for land use planning in the project area. The proposed project will not impact recreational resources. Jurisdictional boundaries in the project area are shown in Figures 5-1, 5-2, and 5-3.

### 5.1.1 Methodology

Various documents were reviewed to complete the land use analysis. These included aerial photos of the project area, city and county general plans and zoning ordinances, and environmental impact reports prepared for other projects in the area. PG&E also obtained information from planning department and/or engineering department staff from the Cities of Pleasanton, Dublin, and Livermore, as well as Alameda County and Contra Costa County. In addition, on-site surveys were conducted along the transmission line routes and at the substation sites where public access was available.

## 5.2 Existing Conditions

### 5.2.1 Jurisdictions

The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) has primary jurisdiction over the project by virtue of its approval authority over construction, operation, and maintenance of public utility facilities. Because local governments do not have discretionary authority over utility projects, such projects are exempt from local land use and zoning regulations and permitting. However, General Order 131-D, Section III.C. requires “the utility to communicate with, and obtain the input of, local authorities regarding land use matters and obtain any non-discretionary local permits...” As part of its environmental review process, PG&E considered local and state land use plans and policies, and local issues.

As shown in Figures 5.1, 5.2, and 5.3, the majority of the proposed transmission line routes lie within unincorporated areas of Contra Costa County and Alameda County. Portions of the routes pass through the City of Pleasanton. The proposed substations, North Livermore and Dublin, are located in Alameda County and in Contra Costa County, respectively. The

proposed transition structure is located in Pleasanton. Table 5-1 provides definitions for the general plan land use designations referenced in the following discussion and in Figures 5-1 through 5-3. General Plan land use designations, existing land use, and agricultural contract status are summarized in Table 5-2 and described in further detail subsequently. Existing and proposed recreational facilities are summarized in Table 5-3. Figures 5-1, 5-2, and 5-3 show land use designations and proposed recreational facilities within approximately one-half mile of proposed project facilities. Figures 5-4, 5-5, and 5-6 show existing land use conditions within approximately one-half mile from the center line of the project.<sup>1</sup>

## 5.2.2 General Plan Designations and Existing Land Use

### North Area—Phase 1

#### Transmission Line

The North Area Phase 1 proposed 230 kV transmission line route travels primarily through grazing land in an existing PG&E easement. The area between Mileposts B10.4 and B10.7 is designated Resource Management by the East County Area Plan Land Use Diagram and is currently used for grazing and wind turbines. Some of the parcels are under Williamson Act contract.

The Williamson Act (California Government Code Section 51200 et seq.) is a state law that establishes a program to preserve agricultural land. Under this program, the owner of an agricultural parcel may enter into a contract with the county in which the owner agrees to maintain agricultural operations on the parcel. In exchange, the county assesses the property based solely on the agricultural value of the parcel, lowering the property tax obligation of the property owner. The contracts are valid for a ten-year period and are automatically renewed unless the property owner files for non-renewal. If an application for non-renewal is filed, the contract terminates at the conclusion of the ten-year term. Cancellations can occur only under limited circumstances.

The land between Mileposts B10.7 and B12.7 is designated Large Parcel Agriculture and also contains parcels under Williamson Act contract. This land is in agricultural production and used for grazing. Between Mileposts B12.7 and B12.8, the route crosses Cayetano Creek, which is designated Water Management. This land is under Williamson Act contract and is used for grazing. After crossing the creek, the route continues through grazing land designated Large Parcel Agriculture between Mileposts B12.8 and B13.3. Some of these parcels are under Williamson Act contract. Most of this land is vacant or used for grazing. An existing and a proposed recreational trail would be crossed between Mileposts B12.9 and B13.1.

At Milepost B13.3, the route crosses into land designated as Resource Management and continues through this designation until Milepost B17. Some of this land is under Williamson Act contract and contains a few small farmhouses and grazing land. An existing barn is located in the proposed easement between Mileposts B14.7 and B14.8. Proposed recreational trails would be crossed between Mileposts B14.3 and B14.5, B15 and B15.2, and B16.2 and B16.4.

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<sup>1</sup> Existing land uses were identified from aerial photos dated 1/98 and 4/98 and field information collected in 6/99.

**Figure 5-1 Existing Zoning Designation, North Area—Phase 1**  
**11 X 17 color**

**Figure 5-2 Existing Zoning Designation, North Area—Phase 2**  
**11 X 17 color**

**Figure 5-3 Existing Zoning Designation, South Area**  
**11 X 17 color**

## Figure 5-4 Existing Land Use, North Area—Phase 1

**Figure 5-5 Existing Land Use, North Area—Phase 2**

## Figure 5-6 Existing Land Use, South Area



**TABLE 5-1**  
General Plan Land Use Designation Definitions

Rural Density Residential (Pleasanton)	No more than 0.2 dwelling units per gross developable acre. Any housing type (detached and attached single family homes, duplexes, townhouses, condominiums, and apartments) in addition to religious facilities and other community facilities, may be allowed provided that all requirements of zoning ordinance are met.
Low Density Residential (Alameda County)	Allows for densities of 1.0 to 4.0 units per acre. This designation provides for single family detached and attached homes, secondary residential units, public and quasi-public uses, limited agricultural uses, community and neighborhood commercial uses, neighborhood support uses, and similar and compatible uses.
Low Density Residential (Pleasanton)	Less than two dwelling units per gross developable acre. Any housing type (detached and attached single family homes, duplexes, townhouses, condominiums, and apartments) in addition to religious facilities and other community facilities, may be allowed provided that all requirements of zoning ordinance are met.
Medium Density Residential (Alameda County)	Allows for densities of 4.1 to 8.0 units per acre. This designation provides for single family detached and attached homes, multiple family residential units, group quarters, public and quasi-public uses, limited agricultural uses, community and neighborhood commercial uses, neighborhood support uses, and similar and compatible uses.
Medium Density Residential (Pleasanton)	Between two and eight dwelling units per gross developable acre. Any housing type (detached and attached single family homes, duplexes, townhouses, condominiums, and apartments) in addition to religious facilities and other community facilities, may be allowed provided that all requirements of zoning ordinance are met.
High Density Residential (Pleasanton)	Greater than eight dwelling units per gross developable acre. Any housing type (detached and attached single family homes, duplexes, townhouses, condominiums, and apartments) in addition to religious facilities and other community facilities, may be allowed provided that all requirements of zoning ordinance are met.
Commercial (Pleasanton)	Floor area ratios (FAR) not to exceed 0.6. This designation provides for retail, highway, service commercial, and business and professional offices.
Industrial (Pleasanton)	Floor area ratios (FAR) not to exceed 0.5. This designation provides for retail, highway, service commercial, and business and professional offices.
Industrial (Alameda County)	Allows for a maximum building intensity of 0.4 floor area ratio except within ¼ mile of a BART station or within downtown commercial areas where a 1.0 floor area ratio is allowed. This designation provides for industrial parks, warehouses, light and heavy manufacturing, assembly, storage, low intensity office uses, public and quasi-public uses, and similar and compatible uses.
Public (Pleasanton)	Intended for any public or institutional use. Floor area ratios not to exceed 0.6.
Parks (Pleasanton)	Neighborhood, community, and regional parks. No significant development is allowed in these areas.

**TABLE 5-1**  
General Plan Land Use Designation Definitions

Rural Density Residential (Pleasanton)	No more than 0.2 dwelling units per gross developable acre. Any housing type (detached and attached single family homes, duplexes, townhouses, condominiums, and apartments) in addition to religious facilities and other community facilities, may be allowed provided that all requirements of zoning ordinance are met.
Water Management (Alameda County)	Intended for watershed lands. Lands are generally not open to the public, but serve as passive open space. Allows for a minimum parcel size of 100 acres and a maximum building intensity of 0.01 floor area ratio. One single family home per parcel is allowed.
Resource Management (Alameda County)	Intended for land designated for long-term preservation as open space. Allows for a minimum parcel size of 100 acres and a maximum building intensity of 0.01 floor area ratio. One single family home per parcel is allowed.
Agricultural Land (Contra Costa County)	Most of the land with this designation is used for grazing livestock or dry grain farming. Allows for 0.2 units per net acre.
Large Parcel Agriculture (Alameda County)	Allows for a minimum parcel size of 100 acres and a maximum building intensity of 0.1 floor area ratio except in areas supporting greenhouses where a maximum building intensity of 0.1 is allowed. One single family home per parcel is allowed.
Public Health and Safety (Pleasanton)	Land set aside for the protection of the public health and safety due to geologic, topographic, fire, or other hazards. No development is allowed in these areas other than one single-family home on existing lots of record as of September 16, 1986.
Wind Resource Area (Alameda County)	Area designated by the California Energy Commission for wind harvesting.
Sand and Gravel Harvesting (Pleasanton)	Areas that have been or are in the process of being mined for sand and gravel.
Wildlands Overlay (Pleasanton)	Contain valuable habitats and communities. Require special attention in order to protect biological diversity and special-status species listed by Federal and State resource agencies.

**TABLE 5-2**  
General Plan Land Use Designation and Existing Land Uses by Milepost

Milepost/Substation <sup>1</sup>	General Plan Land Use Designation and Agricultural Contract Status	Existing Land Use
<b>North Area Phase 1</b>		
B10.4 – B10.7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resource Management</li> <li>• Williamson Act contract</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grazing</li> </ul>
B10.7 – B12.7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large Parcel Agriculture</li> <li>• Williamson Act contract</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grazing</li> <li>• Agriculture</li> </ul>
B12.7 – B12.8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water Management</li> <li>• Williamson Act contract</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grazing</li> </ul>
B12.8 – B13.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large Parcel Agriculture</li> <li>• Williamson Act contract</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grazing</li> </ul>
B13.3 – B17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resource Management</li> <li>• Williamson Act contract</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grazing</li> <li>• Barn</li> </ul>
B17 – B17.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large Parcel Agriculture</li> <li>• Williamson Act contract</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grazing</li> </ul>
V0 – V1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large Parcel Agriculture</li> <li>• Williamson Act contract</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agriculture</li> <li>• Grazing</li> </ul>
North Livermore Substation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large Parcel Agriculture</li> <li>• Medium Density Residential</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agriculture</li> <li>• Grazing</li> <li>• Open Space</li> </ul>
Dublin Substation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agricultural Lands</li> <li>• Williamson Act contract</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grazing</li> </ul>
<b>North Area Phase 2</b>		
A0 – A0.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large Parcel Agriculture</li> <li>• Wind Resource Area</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grazing</li> <li>• Open Space</li> </ul>
C0 – C7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large Parcel Agriculture</li> <li>• Wind Resource Area</li> <li>• Williamson Act contract</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grazing</li> <li>• Wind Turbines</li> <li>• Open Space</li> </ul>
C7 – B10.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large Parcel Agriculture</li> <li>• Williamson Act contract</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grazing</li> <li>• Open Space</li> </ul>
<b>South Area</b>		
MX0 – MX1.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resource Management</li> <li>• Williamson Act contract</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grazing</li> <li>• Open Space</li> </ul>
MX1.3 – MX1.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large Parcel Agriculture</li> <li>• Williamson Act contract</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grazing</li> <li>• Open Space</li> </ul>
MX1.5 – MX1.8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resource Management</li> <li>• Williamson Act contract</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grazing</li> <li>• Open Space</li> </ul>
MX1.8 – M3.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large Parcel Agriculture</li> <li>• Williamson Act contract</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grazing</li> <li>• Open Space</li> </ul>

**TABLE 5-2**  
General Plan Land Use Designation and Existing Land Uses by Milepost

Milepost/Substation <sup>1</sup>	General Plan Land Use Designation and Agricultural Contract Status	Existing Land Use
M3.0 – M3.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rural Density Residential</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grazing</li> <li>Open Space</li> </ul>
Transition Structure (M3.1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rural Density Residential</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gazing</li> <li>Open Space</li> </ul>
M3.1 – M3.8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rural Density Residential</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Open space</li> <li>Residential</li> </ul>
M3.8 – M4.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low Density Residential</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Residential</li> </ul>
M4.3 – M4.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Medium Density Residential</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Residential</li> </ul>
M4.6 – M4.7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Park</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Park</li> </ul>
M4.7 – M5.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Medium Density Residential</li> <li>High Density Residential</li> <li>Park</li> <li>Major Commercial</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Residential</li> <li>Park</li> <li>Commercial</li> </ul>
M5.3 – M5.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public Health and Safety</li> <li>Wildlands Overlay</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Waterway</li> </ul>
M5.4 – M5.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Major Public</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vacant</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup>Mileposts break at land use designation changes.

**TABLE 5-3**  
Existing and Proposed Recreational Facilities Crossed or Paralleled by the Project

Milepost/Substation	Recreational Facilities
<b>North Area ¾ Phase 1</b>	
B12.9 – B13.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Crosses proposed and existing regional trails</li> </ul>
B14.3 – B14.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Crosses proposed regional trail</li> </ul>
B15 – B15.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Crosses proposed regional trail</li> </ul>
B16.2 – B16.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Crosses proposed regional trail</li> </ul>
<b>North Area ¾ Phase 2</b>	
C1.7 – C1.8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Crosses proposed regional trail</li> </ul>
C3.7 – C3.8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Crosses proposed regional trail</li> </ul>
C5.3 – C5.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Crosses proposed regional trail</li> </ul>
C5.5 – C5.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Crosses proposed regional trail</li> </ul>
W2.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Crosses proposed regional trail</li> </ul>
W3.5 – W3.8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Crosses and parallels proposed regional trail</li> </ul>
<b>South Area</b>	
MX0.4 – MX0.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Crosses existing regional trail</li> </ul>
M4.5 – M4.7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Crosses neighborhood park</li> </ul>

Between Mileposts B17 and B17.2, the route passes through land designated Large Parcel Agriculture that is currently used for grazing. This land is under Williamson Act contract.

The portion of the route leading to the North Livermore Substation (Mileposts V0 through V1.0) is designated Large Parcel Agriculture. An existing distribution line is present along North Livermore Avenue. Some of these parcels are under Williamson Act contract. This segment is located on land in agricultural production and land used for grazing. There are no existing or proposed recreational facilities in the area.

## Substations

### *North Livermore Substation*

The North Livermore Substation site is in Alameda County and is located on land designated Medium Density Residential on the northern half of the site and Large Parcel Agriculture on the southern half. The land is currently used for cattle and may have been planted in the past. There are no existing or proposed recreational facilities within or adjacent to the substation site.

### *Dublin Substation*

The Dublin Substation site is located in Contra Costa County. It is designated Agricultural Land and is under Williamson Act contract. The land is currently used for grazing. There is one small utility-type structure located adjacent to the site. There are no existing or proposed recreational facilities within or adjacent to the substation site.

## North Area—Phase 2

### Transmission Line

The Phase 2 transmission line would start at Milepost A0 at the Tesla Substation in Alameda County. This area is designated Large Parcel Agriculture and Wind Resource Area. The current uses are grazing and open space. No recreational facilities exist or are proposed between Mileposts A0 and A0.2.

From Mileposts C0 to C7, the land is designated Large Parcel Agriculture and Wind Resource Area. Some of this land is also under Williamson Act contract. Grazing and wind turbines are the primary uses along this portion of the route. Proposed regional trails would be crossed between the following mileposts:

- C1.7 and C1.8
- C3.7 and C3.8
- C5.3 and C5.4
- C5.5 and C5.6

Between Mileposts C7 and W3.8, the route is located on grazing land with the Alameda County land use designation of Large Parcel Agriculture. This land is under Williamson Act contract and contains some wind turbines. At Milepost W2.5, the transmission line would cross a proposed recreational trail. Between Mileposts W3.5 and W3.8, the line would parallel and cross a proposed recreational trail.

The last portion of the route, between Mileposts B10.1 and B10.4, is also located on grazing land designated for Large Parcel Agriculture. This land is also under Williamson Act contract. There are no existing or proposed recreational facilities between these mileposts.

## South Area

### Transmission Line

Between Mileposts MX0 and MX1.3, the route is located on grazing land with a land use designation of Resource Management. This land is currently used for grazing. The existing Tesla-Newark transmission line corridor is located south of the proposed project route. The transmission line would cross an existing regional trail between Mileposts MX0.4 and MX0.5.

The transmission line route is located in an area designated as Agricultural Land between Mileposts MX1.3 and MX1.5. This area is currently used for grazing and open space. Some of the parcels are under Williamson Act contract.

Between Mileposts MX1.5 and MX1.8, the transmission line would cross through an area of Alameda County designated as Resource Management. This land is currently used for grazing and open space and is under Williamson Act contract. Between mileposts MX1.8 and MX3.0, the transmission line would be located on land that is designated Large Parcel Agriculture and used for grazing and open space. Some of these parcels are under Williamson Act contract.

Before reaching the transition structure, the transmission line would be located in an area designated Rural Density Residential that is currently open space. The transition structure is located approximately at Milepost M3.1 in a Rural Density Residential zone. This land is currently vacant.

Between Milepost M3.1 and M3.8, the transmission line would be underground in open space. The route crosses a neighborhood park located on the southern side of Hearst Drive between Mileposts M3.8 and M3.9. The remaining portion of the transmission line route, between Mileposts M3.1 and M5.4, would be located underground along Hearst Drive and Bernal Avenue. The route is located in areas designated as Rural Density, Low Density, and Medium Density Residential that are fully developed with single family homes. Between Mileposts M4.7 and M5.3, the route would be located in city streets in a residential and commercial area. Neighborhood parks are located adjacent to the line between Mileposts 4.6 and 4.7 and Mileposts 5.1 and 5.2. The line would cross a proposed regional trail and a Public Health and Safety area with a Wildlands Overlay in Alameda County before emerging from underground on vacant land near the Vineyard Substation, approximately at Milepost M5.5. The land use designation for this vacant land and the substation is Major Public.

## 5.2.3 Plans and Policies

This section describes the City of Pleasanton, Alameda County, and Contra Costa County plans and policies that are relevant to the project.

### City of Pleasanton

**Program 8.1.** Discourage the development of agricultural lands indicated on the General Plan Map through the use of Williamson Act contracts (where applicable) and agricultural zoning.

### **Contra Costa County**

**Policy 3-12.** Preservation and buffering of agricultural lands should be encouraged because it is critical to maintaining a healthy and competitive agricultural economy and assuring a balance of land uses. Preservation and conservation of open space, wetlands, parks, hillsides and ridgelines should be encouraged because it is crucial to preserving the continued availability of unique habitats for wildlife and plants, to protecting unique scenery, and to providing a wide range of recreational opportunities for county residents.

**Policy 3-20.** Where new electrical transmission lines are proposed, they should be developed parallel to existing transmission lines to the extent feasible. Mitigation of the environmental impact of building these facilities should be in close proximity to the area of impact.

### **Alameda County**

**Policy 200.** The county shall allow development and expansion of public facilities (for example, parks and recreational facilities; schools; child care facilities; police, fire, and emergency medical facilities; solid waste, water, storm drainage, flood control, subregional facilities; utilities, etc.) in appropriate locations inside and outside the Urban Growth Boundary consistent with the policies and Land Use Diagram of the East County Area Plan.

**Public Services and Facilities Policy 262.** The county shall facilitate the provision of adequate gas and electric service and facilities to serve existing and future needs while minimizing noise, electromagnetic, and visual impacts on existing and future residents.

**Public Services and Facilities Policy 263.** The county shall work with PG&E to design and locate appropriate expansion of gas and electric systems.

**Public Services and Facilities Policy 264.** The county shall require new developments to locate utility lines underground, whenever feasible.

**Land Use Policy 15.** The county shall phase development to minimize premature loss of agricultural land. Agricultural land may be urbanized where conversion is a part of phased growth planned to avoid discontinuous (leap-frog) development.

**Land Use Policy 75.** The county shall conserve prime soils (Class I and Class II, as defined by the USDA Soil Conservation Service Land Capability Classification) and farmland of statewide importance and unique farmland (as defined by the California Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program) outside the urban growth boundary.

**Land Use Policy 84.** The county shall give the highest priority in areas designated “large parcel agriculture” to agricultural operations.

**Land Use Policy 116.** The county shall require that access roads be sited and designed to minimize grading.

**Land Use Policy 117.** The county shall require that utility lines be placed underground whenever feasible. When located above ground, utility lines and supporting structures shall be sited to minimize their visual impact.

**Land Use Policy 161.** The county shall discourage the development of uses and structures that are not compatible with wind energy operations within the wind resource area.

**Land Use Policy 162.** The county shall require that, where conflicts between a new use and an existing windfarm use are anticipated, the burden of mitigating the conflicts be the responsibility of the new use.

## 5.3 Potential Impacts

### 5.3.1 Significance Criteria

Significance criteria for agricultural, land use, and recreational impacts were derived from Appendix G of the revised CEQA Guidelines. Impacts to agriculture, land use, or recreation would be significant if they resulted in any of the following:

- Conversion of land designated as prime farmland, unique farmland, or farmland of statewide importance to non-agricultural use
- Conflicts with existing zoning for agricultural use or Williamson Act contract
- Changes to the environment resulting in conversion of designated farmland to non-agricultural use
- Physical division of an established community
- Conflicts with applicable land use plans, policies, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project
- Conflicts with an applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan
- An increase in the use of existing parks or other recreational facilities
- The construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment

### 5.3.2 Construction Impacts

#### Land Use Compatibility

**Impact 5.1.** Because the construction laydown areas are located on grazing land, project construction will reduce the amount of grazing land available to cattle. Due to the large amount of land available for grazing in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties, and because use of the land will be temporary, this impact will be less than significant.

**Impact 5.2.** The small grass park located on Hearst Drive will be closed temporarily during underground construction (approximately 5 to 10 days). The park will be open when the trench is plated (after work hours and on weekends). This will result in a less than significant impact due to the short-term nature of the construction.



### 5.3.3 Operation Impacts

#### Land Use Compatibility

Operation of the proposed project will not physically divide any communities, conflict with applicable regulations or conservation plans, or affect recreational facilities. Existing and proposed recreational trails that would be paralleled or crossed by the project would also not be impacted because the transmission line will span these areas and no structures will be placed in trail right-of-ways.

**Impact 5.3.** Construction of the permanent access roads will reduce the amount of grazing land, restrict windfarm development on land designated as wind resources area, and provide public access to areas previously not accessible. Because the amount of land that will be removed from grazing and restricted for windfarm development is small relative to its surroundings, these impacts will be less than significant. Implementation of Mitigation Measures 5.1 and 5.2 will reduce the potential public access impact to a less than significant level.

#### North Area<sup>3/4</sup> Phase 1

##### Transmission Line

**Impact 5.4.** The placement of transmission towers on land under Williamson Act contract will not remove the land from Williamson Act contract status. Pursuant to Government Code Section 51238, placement of electric facilities on Williamson Act land is a compatible use. The barn located between Mileposts B14.7 and B14.8 will be spanned by the transmission line, and therefore it will not have to be removed or relocated. This will result in a less than significant impact.

**Impact 5.5.** While the permanent placement of structures on grazing land will remove a small portion of land for grazing, the area will be small relative to the amount of surrounding grazing land available in the Tri-Valley area (approximately 400,000 acres).<sup>2</sup> Therefore, the impact will be less than significant.

##### *North Livermore Substation*

**Impact 5.6.** According to the East County Area Plan Land Use Diagram, the North Livermore Substation site is designated Medium Density Residential. As a result, constructing the substation on this land would restrict development of future medium density housing on this 5-acre parcel. Because approximately 1,800 acres of the surrounding land is designated for Medium Density Residential, and substations are compatible with this use, restricting this 5-acre parcel will not result in a significant land use impact.

##### *Dublin Substation*

**Impact 5.7.** The Dublin Substation site is located on land currently under Williamson Act contract and designated for agricultural use. The land would be subdivided and removed from Williamson Act contract. However, only 5 acres out of a 380-acre parcel would be removed. There are over 100,000 acres of land under Williamson Act contract in Contra Costa County. As a result, the agricultural practices in the area would not change. Government Code Section 51238 states that electric facilities are compatible uses with

<sup>2</sup> 1996 estimate for Contra Costa and Alameda Counties.

Williamson act contracts. In addition, use of the site for a substation would not create pressure to develop surrounding Williamson Act lands. Substation uses are frequently placed in agricultural areas and do not result in the types of land use conflicts that other uses (such as residential) may create in agricultural areas.

## North Area Phase 2

### Transmission Line

**Impact 5.8.** Between Mileposts A0 and C7.8, the route would pass through an area designated for wind resources. Because wind turbines will be prohibited in PG&E's easement, approximately 125 acres will be restricted from potential windfarm development. This will result in a less than significant impact to land use due to the approximately 35,000 acres of surrounding land with the same designation. In addition, approximately 20 existing wind turbines will have to be removed because they are located within the proposed transmission line corridor. The abundance of alternative locations for these structures and implementation of Mitigation Measure 5.3 will reduce this impact to a less than significant level.

## South Area

### Transmission Line

**Impact 5.9.** Between Mileposts MX0 and M3, the transmission line would be located in a rural area used for grazing. Potential land use impacts would be limited to removal of a small amount of grazing land. Because there are more than 5,000 acres of grazing land in the area, this impact will be less than significant.

Because the route would be underground from Mileposts M3.1 through M5.5, there would be no permanent impacts to land use, recreation, or agricultural resources along those portions of the project.

### *Transition Structure*

**Impact 5.10.** Placing the transition structure on vacant Rural Density Residential land will result in a less than significant impact. Utility uses are compatible with the Rural Density Residential designation.

## 5.4 Mitigation Measures

**Mitigation Measure 5.1.** All new access roads will be gated and locked at fence lines.

**Mitigation Measure 5.2.** All new access roads will have a "No Trespassing" sign posted at their entrance from a public roadway.

**Mitigation Measure 5.3.** PG&E will pay restitution for relocating wind turbines and restricting wind farm operations that are currently located outside of PG&E's existing easement.

## 5.5 References

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