

# Environmental Minor Project Refinement Form



**Project Name:** West of Devers Upgrade Project **Request Prepared By:** Sylvia Granados

**Date Approval Required:** 10/7/2019 **Variance Request No.:** 31

**Date Submitted:** 10/2/2019 **Locations:** Wire Setup Site west of WSS-2-2N12; Existing access road east of 4X17; Work Areas east and west of 2N14 (see Description of Change and Justification section below and figures attached).

## Landowners and Associated Parcel Numbers:

Proposed Work Area	Property Owner	Assessor's Parcel Number
WSS-2-2N12-MPR-31	Leo R. Beus	0284-181-25
4X17 Access Road	Pardee Homes	408-120-018
WA-2-2N14-1-MPR-31	Leo R. Beus	0284-181-25
WA-2-2N14-2-MPR-31	Leo R. Beus	0284-181-25

**Current Vegetative Cover/Land Use:** Developed/Disturbed; Grassland Forbland

**Existing Sensitive Resource?** NO  YES Specify: Coastal CAGN Critical Habitat at WSS-2-2N12-MPR-31, WA-2-2N14-1-MPR-31, and WA-2-2N14-2-MPR-31; SKR Suitable Habitat near the existing 4X17 access road.

**Modifying (check as many as apply):**  MITIGATION MEASURE  PLAN/PROCEDURE  SPECIFICATION  
 DRAWING  PERMIT CONDITION  OTHER

**Specify Source (e.g., Mitigation Measure B.5):** NTP #4 Work Areas/Conditions

## Description of Change and Justification (Attach additional sheets if needed.)

Attachments:

CONSTRUCTION DRAWING  ADDITIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS  CORRESPONDENCE  OTHER: \_\_\_\_\_

### Wire Stringing Site WSS-2-2N12-MPR-31

A new temporary work area is required west of WSS-2-2N12 to facilitate wire stringing activities associated with tower 2N12, as shown on Figure 1. The new work area will be lightly graded to level the existing terrain.

The total temporary disturbance area associated with the new work area consists of approximately 0.49 acre of developed/disturbed land (0.08 acre) and grassland/forbland (0.41 acre). The land is privately owned and located within the City of Loma Linda.

### Access Road East of 4X17

Use of an existing access road, located east of 4X17, is required to connect two approved access roads and reduce construction travel between work sites. The access road would provide more direct access between PP #123333, 4X16 and other nearby work areas.

The existing access road is approximately 90 feet in length and 20 feet in width, orientated in a north-south direction on previously disturbed land (33.947165 N, -116.929554 W), as shown in Figure 2. The land is privately owned by Pardee Homes and is located within the existing SCE transmission line right-of-way, in the City of Banning.

### Work Areas WA-2-2N14-1-MPR-31 and WA-2-2N14-2-MPR-31

Two new temporary work areas are required east and west of 2N14 to facilitate wire stringing activities associated with the tower site, as shown in Figure 3. The new work areas will be lightly graded to level the existing terrain.

The total temporary disturbance area associated with the new work areas consists of approximately 0.69 acre of developed/disturbed land (0.30 acre) and grassland/forbland (0.39 acre). The land is privately owned and located within the SCE transmission line right-of-way in the City of Loma Linda.

### **Environmental Analysis**

No impacts to regulated trees, jurisdictional waters, biological, or cultural resources are anticipated during the use of the new work areas and access road.

### **Biological Resources**

A desktop analysis was conducted for the new work areas and access road using aerial imagery, publicly available data, and project biological data. The new work areas and access road were covered during previous surveys, including FRED Preconstruction Survey IDs: 000132, 000186, and 000126.

**Desert Tortoise (DETO)** – The work areas and access road are not located within the current known range of the DETO; therefore, no impacts to DETO are anticipated at these locations.

**Special-status Terrestrial Herpetofauna** – No special-status terrestrial herpetofauna have been observed within the new work areas or access road during prior project-related surveys. A preconstruction survey of the work areas will be conducted prior to use. With implementation of the mitigation measures and biological monitoring during construction, no significant impacts to special-status terrestrial herpetofauna are anticipated.

**Burrowing Owl** – Burrowing owl habitat in the form of annual and perennial grasslands and scrublands characterized by low-growing vegetation is present throughout the project area. Although marginal habitat is present, burrowing owls have the potential to occur in the vicinity of the new work areas and access road. During a previous survey, a burrow with burrowing owl sign in the form of whitewash was observed approximately 43 feet south of supersite 2X14. The previously identified burrow with whitewash is no longer in existence. No burrowing owl have been observed within the new work areas or access road during previous surveys and biological monitoring conducted to date, therefore no impacts are anticipated.

Active burrowing owl burrows observed during preconstruction surveys of the new work areas and during construction will be mitigated in accordance with the Burrowing Owl Management and Passive Relocation Plan. With implementation of the mitigation measures, including appropriate avoidance buffers, and biological monitoring during construction, no impacts to burrowing owls are anticipated.

**Nesting Birds** – Suitable substrates for nesting birds protected by the California Fish and Game Code and Migratory Bird Treaty Act, including trees, shrubs, man-made structures, and the ground surface, can be found throughout the project area. No active nest buffers intersect the new work areas or access road, at this time. Preconstruction surveys, including surveys for nesting birds during the avian breeding season (Jan 1 – Aug 31), will be conducted prior to the initiation of construction use in the areas. If active nests are identified, avoidance buffers will be established in accordance with the Nesting Bird Management Plan. With implementation of the NBMP, no impacts are anticipated.

**Listed Riparian Birds** – No suitable habitat for riparian birds (least Bell's vireo [LBVI]/Southwestern willow flycatcher [SWFL]) occurs within 500 feet of the new work areas or access road. Therefore, no impacts are anticipated.

**Coastal California Gnatcatcher** – WSS-2-2N12-MPR-31, WA-2-2N14-1-MPR-31, and WA-2-2N14-2-MPR-31: The new work areas are located within USFWS-designated Critical Habitat Unit 10 for coastal California gnatcatcher (CAGN). Suitable CAGN habitat is located approximately 407 feet northeast of supersite 2X12. No CAGN birds or nests were observed within the survey area during the active preconstruction survey, nor any previous protocol surveys. Due to a history of negative CAGN survey results in the area, San Bernardino County is considered unoccupied by CAGN at this time. Since the new work area is comprised of grassland/forbland and developed/disturbed land, which is not breeding habitat for the species, no impacts to the species are anticipated.

Impacts to the new work area will be temporary in nature. To offset additional impacts to Critical Habitat subject to mitigation, an unused approved disturbance area, also located in CAGN critical habitat in supersite WSS-2-2N21-2N22 (Figures 1 and 3), will be removed from the project data upon approval of this MPR. The final impact calculations for the project will account for these changes.

4X17 Access Road: No suitable habitat for CAGN is located in the vicinity of the access road. Therefore, no impacts are anticipated.

Preconstruction surveys, including surveys for nesting birds, will be conducted in the new work area and access road during the avian breeding season (Jan 1 – Aug 31). With monitoring and implementation of mitigation measures, no impacts to CAGN are anticipated.

**Golden Eagle** – WSS-2-2N12-MPR-31, WA-2-2N14-1-MPR-31, and WA-2-2N14-2-MPR-31: Based on aerial habitat assessments and protocol surveys conducted for the project, no suitable nesting habitat for golden eagles is located within 2 miles of the new work area. With monitoring and implementation of mitigation measures, no impacts are anticipated.

4X17 Access Road: One historical observation of a golden eagle (FRED Species Event 000078) was observed within the work area of supersite 4X18 on September 26, 2018, and one historical observation of a golden eagle (FRED Species Event 000177) was observed within the work area of supersite 4X18 on May 21, 2019. However, based on aerial habitat assessments and protocol surveys conducted for the project, no suitable nesting habitat for golden eagles is located within 2 miles of the existing access road. Therefore, no impacts are anticipated.

**Stephens' Kangaroo Rat** – WSS-2-2N12-MPR-31, WA-2-2N14-1-MPR-31, and WA-2-2N14-2-MPR-31: No suitable habitat for Stephens' kangaroo rat (SKR) occurs within the new work areas; therefore, no impacts are anticipated.

4X17 Access Road: The area surrounding the existing access road is mapped suitable SKR Habitat. However, the existing access road is comprised of developed/disturbed compacted soils. Further, a habitat assessment, pedestrian surveys, and trapping surveys were conducted in Segment 4 in 2018- no SKR were captured. Based on a lack of historic data, habitat conditions, and negative results over several years of surveys, SKR are not expected. Therefore, no impacts are anticipated.

**Special-status Bats** – No suitable bat roosting habitat or buffers occur within the new work areas or access road; therefore, no impacts are anticipated.

**Special-status Small Mammals** – Special-status small mammals such as the pallid San Diego pocket mouse, northwestern San Diego pocket mouse, American badger, desert kit fox, San Diego desert woodrat, and/or San Diego black-tailed jackrabbit can occur in many parts of the project area. Ringtail and Palm Springs round-tailed ground squirrel are not expected to occur in the vicinity. However, if any of these species are found, potential impacts will be addressed according to the Small Mammals Avoidance and Minimization Plan.

WSS-2-2N12-MPR-31, WA-2-2N14-1-MPR-31, and WA-2-2N14-2-MPR-31: The new work areas are outside the known range of the Palm Springs pocket mouse. No mapped suitable habitat for the Los Angeles pocket mouse (LAPM) occurs within the new work area. No impacts to special-status small mammals are anticipated.

4X17 Access Road: No special-status mammals were observed during previous surveys. The access road is outside the known range of the Palm Springs pocket mouse. No mapped suitable habitat for the Los Angeles pocket mouse (LAPM) occurs within the access road area. No impacts to special-status small mammals are anticipated. If any special-status small mammal species are found during construction activities, potential impacts will be addressed according to the Special-status Small Mammals Avoidance and Minimization Plan.

**Special-status Plants** – No special-status plants have been previously documented within the new work areas or access road; therefore, no impacts are anticipated.

**Regulated Trees** – No tree trimming or tree removal is required for construction activities within the new work areas or access road; therefore, no impacts are anticipated.

**Jurisdictional Waters** – Non-wetland jurisdictional features are located in the general vicinity. However, no jurisdictional features intersect the new work areas or access road. A preconstruction survey of the work areas will be conducted prior to use. Therefore, no unpermitted impacts to jurisdictional waters are anticipated.

### **Cultural Resources**

The new work areas are located within the WOD APE and were covered within the record search data that was conducted during previous WOD surveys and studies. The record search and survey results for the new work areas were negative for cultural resources. Williams, Audry. 2016. *Cultural Resources Management Plan for Southern California Edison Company's West of Devers Transmission Line Upgrade Project*, Riverside and San Bernardino Counties, California.

### **Paleontological Resources**

The WOD Paleontological Resources Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (PRMMP) requires full-time, qualified paleontological construction monitoring in areas determined to have moderate (PFYC 3) to very high (PFYC 5) sensitivity. Sediments of unknown (PFYC U) sensitivity shall be monitored by a qualified paleontological monitor on a part-time basis and geologic units with very low (PFYC 1) or low (PFYC 2) sensitivity may be spot checked to confirm paleontological sensitivity.

Per the PRMMP, *the types of construction activities that require monitoring or spot-checking include:*

- Grading
- Drilling (if drill bit is greater than two feet in diameter)
- Excavation for retaining walls
- Excavation of construction areas

***Types of construction activities that will not require monitoring or spot-checking, regardless of paleontological sensitivity include:***

- Small diameter drill holes (less than two feet in diameter)
- Pile driving
- Project activities that do not involve ground disturbance

WSS-2-2N12-MPR-31 and WA-2-2N14-2-MPR-31: The proposed work areas are located in an area of very high (PFYC 5) paleontological sensitivity and require full time monitoring during ground-disturbing construction activities.

4X17 Access Road and WA-2-2N14-1-MPR-31: The existing access road and work area are located in an area of low (PFYC 2) paleontological sensitivity. WA-2-2N14-1-MPR-31 may be spot checked during excavation to confirm paleontological sensitivity. No excavation is anticipated on the access road; therefore, no monitoring will be required.

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### **Resources:**

Biological       NO SENSITIVE RESOURCES PRESENT       SENSITIVE RESOURCES PRESENT       N/A

New Survey Report Attached:      YES  NO

If No, Previous Biological Survey Reference: Preconstruction surveys will be conducted prior to initiating work in the new work areas. The new work areas were covered in FRED Preconstruction Survey IDs 000132, 000186, and 000126.

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**Cultural :**       NO RESOURCES PRESENT       RESOURCES PRESENT WITH PROJECT APE:       YES       NO  
                          (PAVED/GRAVEL AREA AND NO GROUND DISTURBANCE)

If in APE, Previous Cultural Survey Reference:

If not in APE, attach new survey report.

The new work areas and access road are located within the WOD APE and were covered within the record search data that was conducted during previous WOD surveys and studies. The record search and survey results for the areas were

negative for cultural resources. Williams, Audry. 2016. *Cultural Resources Management Plan for Southern California Edison Company's West of Devers Transmission Line Upgrade Project, Riverside and San Bernardino Counties, California.*

**Other Potential Impacts:** (Check any potential changes to permitted impacts and provide details below. Attach additional sheets if needed.)

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> AIR QUALITY          | <input type="checkbox"/> LAND USE            | <input type="checkbox"/> TRAFFIC         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES | <input type="checkbox"/> NOISE               | <input type="checkbox"/> VISUAL          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CONTAMINATED SOILS   | <input type="checkbox"/> PALEO RESOURCES     | <input type="checkbox"/> WATER RESOURCES |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CULTURAL RESOURCES   | <input type="checkbox"/> SOCIOECONOMIC       | <input type="checkbox"/> WETLANDS        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> HAZARDOUS MATERIALS  | <input type="checkbox"/> STORM WATER (SWPPP) |  |


NA

**CEQA and Permitting:** (Provide details for any "Yes" answer and attach additional information if needed.)

1. Will modification involve substantial changes that will require major changes to the CEQA document?  
 YES  NO
2. Will modification result in new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified impacts?  
 YES  NO
3. Additional agency notifications and/or permit modifications required?  YES  NO

**Conditions of Approval or Reasons for Denial:** (Attach additional information if needed.)

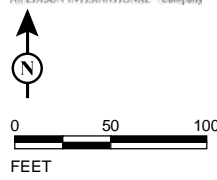
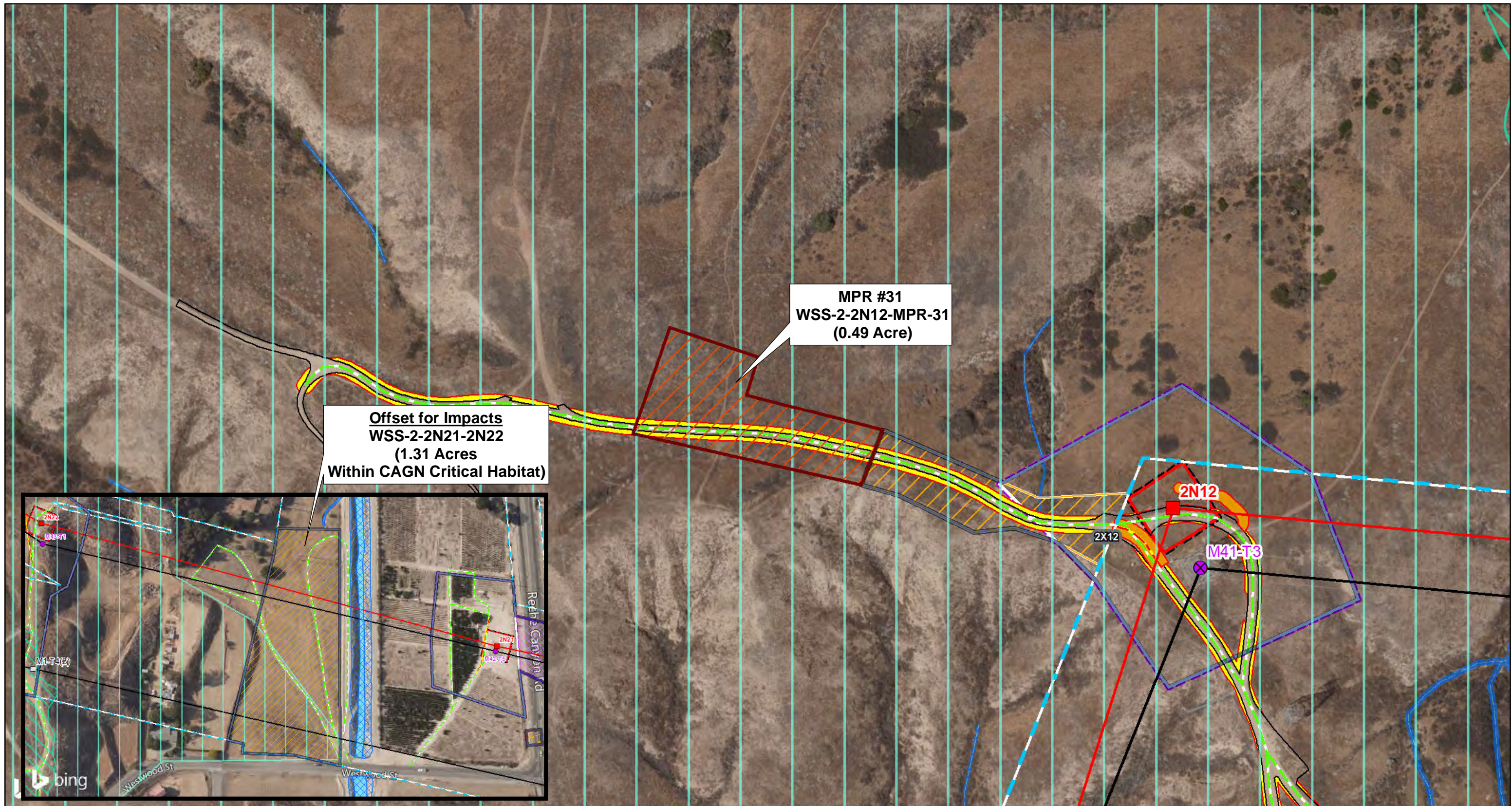
     **Required Signatures:** (Attached email approvals may be used in lieu of signatures.)

  X   Chief Construction Inspector or Foreman:  VARIANCE MODIFICATION IS NEEDED FOR SAFE AND EFFICIENT CONSTRUCTION  
Name: Jeff Miller Signature:  Date: 9/30/2019

Environmental Inspector:  FIELD REVIEW COMPLETE  
Name: Lisa Amador Signature: *Lisa Amador* Date: 9/30/2019

  X   Land Agent:  CONSISTENT WITH EXISTING RIGHTS  NEW RIGHTS OBTAINED  
Name: James Spence Signature: Sylvia Granados for James Spence Date: 9/30/2019

  X   Environmental Compliance Lead:  APPROVED  APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS (SEE CONDITIONS ABOVE)  DENIED  
Name: Sylvia Granados Signature: *Sylvia Granados* Date: 9/30/2019



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**LEGEND**

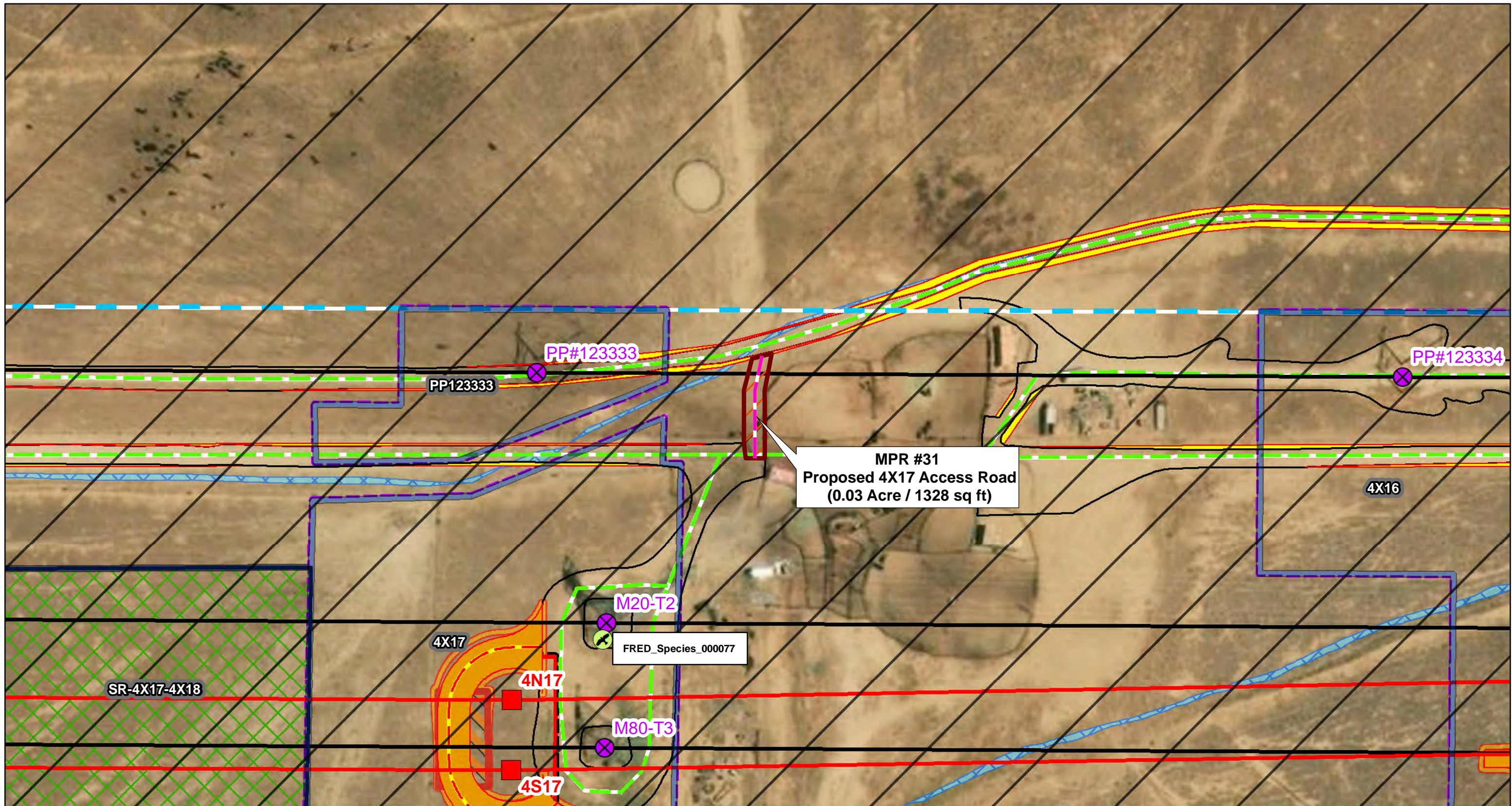
- |  |   |   |   |  |
|--|---|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> MPR #31 Proposed Work Area</li> <li> Supersite Boundary</li> <li><b>Major Trans Structure</b></li> <li> Proposed</li> <li> Remove</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Major Trans Line</b></li> <li> Proposed</li> <li> Existing</li> <li><b>Civil Access Roads Lines</b></li> <li> New Access Road</li> <li> Existing Access Road</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Civil Access Road Areas</b></li> <li> Existing Road Edge</li> <li> Designed Road Boundary</li> <li> Potential Road Widening</li> <li> Existing ROW</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Construction Areas</b></li> <li> O&amp;M Tower Area</li> <li> Structure Work Area</li> <li> Wire Setup</li> <li> Coastal California Gnatcatcher Suitable Habitat</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> Coastal California Gnatcatcher Critical Habitat</li> <li><b>Non-wetland Waters</b></li> <li> CDFW Jurisdiction</li> <li> USACE/RWQCB Jurisdiction</li> </ul> |
|--|---|---|---|--|



FIGURE 1

Southern California Edison  
West of Devers Upgrade Project  
**WSS-2-2N12-MPR-31**  
MPR #31





SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA  
**EDISON**  
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**LEGEND**

- |   |  |   |   |   |   |
|---|--|---|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="color: magenta;">---</span> Proposed Access Road</li> <li><span style="border: 1px solid red; padding: 2px;"> </span> Proposed Access Road Edge</li> <li><span style="border: 2px solid blue; padding: 2px;"> </span> Supersite Boundary</li> </ul> | <p><b>Major Trans Line</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="color: red;">—</span> Proposed</li> <li><span style="color: black;">—</span> Existing</li> </ul> <p><b>Civil Access Roads Lines</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="color: red; border-bottom: 1px dashed red;"> </span> New Access Road</li> <li><span style="color: green; border-bottom: 1px dashed green;"> </span> Existing Access Road</li> </ul> | <p><b>Civil Access Road Areas</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;"> </span> Existing Road Edge</li> <li><span style="background-color: orange; border: 1px solid orange; padding: 2px;"> </span> Designed Road Boundary</li> <li><span style="background-color: yellow; border: 1px solid yellow; padding: 2px;"> </span> Potential Road Widening</li> <li><span style="border: 1px dashed blue; padding: 2px;"> </span> Existing ROW</li> </ul> | <p><b>Construction Areas</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="background-color: green; border: 1px solid green; padding: 2px;"> </span> Construction Work Site</li> <li><span style="border: 2px solid red; padding: 2px;"> </span> O&amp;M Tower Area</li> <li><span style="border: 1px solid purple; padding: 2px;"> </span> Structure Work Area</li> <li><span style="background-color: orange; border: 1px solid orange; padding: 2px;"> </span> Permanent, Crane Pad</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="border: 1px solid orange; padding: 2px;"> </span> Temporary, Grading Limit</li> <li><span style="color: green;">●</span> Ferruginous Hawk</li> <li><span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;"> </span> Stephens' Kangaroo Rat Suitable Habitat</li> <li><span style="border: 1px solid blue; padding: 2px;"> </span> Non-wetland Waters</li> <li><span style="background-color: lightblue; border: 1px solid blue; padding: 2px;"> </span> CDFW Jurisdiction</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="background-color: lightblue; border: 1px solid lightblue; padding: 2px;"> </span> USACE/RWQCB Jurisdiction</li> </ul> |
|---|--|---|---|---|---|

**Major Trans Structure**

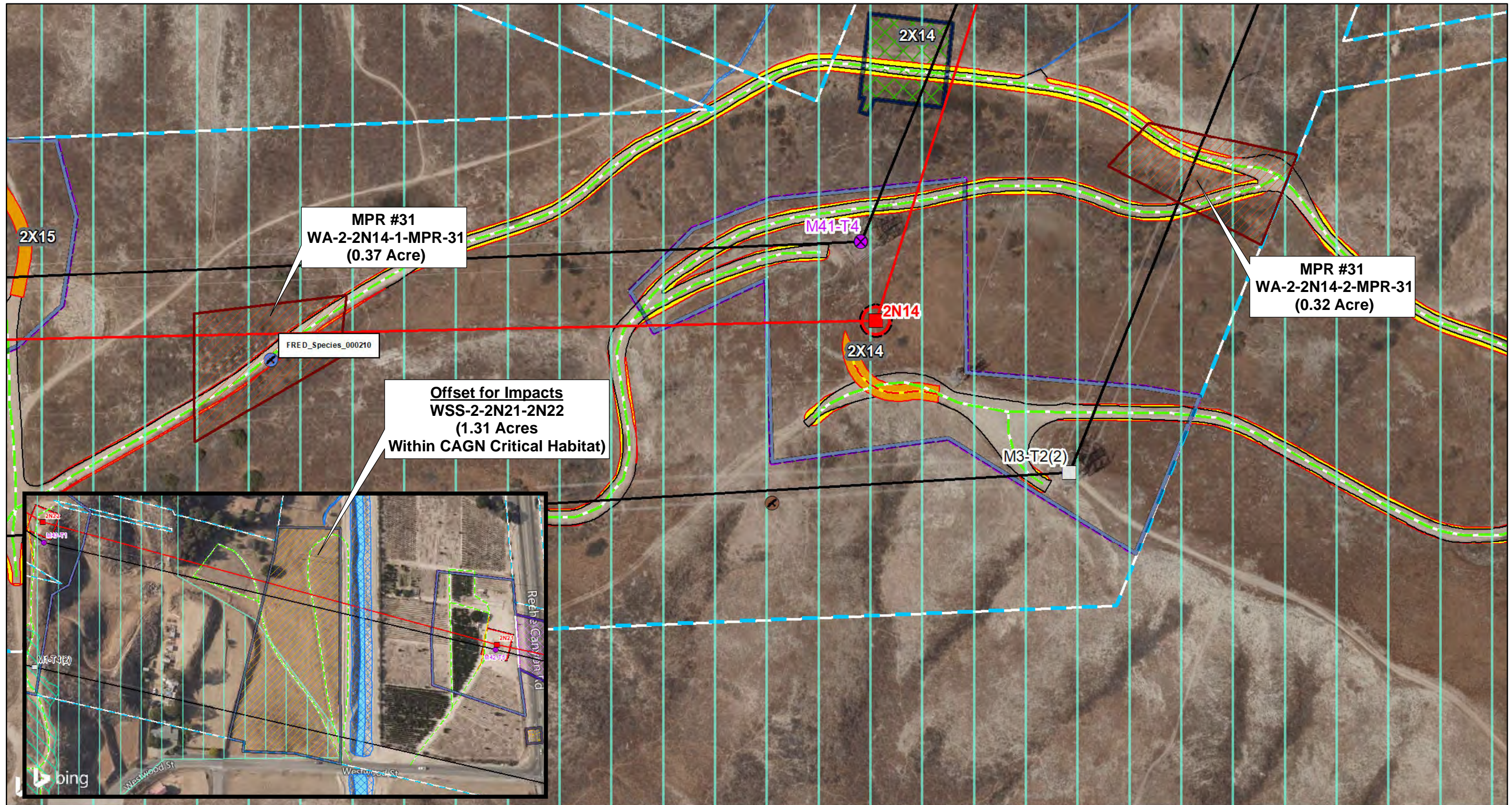
- Proposed
- Remove

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FIGURE 2

Southern California Edison  
 West of Devers Upgrade Project  
**Proposed 4X17 Access Road**  
 MPR #31



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FEET  
SCE, Bing Imagery

**LEGEND**

- MPR #31 Proposed Work Area
- Supersite Boundary
- Major Trans Structure**
- Proposed
- Remove
- Existing

- Major Trans Line**
- Proposed
- Existing
- Civil Access Roads Lines**
- New Access Road
- - - Existing Access Road

- Civil Access Road Areas**
- Existing Road Edge
- Designed Road Boundary
- Potential Road Widening
- Existing ROW

- Construction Areas**
- Construction Work Site
- O&M Tower Area
- Structure Work Area
- Southern California Rufous-crowned Sparrow

- Burrowing Owl
- Coastal California Gnatcatcher Critical Habitat
- Non-wetland Waters**
- CDFW Jurisdiction
- USACE/RWQCB Jurisdiction



FIGURE 3

Southern California Edison  
West of Devers Upgrade Project  
**WA-2-2N14-1-MPR-31 &  
WA-2-2N14-2-MPR-31**  
MPR #31